

अथाष्टत्रिंशोऽध्यायः

Chapter 38

Lakṣmī kavaca

नारायण उवाच

सुचन्द्रे पतिते ब्रह्मराजेन्द्राणां शिरोमणौ।

अगमत्पुष्कराक्षस्तु सेनाय्यक्षौहिणीयुतः॥ १॥

Nārāyaṇa said - O Brāhmaṇa, after the king,
Sucandra met with his end in the battle-field, Puṣ

karākṣa came forward in the battle-field for waging a war. He happened to be the best of the kings and was accompanied by three *akṣauhiṇī* armies.

सूर्यवंशोद्भवो राजा सुचन्द्रतनयो महान्।

महालक्ष्मीसेवकश्च लक्ष्मीवान्सूर्यसन्निभः॥२॥

The king who belonged to the solar dynasty, happened to be the eldest son of Sucandra, adored Mahālakṣmī and had immense fortune and glory resembling the sun-rays.

महालक्ष्म्याश्च कवचं गले यस्य मनोहरम्।

परमैश्वर्यसंयुक्तस्त्रैलोक्यविजयी ततः॥३॥

The pleasant *kavaca* of Mahālakṣmī always adorned around his neck. He was lord of immense fortune and had conquered all the three worlds.

तं दृष्ट्वा भ्रातरः सर्वे रैणुकेयस्य धीमतः।

आययुः समरं कर्तुं नानाशस्त्रास्त्रपाणयः॥४॥

राजेन्द्रः शरजालेन छादयामास तांस्तथा।

चिच्छिदुः शरजालं च ते वीराश्चैव लीलया॥५॥

Finding him there, Paraśurāma's brothers came forward to fight with him holding several weapons in their hands and the prince covered all of them with his arrows and the great warrior also did not lag behind in destroying the net of the arrows.

चिच्छिदुः स्यन्दनं राजस्ते वीराः पञ्चबाणतः।

सारथिं पञ्चबाणेन रथाश्वं दशबाणतः॥६॥

तद्धनुः सप्तबाणेन तूर्णं वै पञ्चबाणतः।

चिच्छिदुस्तद्व्यातृवर्गान्विप्राः शंकरशूलतः॥७॥

Thereafter, those warriors shot five arrows at the king, killing his charioteer with five arrows, the charioteer and horses with ten arrows, the bow with seven arrows and the quiver with five arrows. With the use of the trident of Śiva, they destroyed all the brothers.

ते च त्र्यक्षौहिणीं सेनां निजघ्नुश्चापि लीलया।

हन्तुं नृपेन्द्रं ते वीराः शिवशूलं निचिक्षिपुः॥

गले बभूव तच्छूलं राज्ञः पुष्करमालिका॥८॥

The three *akṣauhiṇī* armies of the king were also playfully destroyed with the shooting of the arrow and the trident of Śiva, but the trident of Śiva touching the neck of the king became like a garland of flowers.

शक्तिं च परिघं चैव भृशुण्डीं मुद्गरं तथा।

गदां च चिक्षिपुर्विप्राः कोपेन ज्वलदग्नयः॥९॥

Thereafter, getting enraged like the burning fire-flame, the Brāhmaṇas shot *śaktis*, *parighas*, *bhuṣuṇḍis*, *mudgaras* and *gadās*.

तानि शस्त्राणि चूर्णानि क्षमाभृतो देहयोगतः।

विस्मिता भ्रातरः भृगोरेव महामुने॥१०॥

O great sage, with the very touch of the body of the king, all the weapons were reduced to pieces. This surprised immensely the brothers of Bhṛgu.

रथं धनुश्च शस्त्राणि चास्त्राणि विविधानि च।

सेनां प्रस्थापयामास कार्तवीर्यार्जुनः स्वयम्॥११॥

Thereafter Kārtavīrya himself deployed the army soldiers with chariots, bows and various types of other weapons.

राजा स्यन्दनमारुह्य पुष्कराक्षो महाबलः।

चकार शरजालं च महाघोरतरं मुने॥१२॥

O sage, the great warrior king Puṣkarākṣa mounted on the chariot, immensely started showering arrows.

चिच्छिदुः शरजालं च ते वीराः शस्त्रपाणयः।

राजा प्रस्वापनेनैव निद्रितांस्तांश्चकार ह॥१३॥

The warriors also faced them holding weapons in their hands, shooting arrows and destroyed the net of arrows. The king then cast a swoon on all of them and overpowered them with sleep.

भ्रातृश्च निद्रितान्दृष्ट्वा जामदग्न्यो महाबलः।

क्षतविक्षतसर्वाङ्गान्बोधयामास तत्त्वतः॥१४॥

बोधयित्वा तान्निवार्य जगाम रणमूर्धनि।

चिक्षेप पर्शुं कोपेन शीघ्रं राजजिघांसया॥१५॥

छित्त्वा राज्ञः किरीटं च पर्शुर्भूमौ पपात ह।

जग्राह परशुं शीघ्रं जागदग्न्यो महाबलः॥१६॥

Thereafter Paraśurāma's brothers, who were the great warriors got wounded in the battle-field who were removed by him carefully from the battle-field. He therefore himself came forward holding a battle-axe in the hand. The hand of the king was cut-off who fell on the ground. Paraśurāma caught hold of it.

तदा शंकरशूलं च चिक्षिपे मन्त्रपूर्वकम्।

नृपस्य कुण्डलं छित्त्वा जगाम शिवसंनिधिम्॥ १७॥

Thereafter he used the trident of Śiva reciting the *mantra*, which cut off the *kuṇḍalas* of the king and went back to Śiva.

राजा निहन्तुं तं रामं शरजालं चकार ह।

चिच्छेद शरजालं च रैणुकेयश्च लीलया॥ १८॥

The king on the other hand shot arrows creating a net around Paraśurāma but Bhṛgu on his part shattered the same.

क्रमेण राजा नानास्त्रं चिक्षिपे मन्त्रपूर्वकम्।

तच्चिच्छेद क्रमेणैव भृगुः शस्त्रभृतां वरः॥ १९॥

The king however used many weapons which were destroyed by Paraśurāma the great archer.

भृगुश्चिक्षेप नानास्त्रं महासंधानपूर्वकम्।

तच्चिच्छेद महाराजः संधानेनैव लीलया॥ २०॥

रामश्चिक्षेप संधाय ब्रह्मस्त्रं मन्त्रपूर्वकम्।

राजा निर्वापणं चक्रे संधानेनैव लीलया॥ २१॥

Bhṛgu also used many types of weapons available with him, which were easily destroyed by the king, Paraśurāma then thought of attacking the king with *Brahmāstra* but the king on coming to know about the intention of Paraśurāma playfully destroyed the same.

सर्वाण्यस्त्राणि शास्त्राणि राम पाशुपतं विना।

चिक्षेप कोपविभ्रान्तो भूपश्चिच्छेद तानि च॥ २२॥

Thereafter Paraśurāma was enraged and he shot the *Pāśupata* arrow, besides several other weapons which were in turn neutralised by the king.

रामः स्नात्वा शिवं नत्वाऽऽददे पाशुपतं मुने।

नारायणश्च भगवानवोचद्विप्ररूपशृङ्ग॥ २३॥

O sage, then Paraśurāma bowed in reverence to Śiva and held the *Pāśupata* weapons again. At

that very moment Nārāyaṇa, taking to the form of a Brāhmaṇa came to him with a request.

वृद्धब्राह्मण उवाच

किं करोषि भृगो वत्स त्वमेव ज्ञानिनां वरः।

नरं हन्तुं पाशुपतं कोपात्किं क्षिपसि भ्रमात्॥ २४॥

विश्वं पाशुपतेनैव भवेद्भस्म च सेश्वरम्।

सर्वघ्नं स्याच्छस्त्रमिदं विना श्रीकृष्णमीश्वरम्॥ २५॥

The Brāhmaṇa said - O son, O Paraśurāma, you are best among the intellectuals. What is all this being done by you. You are using the great *Pāśupata* weapon just for the killing of the ordinary human. By doing so the entire universe would be reduced to ashes together with Śiva because everything else gets destroyed by its use except lord Kṛṣṇa.

अहो पाशुपतं जेतुं नालमेव सुदर्शनम्।

हरेः सुदर्शनं चैव सर्वास्त्रपरिमर्दकम्॥ २६॥

Not only this, in order to over-power *Pāśupata*, the *Sudarśana-cakra* of lord Kṛṣṇa will be of no consequence. It destroy all the weapons and the enemies.

खट्वाङ्गिनः पाशुपतं हरेरेव सुदर्शनम्।

एते प्रधाने सर्वेषामस्त्राणां च जगत्त्रये॥ २७॥

Therefore, the *Pāśupata* of Śiva and *Sudarśana-cakra* of lord Kṛṣṇa are believed to be the best of all the weapons.

त्यज पाशुपतं ब्रह्मन्मदीयं वचनं शृणु।

यथा जेष्यसि राजानं पुष्कराक्षं महाबलम्॥ २८॥

कार्तवीर्यमजेतारं यथा जेष्यसि सांप्रतम्।

श्रूयतां सावधानेन तत्सर्वं कथयामि ते॥ २९॥

Therefore, O Brāhmaṇa you place the *Pāśupata* weapon aside and listen to my words. I shall let you know the way to be victorious on Puṣakarākṣa. I am also going to tell you the way to become victorious over Kārtavīrya. You listen to me attentively.

महालक्ष्म्याश्च कवचं त्रिषु लोकेषु दुर्लभम्।

भक्त्या च पुष्कराक्षेण धृतं कण्ठे विधानतः॥ ३०॥

The king Puṣakarākṣa is wearing around his right arm the inaccessible *kavaca* of Mahālakṣmī.

परं दुर्गतिनाशिन्याः कवचं परमाद्भुतम्।
 धृतं च दक्षिणे बाहौ पुष्कराक्षसुतेन च॥ ३१॥
 कवचस्य प्रभावेण विश्वं जेतुं क्षमौ च तौ।
 को जेता च त्रिभुवने देहे च कवचे स्थिते॥ ३२॥

The son of Puṣkarākṣa has also tied the *kavaca* of goddess Durgā around his right arm. With the influence of the *kavacas* both of them are competent enough to over-power the entire universe. Therefore till such time as the *kavacas* are worn by them, no one can defeat them.

अहं यास्यामि भिक्षार्थं संनिधाने तयोर्मुने।
 करिष्यामि च तद्भिक्षां प्रतिज्ञासफलाय ते॥ ३३॥

O sage, I am therefore proceeding to both of them begging for the *kavacas* after which you will meet with success."

ब्राह्मणस्य वचः श्रुत्वा रामः संव्रस्तमानसः।
 उवाच ब्राह्मणं वृद्धं हृदयेन विदूयता॥ ३४॥

On hearing the words of the Brāhmaṇa the mind of Paraśurāma felt panicky and with a painful heart, he spoke to the Brāhmaṇa.

परशुराम उवाच

न जानामि महाप्राज्ञ कस्त्वं ब्राह्मणरूपधृक्।
 शीघ्रं च ब्रूहि मां मुंडे तदा गच्छ नृपान्तिकम्॥ ३५॥

Paraśurāma said - O great intellectual, I am not aware, as to who you are and why you have appeared in the form of an old Brāhmaṇa. First of all you enlighten a foolish person like me on this and then proceed to the king."

जामदग्न्यवचः श्रुत्वा प्रहस्य ब्राह्मणः स्वयम्।
 उक्त्वा चाहं विष्णुरिति ययौ भिक्षितुमीश्वरः॥ ३६॥

On hearing the words of Jamadagni, Brāhmaṇa smiled and said - "I am Viṣṇu." Thereafter the lord Viṣṇu went for begging alms.

गत्वा तयोः संनिधानं ययाचे कवचे च तौ।
 ददतुस्तौ च कवचे विष्णवे विष्णुमायया॥
 गृहीत्वा कवचे विष्णुर्वैकुण्ठं निर्जगाम सः॥ ३७॥

Approaching both of them he begged for the *kavacas*. Both of them influenced by the illusion

of Viṣṇu handed over their respective *kavacas* to him and lord Viṣṇu went back to Viṣṇuloka carrying both of them with him.

नारद उवाच

महालक्ष्म्याश्च कवचं केन दत्तं महामुने।
 पुष्कराक्षाय भूपाय श्रोतुं कौतुहलं मम॥ ३८॥
 कवचं चापि दुर्गायाः पुष्कराक्षसुताय च।
 दुर्लभं केन वादत्तं तद्भवान्वक्तुमर्हति॥ ३९॥

Nārada said - O great sage, who had bestowed the *kavaca* of Mahālakṣmī? I am anxious to know about it.

Who gave the invaluable *kavaca* of Durgā to Puṣkarākṣa? You tell me all this.

कवचं चापि किंभूतं तयोर्वा तस्य किं फलम्।
 मन्त्रो तु किंप्रकारौ च तन्मे ब्रूहि जगद्गुरो॥ ४०॥

You kindly tell me, O teacher of the universe, all about both the *kavacas* and the relevant *mantras* and the result thereof.

नारायण उवाच

दत्तं सनत्कुमारेण पुष्कराक्षाय धीमते।
 महालक्ष्म्याश्च कवचं मन्त्रश्चापि दशाक्षरः॥ ४१॥
 स्तवनं चापि गोप्यं वै प्रोक्तं तच्चरितं च यत्।
 ध्यानं च सामवेदोक्तं पूजां चैव मनोहराम्॥ ४२॥

Nārāyaṇa said - The *kavaca* of Mahālakṣmī has the ten letter *mantra*, secret *stotra*, her life story as brought out in the *Sāmaveda*, the *dhyānam* and the method of adoration which was revealed to Puṣkarākṣa by Sanatkumāra.

दुर्गायाश्चापि कवचं दत्तं दुर्वाससा पुरा।
 स्तवनं चातिगोप्यं च मन्त्रश्चापि दशाक्षरः॥ ४३॥

In the earlier times the *Durgā-kavaca* was endowed by Durvāsā to the king and the secret *stotra* and the ten letter *mantra*.

पश्चाच्छ्रोष्यसि तत्सर्वं देव्याश्च परमाद्भुतम्।
 महायुद्धसमारम्भे दत्तं प्रार्थनया च यत्॥ ४४॥

The extremely astonishing *kavaca* of the goddess Durgā shall be told to you later, which was handed over to the kings at the start of the great war.

महालक्ष्म्याश्च मन्त्रं च शृणु तं कथयामि ते।

ॐ श्रीं कमलवासिन्यै स्वाहेति परमाद्भुतम्॥४५॥

Currently I am revealing the *mantra* of Mahālakṣmī to you ओं कमलवासिन्यै स्वाहा. This is the best of the *mantras*.

ध्यानं च सामवेदोक्तं शृणु पूजाविधिं मुने।

दत्तं तस्मै कुमारेण पुष्कराक्षाय धीमते॥४६॥

O sage, the *dhyānam*, the method of adoration, whatever was revealed by Sanatkumāra to Puṣkarākṣa is being retold by me. You please listen to it.

सहस्रदलपद्मस्थां पद्मनाभप्रियां सतीम्।

पद्मालयां पद्मवक्त्रां पद्मपत्राभलोचनाम्॥४७॥

पद्मपुष्पप्रियां पद्मपुष्पतल्पाधिशायिनीम्।

पद्मिनीं पद्महस्तां च पद्ममालाविभूषिताम्॥४८॥

पद्मभूषणभूषाढ्यां पद्मशोभाविवर्द्धनीम्।

पद्माटवीं प्रपश्यन्तीं सस्मितां तां भजे मुदा॥४९॥

Mahālakṣmī, the beloved of lord Viṣṇu, is lodged on the lotus of a thousand petals. She is chaste, lotus-faced, having the eyes like lotus flowers and she is like the lotus flowers. She sleeps on the bed of lotus flowers and holds the lotus stalk in her hand. She wears garlands of lotus flowers and is also adorned with the ornaments of lotus flowers. She increases the glory of lotus flowers, looks at the forest of lotus flowers and she is the one who wears a serene smile on her face. I serve her with devotion.

चन्दनाष्टदले पद्मे पद्मपुष्पेण पूजयेत्।

गणं संपूज्यं दत्त्वा चैवापचारांश्च षोडश॥५०॥

ततः स्तुत्वा च प्रणमेत्साधको भक्तिपूर्वकम्।

कवचं श्रूयतां ब्रह्मन्सर्वसारं वदामि ते॥५१॥

One should write it on the lotus with ten petals and should adorn her with lotus flowers; her attendants should also be adored and the offerings of sixteen types should be made to her, after making prayers. Thereafter, the devotees should bow before her with devotion. (O Brāhmaṇa, now you listen from me about the essence of all the *kavacas* from me.

नारायण उवाच

शृणु विप्रेन्द्र पद्मायाः कवचं परमं शुभम्।

पद्मनाभेन यद्दत्तं ब्रह्मणे नाभिपद्मके॥५२॥

संप्राप्य कवचं ब्रह्म तत्पद्मे ससृजे जगत्।

पद्मालयाप्रसादेन सलक्ष्मीको बभूव सः॥५३॥

Nārāyaṇa said - O best of the Brāhmaṇa, this is the best *kavaca* of Lakṣmī which was bestowed by lord Padmanābha on Brahmā who emerged seated on a lotus from the navel of Viṣṇu. Brahmā after receiving the *kavaca* started the creation of the universe seated on the lotus and with the grace of Lakṣmī, he achieved all the riches.

पद्मालयावरं प्राप्य पादश्च जगतां प्रभुः।

पाद्रेण पद्मकल्पे च कवचं परमाद्भुतम्॥५४॥

दत्तं सनत्कुमाराय प्रियपुत्राय धीमते।

कुमारेण च यद्दत्तं पुष्कराक्षाय नारद॥५५॥

After receiving a boon from Lakṣmī, Brahmā, the lord of the universe then imparted the knowledge of the *kavaca* to his intelligent son Sanatkumāra. O Nārada, the same *kavaca* was bestowed by Sanatkumāra to Puṣkarākṣa.

यद्धृत्वा पठनाद्ब्रह्मा सर्वसिद्धेश्वरो महान्।

परमैश्वर्यसंयुक्तः सर्वसंपत्समन्वितः॥५६॥

By wearing and reciting the same Brahmā became the great lord and was bestowed with all the fortunes and riches.

यद्धृत्वा च धनाध्यक्षः कुबेरश्च धनाधिपः।

स्वायंभुवो मनुः श्रीमान्यठनाद्धारणाद्यतः॥५७॥

By wearing this, Kubera became the lord of riches and wealth and by wearing this Manu became Svāyambhuva.

प्रियव्रतोत्तानपादौ लक्ष्मीवन्तौ यतो मुने।

पृथुः पृथ्वीपतिः सद्यो ह्यभवद्वारणाद्यतः॥५८॥

कवचस्य प्रसादेन स्वयं दक्षः प्रजापतिः।

धर्मश्च कर्मणां साक्षी पाता यस्य प्रसादतः॥५९॥

O sage, by wearing this Priyavrata and Uttānapāda gained all the riches and the king Pṛthu became the king of his kingdom.