

Skanda Purāna 7.1.2.6-53

Prabhāsa Tīrtha & the Kūrma-Vibharga of Bhārata-Varṣa

Īśvara said:

6. What is remembered as Jambūdvīpa is exactly at the centre of the earth. It is divided into nine regions, O beautiful woman, known as the different varṣas (regions).

7. Therein, the first varṣa is Bhārata. It is also remembered as being divided into nine parts. From south to north it measures nine thousand yojanas.

8. The distance from east to west is eighty thousand. Himavān is in the north. The Kṣīroda (ocean) is in the south.

9-10a. O Goddess, Bhārata, the excellent Kṣetra, is in between. There are four Yugas, viz. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Tiṣya (i.e. Kali). The division of Yugas exists only here. So also the classification of the people into four Varṇas.

10b-12. O Goddess, the men here live up to four hundred, three hundred, two hundred and one hundred years, in the Yugas Kṛta, Tretā etc. respectively. I told you about the earth likened to a lotus with four petals. The varṣas Bhārata etc. are the petals in the four quarters, viz. Bhārata, Ketumāla, Kuru and Bhadrāśva.

13. The southern-most varṣa that has been mentioned by me by the name Bhārata has oceans to its south, west and east. Himavān is to the north like string unto bow.

14. This Bhārata Varṣa is the seed of everything, O lady of excellent countenance. It is Karma-bhūmi. The consequences of incurring merit and sins are not obtained elsewhere.

15. O Goddess of Devas, even Devas wish: “We would rather attain human birth in Bhārata, the Earth.”

16. Viṣṇu is stationed in Bhadrāśva Varṣa as Aśvaśiras (Horseheaded). In Bhārata he is stationed as Kūrma (Tortoise); as Varāha (Boar) in Ketumāla. He is in the form of a fish in the northern (Kuru).

17. In all those four varṣas, the Viṣayas (regions) are set up on the basis of constellations.

18. O great Goddess, I shall tell you the distribution of the constellations in regard to Bhārata which is constituted in the form of Kūrma (Tortoise).

19. The holy Lord in the form of a Kūrma is stationed facing the east. O my beloved, he thus occupies Bhārata Varṣa of nine sectors.

20. Learn from me the constellation basis of this (Varṣa) set up in nine sectors. Kṛttikā, Rohiṇī and Saumya (i.e. Mrgasiras) the third—these have their positions on the back of the Kūrma.

21-23. Ardrā, Punarvasu and Pusya—these three constellations are on the mouth (face).

Aslesā, Maghā, and Purvā Phalguni— these three constellations, O my beloved, have their bases on the south-east Pāda (sectors), Uttarā Phalguni, Hasta and Citrā— these three

constellations are remembered as having bases assigned to the right belly (side) of the Kūrma. Svāti, Viśākhā and Maitra (Anurādhā)—these three are in the south-west sector. 24-26. Aindra (i.e. Jyesthā), Mūla and Pūrvāsādhā are remembered as based on the back part. O lady of renown, the three constellations Uttarāsādhā, Sravana and Dhanisthā are mentioned in - the north-west sector. Satabhisak, Pūrvāprosthapadā and Uttarāprosthapadā—these constellations are stationed in the left part of the belly of the Kūrma, O my beloved. Revatī, Aśvinī and Yāmyā (i.e. Bharanī) are assigned to the north-east sector. Listen to the auspicious and the inauspicious benefit.

27. If a planet, the Lord of the constellation of a region happens to occupy a low position, it indicates a danger to that region, O Great Goddess.

28. As has been mentioned by me, this Kūrma is the Lord in Bhārata. It is Nārāyana, the Supreme Soul, who cannot be adequately thought of. Everything is firmly established therein.

29. The zodiacs Mesa and Vrsa (i.e. Aries and Taurus) are in the centre of the heart; Vrsa and Mithuna (Taurus and Gemini) in the face. The signs of Cancer and Leo are in the south-east Pāda (sector).

30. Three zodiacs are remembered as stationed in the belly, Leo, Virgo and Libra. Two zodiacs, Libra and Scorpio are in the south-west sector.

31. Scorpio and Sagittarius are stationed in the tail. The three beginning with Sagittarius (i.e. Sagittarius, Capricorn and Aquarius) are in the north-west left sector.

32. Aquarius and Pisces occupy its northern belly, O great Goddess. Pisces and Aries are stationed in the north-east sector.

33. In these regions, O my beloved, the constellations occupy Kūrma parts. The zodiacs influence the constellations and the planets are influenced by the zodiacs.

34. One can point out the affliction of the regions based on the high and low positions of the planets and the constellations. At that time devotees take holy ablution, make religious offerings and perform Homa etc.

35. O Goddess, it is the Vaisnava Pāda where the Graha (planet) is in the centre. It is the Lord of the worlds named Nārāyana, the supreme soul who cannot be adequately thought of.

36. The Lords of the zodiacs Mesa (Aries) etc. are respectively Mars, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Saturn and Jupiter.

37. O great Goddess, Janārdana in the form of Kūrma is of such a nature. The region well-known as Saurāstra is in the south-west sector.

38-39. O beautiful lady, based on the difference in the city it is of nine types. Its ninth part is near the ocean and well known as Prabhāsa. O Goddess, it is dear to me always. Its overall extent is twelve yojanas.

40. The Pīthikā is said to be five yojanas in area. It is in the centre. My abode is in the middle

41. O Great Goddess, I reside at its centre in the form of a Linga.

42. Three hundred dhanus (i.e. 300 x 4 hastas) to the west of Kṛtasmara, I stay along with you (there). O Goddess of Devas, of excellent countenance.

