

SREE MAHAABHAARATHAM

AADHI PARVVAM ANUKREMANIKAA PARVVAM

48. AastheekOthpaththi (48. The Birth of Aastheekan)

The conversation between Naagendhra Vaasuki and his sister Jeralkkaaru. Vaasuki consoles and pacifies his sister. In due course of time the serpent lady Jeralkkaaru delivers a highly splendid son. The Naagaas or serpents gives him the name Aastheekan and teaches him all Vedhaas and Saasthraas and makes him the great scholar and Panditha in all areas of Vedha, Saasthra, Puraana, and Ithihaasa.

Soothan Said:

Soon after her husband has gone, the serpent Jeralkkaaru approached her brother, Vaasuki, and duly notified him about the departure of her husband, the great ascetic Jeralkkaaru Muni. 1

Having heard such sorrowful and shocking news, suddenly the great leader and Lord of serpents who was in grief asked his sister who was also in grief. 2

Vaasuki Said:

Oh, Bhadhre or Most Auspicious and Fortunate One! My dear sister you know well that I gave you as alms to that Yetheendhra Jeralkkaaru to have a son from him for the welfare and prosperity of Naagaas or serpents. 3

That son will attain release of our mother's curse and provide us salvation by saving us from Sarppa Sathram where the serpents are sacrificed. That is what Pithaamahan or Brahmadhevan said in the past in the presence of all Dhevaas. 4

Oh, Subhage or the Virtuous One! My dear sister, have you conceived pregnancy from him, that great ascetic Jeralkkaaru Muni? The

Grihasthaasrama or married life of that most intelligent and virtuous Muni
can never be futile or fruitless. 5

Whatever, it is not proper for me, and I am not supposed to ask you such
questions. But I am asking you because of the seriousness of the matter.

6

Knowing well the obstinacy of that Muni Veeran rich with severe austerity
and penance, I am not following after him. It is possible for him to curse
me also, if I follow him. 7

Oh, Bhadhre! Please tell me all your connections and stories from your
experience. Please quote or tell me exactly the heartfelt and painful
affliction you suffered for long time. 8

Soothan Said:

Having listened to the questions of his brother, Jeralkkaaru, his sister,
calmly and slowly but in detail answered and consoled him who sorrowfully
weeping Vaasuki was. 9

Pannagi Said:

At that time, I asked him, the great ascetic Thapoddhanan Jeralkkaaru,
about having a Son. The most ascetic and mighty and powerful Jeralkkaaru
Muni said "Asthi," means "there is" and he sped off. 10

I do not remember him even as a joke uttering any false words. Oh, The
supreme Lord of serpents - Vaasuki! Do you think in that case he will tell lie
under seriously grieving situation? 11

Jeralkkaaru Muni has confirmed to me: "Oh, Pannagi, my fair wife! You do
not need to be in grief and worried at all thinking of a son. A son as
splendorous as fire flame will be born to you." 12

The Yogeeswara Jeralkkaaru Muni, my husband, has confirmed to me like
that. Therefore, please get rid of the painful grief growing within your heart
and mind. 13

Soothan Said:

Hearing that the Naageswara or Lord of Naagaas Sree Vaasuki was so pleased and with great interest celebrated what was explained by his sister by saying let it be so or let that be materialized. 14

And the PhaniRaajan or King of Snakes Vaasuki adored his sister with high regards, gift of wealth, and befitting eulogies. 15

Oh, Dhvija or Saunaka Braahmana! With high splendor and luster the pregnancy of Jeralkkaaru began to develop just like how the moon in the sky or heaven develops in the bright fortnight. 16

Oh, Vipra Sreshtta Saunaka! In due time the sister of Vaasuki gave birth to a son with the splendor of celestial child who will be the reliever of the fears of his ancestors and maternal relatives. 17

That child grew up there in the house of the king of snakes Vaasuki. He studied Vedhaas and Vedhaamgaas or branches of Vedhaas with the most ascetic Chyavana Bhaarggava Maharshi, the son of Bhrigu. 18

Even from the very childhood his vows were very rigid, and he was gifted with great intelligence and was with all virtuous qualities. Thus, the fame of that one named as Aastheekan spread the whole world and heaven. 19

During the pregnancy itself his father who was supposed to stay with the pregnancy or when he was in the womb itself called it as "Asthi" and went away forever to the forest. Because of that the name of Aastheeka became so famous and spread to heaven. 20

That boy was gifted with great intelligence, and all attributes of virtues, knowledge, freedom from material indulgences, and saintliness. And lived in the home of Lord and Leader of Naagaas under his protection and care.

21

That boy was like the illustrious lord of the celestials who is DhevaDheva or Mahaadheva, the holder of the fierce trident. And he grew day by day increasing the delight and happiness of all Naagaas or snakes. 22

So ends this section.