

CHAPTER NINE

Appearance of the Demon Vṛtrāsura

As described in this chapter, Indra, the King of heaven, killed Viśvarūpa, and therefore Viśvarūpa's father performed a yajña to kill Indra. When Vṛtrāsura appeared from that yajña, the demigods, in fear, sought shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and glorified Him.

Because of affection for the demons, Viśvarūpa secretly supplied them the remnants of yajña. When Indra learned about this, he beheaded Viśvarūpa, but he later regretted killing Viśvarūpa because Viśvarūpa was a brāhmaṇa. Although competent to neutralize the sinful reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa, Indra did not do so. Instead he accepted the reactions. Later, he distributed these reactions among the land, water, trees and women in general. Since the land accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions, a portion of the land turned into desert. The trees were also given one fourth of the sinful reactions, and therefore they drip sap, which is prohibited for drinking. Because women accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions, they are untouchable during their menstrual period. Since water was also infested with sinful reactions, when bubbles appear in water it cannot be used for any purpose.

After Viśvarūpa was killed, his father, Tvaṣṭā, performed a sacrifice to kill King Indra. Unfortunately, if mantras are chanted irregularly, they yield an opposite result. This happened when Tvaṣṭā performed this yajña. While performing the sacrifice to kill Indra, Tvaṣṭā chanted a mantra to increase Indra's enemies, but because he chanted the mantra wrong, the sacrifice produced an asura named Vṛtrāsura, of whom Indra was the enemy. When Vṛtrāsura was generated from the sacrifice, his fierce features made the whole world afraid, and his personal effulgence diminished even the power of the demigods. Finding no other means of protection, the demigods began to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the enjoyer of all the results of sacrifice, who is supreme throughout the entire universe. The demigods all worshiped Him because ultimately no one but Him can protect a living entity from fear and danger. Seeking shelter of a demigod instead of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead is compared to trying to cross the ocean by grasping the tail of a dog. A dog can swim, but that does not mean that one can cross the ocean by grasping a dog's tail.

Being pleased with the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead advised them to approach Dadhīci to beg him for the bones of his own body. Dadhīci would comply with the request of the demigods, and with the help of his bones Vṛtrāsura could be killed.

Text 1:

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Viśvarūpa, who was engaged as the priest of the demigods, had three heads. He used one to drink the beverage soma-rasa, another to drink wine and the third to eat food. O King Parīkṣit, thus I have heard from authorities.

Text 2:

O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the demigods were related to Viśvarūpa from his father's side, and therefore he visibly offered clarified butter in the fire while chanting mantras such as indrāya idam svāhā ["this is meant for King Indra"] and idam agnaye ["this is for the demigod of fire"]. He loudly chanted these mantras and offered each of the demigods his proper share.

Text 3:

Although offering clarified butter in the sacrificial fire in the name of the demigods, without the knowledge of the demigods he also offered oblations to the demons because they were his relatives through his mother.

Text 4:

Once upon a time, however, the King of heaven, Indra, understood that Viśvarūpa was secretly cheating the demigods by offering oblations on behalf of the demons. He became extremely afraid of being defeated by the demons, and in great anger at Viśvarūpa he cut Viśvarūpa's three heads from his shoulders.

Text 5:

Thereafter, the head meant for drinking soma-rasa was transformed into a kapiñjala [francolin partridge]. Similarly, the head meant for drinking wine was transformed into a kalaviṅka [sparrow], and the head meant for eating food became a tittiri [common partridge].

Text 6:

Although Indra was so powerful that he could neutralize the sinful reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa, he repentantly accepted the burden of these reactions with folded hands. He suffered for one year, and then to purify himself he distributed the reactions for this sinful killing among the earth, water, trees and women.

Text 7:

In return for King Indra's benediction that ditches in the earth would be filled automatically, the land accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa. Because of those sinful reactions, we find many deserts on the surface of the earth.

Text 8:

In return for Indra's benediction that their branches and twigs would grow back when trimmed, the trees accepted one fourth of the reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa. These reactions are visible in the flowing of sap from trees. [Therefore one is forbidden to drink this sap.]

Text 9:

In return for Lord Indra's benediction that they would be able to enjoy lusty desires continuously, even during pregnancy for as long as sex is not injurious to the embryo, women accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions. As a result of those reactions, women manifest the signs of menstruation every month.

Text 10:

And in return for King Indra's benediction that water would increase the volume of other substances with which it was mixed, water accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions. Therefore there are bubbles and foam in water. When one collects water, these should be avoided.

Text 11:

After Viśvarūpa was killed, his father, Tvaṣṭā, performed ritualistic ceremonies to kill Indra. He offered oblations in the sacrificial fire, saying, "O enemy of Indra, flourish to kill your enemy without delay."

Text 12:

Thereafter, from the southern side of the sacrificial fire known as Anvāhārya came a fearful personality who looked like the destroyer of the entire creation at the end of the millennium.

Texts 13-17:

Like arrows released in the four directions, the demon's body grew, day after day. Tall and blackish, he appeared like a burnt hill and was as lustrous as a bright array of clouds in the evening. The hair on the demon's body and his beard and moustache were the color of melted copper, and his eyes were piercing like the midday sun. He appeared unconquerable, as if holding the three worlds on the points of his blazing trident. Dancing and shouting with a loud voice, he made the entire surface of the earth tremble as if from an earthquake. As he yawned again and again, he seemed to be trying to swallow the whole sky with his mouth, which was as deep as a cave. He seemed to be licking up all the stars in the sky with his tongue and eating the entire universe with his long, sharp teeth. Seeing this gigantic demon, everyone, in great fear, ran here and there in all directions.

Text 18:

That very fearful demon, who was actually the son of Tvaṣṭā, covered all the planetary systems by dint of austerity. Therefore he was named Vṛtra, or one who covers everything.

Text 19:

The demigods, headed by Indra, charged the demon with their soldiers, striking him with their own transcendental bows and arrows and other weapons but Vṛtrāsura swallowed all their weapons.

Text 20:

Struck with wonder and disappointment upon seeing the strength of the demon, the demigods lost their own strength. Therefore they all met together to try to please the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, by worshiping Him.

Text 21:

The demigods said: The three worlds are created by the five elements — namely ether, air, fire, water and earth — which are controlled by various demigods, beginning from Lord Brahmā. Being very much afraid that the time factor will end our existence, we offer presentations unto time by

performing our work as time dictates. The time factor himself, however, is afraid of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore let us now worship that Supreme Lord, who alone can give us full protection.

Text 22:

Free from all material conceptions of existence and never wonder-struck by anything, the Lord is always jubilant and fully satisfied by His own spiritual perfection. He has no material designations, and therefore He is steady and unattached. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only shelter of everyone. Anyone desiring to be protected by others is certainly a great fool who desires to cross the sea by holding the tail of a dog.

Text 23:

The Manu named King Satyavrata formerly saved himself by tying the small boat of the entire world to the horn of the Matsya avatāra, the fish incarnation. By the grace of the Matsya avatāra, Manu saved himself from the great danger of the flood. May that same fish incarnation save us from the great and fearful danger caused by the son of Tvaṣṭā.

Text 24:

In the beginning of creation, a tremendous wind caused fierce waves of inundating water. The great waves made such a horrible sound that Lord Brahmā almost fell from his seat on the lotus into the water of devastation, but he was saved with the help of the Lord. Thus we also expect the Lord to protect us from this dangerous condition.

Text 25:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who created us by His external potency and by whose mercy we expand the creation of the universe, is always situated before us as the Supersoul, but we cannot see His form. We are unable to see Him because all of us think that we are separate and independent gods.

Texts 26-27:

By His inconceivable internal potency, the Supreme Personality of Godhead expands into various transcendental bodies as Vāmanadeva, the incarnation of strength among the demigods; Paraśurāma, the incarnation among saints; Nṛsiṃhadeva and Varāha, incarnations among animals; and Matsya and Kūrma, incarnations among aquatics. He accepts various

transcendental bodies among all types of living entities, and among human beings He especially appears as Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma. By His causeless mercy, He protects the demigods, who are always harassed by the demons. He is the supreme worshipable Deity of all living entities. He is the supreme cause, represented as the male and female creative energies. Although different from this universe, He exists in His universal form [virāṭ-rūpa]. In our fearful condition, let us take shelter of Him, for we are sure that the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Soul, will give us His protection.

Text 28:

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, when all the demigods offered Him their prayers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, carrying His weapons, the conchshell, disc and club, appeared first within their hearts and then before them.

Texts 29-30:

Surrounding and serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, were sixteen personal attendants, decorated with ornaments and appearing exactly like Him but without the mark of Śrīvatsa and the Kaustubha jewel. O King, when all the demigods saw the Supreme Lord in that posture, smiling with eyes like the petals of lotuses grown in autumn, they were overwhelmed with happiness and immediately fell down like rods, offering daṇḍavats. Then they slowly rose and pleased the Lord by offering Him prayers.

Text 31:

The demigods said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are competent to give the results of sacrifice, and You are also the time factor that destroys all such results in due course. You are the one who releases the cakṛa to kill the demons. O Lord, who possess many varieties of names, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

Text 32:

O supreme controller, You control the three destinations [promotion to the heavenly planets, birth as a human being, and condemnation in hell], yet Your supreme abode is Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma. Since we appeared after You created this cosmic manifestation, Your activities are impossible for us to understand. We therefore have nothing to offer You but our humble obeisances.

Text 33:

O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O Nārāyaṇa, O Vāsudeva, original person! O most exalted person, supreme experience, welfare personified! O supreme benediction, supremely merciful and changeless! O support of the cosmic manifestation, sole proprietor of all planetary systems, master of everything and husband of the goddess of fortune! Your Lordship is realized by the topmost sannyāsīs, who wander about the world to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, fully absorbed in samādhi through bhakti-yoga. Because their minds are concentrated upon You, they can receive the conception of Your personality in their fully purified hearts. When the darkness in their hearts is completely eradicated and You are revealed to them, the transcendental bliss they enjoy is the transcendental form of Your Lordship. No one but such persons can realize You. Therefore we simply offer You our respectful obeisances.

Text 34:

O Lord, You need no support, and although You have no material body, You do not need cooperation from us. Since You are the cause of the cosmic manifestation and You supply its material ingredients without being transformed, You create, maintain and annihilate this cosmic manifestation by Yourself. Nevertheless, although You appear engaged in material activity, You are transcendental to all material qualities. Consequently these transcendental activities of Yours are extremely difficult to understand.

Text 35:

These are our inquiries. The ordinary conditioned soul is subject to the material laws, and he thus receives the fruits of his actions. Does Your Lordship, like an ordinary human being, exist within this material world in a body produced by the material modes? Do You enjoy or suffer the good or bad results of actions under the influence of time, past work and so forth? Or, on the contrary, are You present here only as a neutral witness who is self-sufficient, free from all material desires, and always full of spiritual potency? We certainly cannot understand Your actual position.

Text 36:

O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all contradictions can be reconciled in You. O Lord, since You are the Supreme Person, the reservoir of

unlimited spiritual qualities, the supreme controller, Your unlimited glories are inconceivable to the conditioned souls. Many modern theologians argue about right and wrong without knowing what is actually right. Their arguments are always false and their judgments inconclusive because they have no authorized evidence with which to gain knowledge of You. Because their minds are agitated by scriptures containing false conclusions, they are unable to understand the truth concerning You. Furthermore, because of polluted eagerness to arrive at the right conclusion, their theories are incapable of revealing You, who are transcendental to their material conceptions. You are one without a second, and therefore in You contradictions like doing and not doing, happiness and distress, are not contradictory. Your potency is so great that it can do and undo anything as You like. With the help of that potency, what is impossible for You? Since there is no duality in Your constitutional position, You can do everything by the influence of Your energy.

Text 37:

A rope causes fear for a bewildered person who considers it a snake, but not for a person with proper intelligence who knows it to be only a rope. Similarly, You, as the Supersoul in everyone's heart, inspire fear or fearlessness according to one's intelligence, but in You there is no duality.

Text 38:

With deliberation, one will see that the Supreme Soul, although manifested in different ways, is actually the basic principle of everything. The total material energy is the cause of the material manifestation, but the material energy is caused by Him. Therefore He is the cause of all causes, the manifester of intelligence and the senses. He is perceived as the Supersoul of everything. Without Him, everything would be dead. You, as that Supersoul, the supreme controller, are the only one remaining.

Text 39:

Therefore, O killer of the Madhu demon, incessant transcendental bliss flows in the minds of those who have even once tasted but a drop of the nectar from the ocean of Your glories. Such exalted devotees forget the tiny reflection of so-called material happiness produced from the material senses of sight and sound. Free from all desires, such devotees are the real friends of all living entities. Offering their minds unto You and enjoying transcendental bliss, they are expert in achieving the real goal of life. O

Lord, You are the soul and dear friend of such devotees, who never need return to this material world. How could they give up engagement in Your devotional service?

Text 40:

O Lord, O personified three worlds, father of the three worlds! O strength of the three worlds, in the form of the Vāmana incarnation! O three-eyed form of Nṛsimhadeva! O most beautiful person within the three worlds! Everything and everyone, including human beings and even the Daitya demons and the Dānavas, is but an expansion of Your energy. O supremely powerful one, You have always appeared in Your forms as the various incarnations to punish the demons as soon as they become very powerful. You appear as Lord Vāmanadeva, Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa. You appear sometimes as an animal like Lord Boar, sometimes a mixed incarnation like Lord Nṛsimhadeva and Lord Hayagrīva, and sometimes an aquatic like Lord Fish and Lord Tortoise. Assuming such various forms, You have always punished the demons and Dānavas. We therefore pray that Your Lordship appear today as another incarnation, if You so desire, to kill the great demon Vṛtrāsura.

Text 41:

O supreme protector, O grandfather, O supreme pure, O Lord! We are all surrendered souls at Your lotus feet. Indeed, our minds are bound to Your lotus feet in meditation by chains of love. Now please manifest Your incarnation. Accepting us as Your own eternal servants and devotees, be pleased with us and sympathetic toward us. By Your love-filled glance, with its cool and pleasing smile of sympathy, and by the sweet, nectarean words emanating from Your beautiful face, free us from the anxiety caused by this Vṛtrāsura, who always pains the cores of our hearts.

Text 42:

O Lord, as the small sparks of a fire cannot possibly perform the actions of the whole fire, we sparks of Your Lordship cannot inform You of the necessities of our lives. You are the complete whole. Therefore, of what do we need to inform You? You know everything because You are the original cause of the cosmic manifestation, the maintainer and the annihilator of the entire universal creation. You always engage in Your pastimes with Your spiritual and material energies, for You are the controller of all these varied energies. You exist within all living entities, within the cosmic

manifestation, and also beyond them. You exist internally as Parabrahman and externally as the ingredients of the material creation. Therefore, although manifested in various stages, at different times and places, and in various bodies, You, the Personality of Godhead, are the original cause of all causes. Indeed, You are the original element. You are the witness of all activities, but because You are as great as the sky, You are never touched by any of them. You are the witness of everything as Parabrahman and Paramātmā. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, nothing is unknown to You.

Text 43:

Dear Lord, You are omniscient, and therefore You know very well why we have taken shelter at Your lotus feet, which provide shade that gives relief from all material disturbances. Since You are the supreme spiritual master and You know everything, we have sought shelter of Your lotus feet for instruction. Please give us relief by counteracting our present distress. Your lotus feet are the only shelter for a fully surrendered devotee and are the only means for subduing all the tribulations of this material world.

Text 44:

Therefore, O Lord, O supreme controller, O Lord Kṛṣṇa, please annihilate this dangerous demon Vṛtrāsura, Tvaṣṭā's son, who has already swallowed all our weapons, our paraphernalia for fighting, and our strength and influence.

Text 45:

O Lord, O supreme pure, You live within the core of everyone's heart and observe all the desires and activities of the conditioned souls. O Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Lord Kṛṣṇa, Your reputation is bright and illuminating. You have no beginning, for You are the beginning of everything. This is understood by pure devotees because You are easily accessible to the pure and truthful. When the conditioned souls are liberated and sheltered at Your lotus feet after roving throughout the material world for many millions of years, they attain the highest success of life. Therefore, O Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, we offer our respectful obeisances at Your lotus feet.

Text 46:

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, when the demigods offered the Lord their sincere prayers in this way, the Lord listened by His causeless mercy. Being pleased, He then replied to the demigods.

Text 47:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O beloved demigods, you have offered your prayers to Me with great knowledge, and I am certainly most pleased with you. A person is liberated by such knowledge, and thus he remembers My exalted position, which is above the conditions of material life. Such a devotee is fully purified by offering prayers in full knowledge. This is the source of devotional service to Me.

Text 48:

O best of the intelligent demigods, although it is true that nothing is difficult for one to obtain when I am pleased with him, a pure devotee, whose mind is exclusively fixed upon Me, does not ask Me for anything but the opportunity to engage in devotional service.

Text 49:

Those who think material assets to be everything or to be the ultimate goal of life are called misers [kṛpaṇas]. They do not know the ultimate necessity of the soul. Moreover, if one awards that which is desired by such fools, he must also be considered foolish.

Text 50:

A pure devotee who is fully accomplished in the science of devotional service will never instruct a foolish person to engage in fruitive activities for material enjoyment, not to speak of helping him in such activities. Such a devotee is like an experienced physician, who never encourages a patient to eat food injurious to his health, even if the patient desires it.

Text 51:

O Maghavan [Indra], all good fortune unto you. I advise you to approach the exalted saint Dadhyañca [Dadhīci]. He has become very accomplished in knowledge, vows and austerities, and his body is very strong. Go ask him for his body without delay.

Text 52:

That saintly Dadhyañca, who is also known as Dadhīci, personally assimilated the spiritual science and then delivered it to the Aśvinī-kumāras. It is said that Dadhyañca gave them mantras through the head of a horse. Therefore the mantras are called Aśvaśira. After obtaining the mantras of spiritual science from Dadhīci, the Aśvinī-kumāras became jīvan-mukta, liberated even in this life.

Text 53:

Dadhyañca's invincible protective covering known as the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca was given to Tvaṣṭā, who delivered it to his son Viśvarūpa, from whom you have received it. Because of this Nārāyaṇa-kavaca, Dadhīci's body is now very strong. You should therefore beg him for his body.

Text 54:

When the Aśvinī-kumāras beg for Dadhyañca's body on your behalf, he will surely give it because of affection. Do not doubt this, for Dadhyañca is very experienced in religious understanding. When Dadhyañca awards you his body, Viśvakarmā will prepare a thunderbolt from his bones. This thunderbolt will certainly kill Vṛtrāsura because it will be invested with My power.

Text 55:

When Vṛtrāsura is killed because of My spiritual strength, you will regain your strength, weapons and wealth. Thus there will be all good fortune for all of you. Although Vṛtrāsura can destroy all the three worlds, do not fear that he will harm you. He is also a devotee and will never be envious of you.