

was pleased at the virtuous character of the son of the Vaiśya. So taking him, as if he was God, placed him on its back and walked to the city. The people gathered round him and anointed him as their King. The son of the Vaiśya became King. He never even thought of women who are generally fickle and wicked.

The wicked wife of the Vaiśya's son took the limbless man on her shoulder and wandered about saying, "The enemies of my husband have put him in this plight. Because of my conjugal fidelity I carry him thus and earn our daily bread. Please give us alms". In this manner she spent her days in begging. Thus wandering from place to place she reached the city where the Vaiśya's son was the King. The people, seeing her loyalty to her husband, honoured her and spoke highly of her. Hearing that a very loyal wife had reached his city the King sent for her. The King recognized her instantly. But she did not know him. The King reminded her of her deeds of the past one by one and began to tease and scold her. Finally when she understood that the King was her husband she was dumb-founded. The amazed ministers looked at each other. The King revealed everything to them. The ministers disfigured her and drove her away.

BODHYA. A famous teacher-priest. Once there was a discussion between Nahuṣa and Bodhya on Philosophy. The summary of what Bodhya said is as follows:—

Before I advise others, I do it myself first. I am the teacher of none. I take the world as my teacher. I learned the lessons of harmlessness from snakes, disappointment from Piṅgala the harlot, self-sacrifice from animals, concentration from the archer, and loneliness from a maid who is a spinster. (M.B., Śānti Parva, 171, 56, 61).

This hermit came to the King Yayāti and taught him philosophy and ethics. The whole of the Chapter 171 of Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, comprises the exhortations of this hermit, which are known by the famous name Bodhya-Gītā (Song of Bodhya).

BRADHNĀŚVA. A king. Agastya once approached this King to request him for some wealth. (See the word Agastya).

BRAHMĀ :

One of the trimūrtis of the Hindu Pantheon. The trimūrtis are Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

1) *General information.* God who is the creator of the Universe. It is mentioned in the Purānas that Brahmā creates, Viṣṇu preserves and Paraśiva destroys the universe.

2) *The birth of Brahmā.* The birth of Brahmā is from the navel of Viṣṇu. It is mentioned in Devī Purāṇa, Skandha 1, about the birth of Brahmā as follows:— In the beginning Mahāviṣṇu lay on a banyan leaf in the shape of a baby and began to think, "Who am I? Who created me? What for? What is my work? Where to work?" and so on. At that time an ethereal voice said:—"Sarvaṁ khalvidamevāhaṁ nānyadasti sanātanaṁ".* Mahāviṣṇu was amazed at this ethereal voice. He did not know whose oracle it was. Still He lay meditating upon the words. Then Mahādevī, with four hands and weapons such as Śaṅkha (conch), Cakra (wheel), Gadā (club), Padma (lotus) and maids who are prosperities and having worn glorious clothes and ornaments, and accompanied by the Śaktis

(powers) named Rati, Bhūti, Buddhi, Mati, Kīrti, Dhṛti, Smṛti, Śraddhā, Medhā, Svadhā, Svāhā, Kṣudhā, Nidrā, Dayā, Gau, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Kṣamā, Lajjā, Jṛmbhā and Tandrā, appeared before Mahāviṣṇu, who was struck with wonder. Mahādevī said, "Oh, Viṣṇu, what is there to wonder at? Every time the universe is subjected to creation, preservation and destruction, you are born thus due to the great power of the supreme spirit. It seems that you have forgotten those matters. Know that the supreme power is beyond qualities. We are all with qualities. Your main quality is Sattva. From your navel Brahmā will be born. His attribute is Rajoguṇa (activity, passion or motion). From the middle of the eyebrows of Brahmā, will be born Rudra, whose attribute will be Tāmasaguṇa (darkness). Brahmā, with the power of penance, will acquire the ability of creation and by his attribute of Rajoguṇa will create the world in the colour of blood. You will be the preserver of that world. The same world will be destroyed by Rudra at the end of the Kalpa (world age)".

Accordingly from the navel of Viṣṇu a lotus grew up and in that lotus flower Brahmā took his form. The same Brahmādeva did penance before Mahāviṣṇu and Jagadambā, who were pleased at his penance and gave him all the boons he wanted. After that Brahmā began the work of creation. He created with his mind the Saptarṣis, (seven sages) and then the Prajāpatis (the lords of emanation). From them all the movables and the immovables in the universe came into existence. (Devī Bhāgavata, Skandha 7).

In manusmṛti, Chapter 1, the following stanza about the creation of Brahmā occurs.

"Tadaṇḍamabhavad haimam
Sahasrāṁśusamaprabhaṁ /
Tasmin jājñe svayam Brahmā
Sarvalokapitāmahaḥ" //

That egg was as radiant as the Sun, with the colour of gold. Brahmā the great grandfather of everything in the world took birth by himself in it.

From the supreme power, an egg fell on the water which was the first creation. That egg became a germ of golden colour. Creating a life, which had done penance in its former births in such a way as to enable it to become Brahmā, in the golden germ of the egg, the supreme power entered the life that is to become Brahmā as its inner guide. That Brahmā is known as the Pitāmaha (Grandfather of the manes) or Paternal grandfather of all the worlds."

Vāmanapurāṇa Chapter 43 states as follows about the creation of Brahmā :—

Ages before the beginning, when all the worlds with everything they contained were submerged in the single ocean of the great flood, the germ of living things formed itself into a big egg. Brahmā who had been inside the egg went to a long sleep. The sleep continued for a thousand yugas (ages) when Brahmā woke up; as Sattva guṇa (purity) was the foremost attribute of him, he saw that the world was void. When the thought of creation occurred in his mind Rajoguṇa (activity or passion) became his foremost attribute. Rajas is the attribute that creates and Sattva, that which preserves. At the time of destruction Tamoguṇa (darkness) becomes the foremost attribute. That Bhagavān (Supreme

1 Idaṁ sarvaṁ khalu aham eva, Sanātanaṁ anyad nāsti. All these are myself. Except me there is nothing eternal.