

Srinivasa Bala Bharati - 152

(Children Series)

DADHEECHI

English Version

Prof. Madhuranthakam Narendra

Telugu Original

Thumuluri Lakshminarayana



Published by

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati.

2017

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FOREWORD

If a beautiful garden is to be raised, one needs to take proper care of tender flower plants. In the same way in order to create a good society, great care is needed to be taken of young children who are going to be future citizens of India. All their intellectual attainments will be futile if they fail to learn of their culture and its greatness. They need to be told of great men and women of this country so that they are inspired by their ideals. The essentials of our culture should be given to them in the form of simple and charming stories. They will cherish these ideals and be guided by them. They will promote good and they will love the society they live in. They make their families proud and bring great prestige to their country when they grow up into good citizens.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has brought out these booklets for children in Telugu under 'Srinivasa Bala Bharati Series'. Although meant for children, they are useful to the elderly too. They have found place in the book shelves of every family. The stories of legendary men and women are narrated in a simple manner. We hope that more and more children will read them and get benefitted by them.

I congratulate the Special Officer, Publications Division, TTD for his efforts in bringing out the English translations of SRINIVASA BALA BHARATI SERIES so well. We have received co-operation of many learned men and women in our efforts to popularize this series. I am thankful to them.

In the Service of Lord Venkateswara



Executive Officer,

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati.

PREAMBLE

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. They need at tender age apt acquaintance with the life-histories of celebrated persons so that they get opportunity to lead their lives in an exemplary way. They will come to know that great things such as Indian culture, basic tenets of life and moral teachings are abundantly available in the life-experiences of great men. It is observed that there is no scope to teach such subjects in school curriculum.

Observing such circumstances the Publication Division of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has published about hundred booklets in Telugu about the lives of famous sages and great men written by various authors under the editorship of Dr. S. B. Raghunathacharya under "Bala Bharati Series". The response over these books is tremendous and it has given impetus to publish them in other languages also. To begin with some of the books are now brought out with English and Hindi rendering by T.T.D., for the benefit of boys and girls and the interested public.

These booklets are primarily intended to the growing children and also generally intended to the elders to study and narrate the stories to their children, will go a long way to sublimate the aspirations of the children to greater heights.

Special Officer
Publications Division

Welcome To Srinivasa Bala Bharati Series

The series is the outcome of abundant grace of Lord Sri Venkateswara.

This will be an unfailing source of inspiration to the young.

It enshrines the best of Bharatiya tradition. May this noble endeavour be successful.

India has been known for its culture and civilization, its ethical and dharmic way of life from time immemorial. India has marched ahead with its commitment to dharma, its resistance to adharma, its espousal of life-affirming values and its humane attitude to life as a journey towards God realization. Those who embodied these values in their life have been a beacon of light to us. Their impact is deep on the life we lead. Young boys and girls will find them exemplary and feel proud to their invaluable heritage. They will love their motherland and dedicate themselves to its service.

It is therefore necessary that the young learn about these great men and women so that they will realize their indebtedness to them for their selfless contribution to the enrichment of life. This should indeed be a chief component of true education which ensures the perennial continuity of Indian Culture and Civilization. SRINIVASA BALA BHARATI SERIES has come into existence to acquaint the young boys and girls with right perspective of Indian life and values through a series of booklets written exclusively for this purpose describing in brief the lives of great men and women.

We welcome you to share our joy in launching these booklets.

S.B. Raghunathacharya

Chief Editor

Srinivasa Bala Bharati

DADHEECHI

SACRIFICE PERSONIFIED

The quest for Peace

Once there was a war between the angels and the demons. Though the angels finally won the war, both the sides sustained irredeemable loss. Having experienced the calamities of the war, all of them realized the importance of peace.

But the fear of war dogged them continuously as they suspected each other. They felt that they wouldn't dare enough to resort to a war when they didn't have weapons. But they didn't have the courage to demolish their weapons once for all as they were afraid they would get a need of them when their opponents rage a war on them. They wanted to hide them in a secret place so that they could get them back whenever they needed.

Where to hide the weapons?

The angels searched for a secret place to hide their weapons. After deep thinking they resolved to keep them with saint Dadheechi.

Dadheechi was a seer and an extraordinary saint. He was a brave man known for his adherence to truth. He was such a peace-loving man that he would even make friendship with his enemies. His hermitage was a sacred place into which no man with evil desires could dare enter. Nobody can take away anything from him

without his permission. The angels found out that his hermitage would be the right place to hide their weapons.

The serenity of the hermitage may get spoiled

The angels went to Dadheechi and requested him to come to their rescue. Though he accepted to help them, his wife, Gabhasthini, a virtuous, clever and worldly wise woman warned him against it. As she was more concerned of her husband's welfare, she rightly argued that the angels would get furious when he could not supply their weapons whenever they asked for and the demons would naturally get annoyed when they found out that he had protected the weapons of their enemies.

But Dadheechi who was well known for his helping nature never went back to his promises. He had tremendous self confidence and above all he was born to fulfil a great mission. His life and actions prove the same.

Born to fulfil a mission

Dadheechi was the son of saint Chyavana and Sukanya. He belonged to the family of Bhargava a renowned saint of the yore. According to other myths, he was considered the son of Santhi who was the daughter of Kardama Prajapathi. Sukanya was the daughter of king, Saryathi. Once she went for hunting accompanying her father. Saint Chyavana was there in the forest, in deep penance, and his eyes glittered with

heavenly grandeur beneath a mound which covered his body. Mistaking his eyes for the glowworms Sukanya pierced them with a stick and consequently Chyavana lost his eye sight. After knowing the truth the king fell on his feet and requested him to pardon them. Saint Chyavana, a seer who knew the past, present and future, told him that the king had to give him his daughter in marriage to get rid of the sin.

Marriage

Saint Chyavana was a blind old man where as Sukanya was a young and beautiful damsel. When the king was hesitating to accept the proposal of the saint, Sukanya, the wise girl said that there was nothing more fortunate than marrying a pious saint like Chyavana. After the marriage she served her husband sincerely and thus got her life highly fulfilling.

The Temptation of the Aswani angels

Aswani angels, the divine doctors met her in the ashram when she was alone and told her that they were so pity with her that they were prepared to get a handsome young man for her if she desired. They suggested her to ditch the old Chyavana and have someone whom she deserved. But she was so loyal to her husband that she requested them to transform her husband into a young man. Then her husband gave her a boon in the form of a son, Dadheechi who inherited the sacrificing nature, intelligence, deep penance and physical strength by birth from his parents.

Helping others was his nature

Dadheechi undertook deep penance in his childhood itself. Afterwards he built a hermitage on the banks of the river Saraswathi. By observing his credentials, Devendra, the king of angels, came on his own and taught him many things including Brahmavidya. He warned Dadheechi not to teach them to anybody else and told him that he would sever his head if he did not heed his words.

Dadheechi got a horse head

The Aswini angels came to Dadheechi when he procured the divine weapons from Devendra and reminded him the help they rendered to his parents and demanded him to teach the same to them as they wanted to help the angels. Then Dadheechi told them that he was prepared to accept their proposal but they should know that there was a danger to his life as per the curse of Devendra. Wise Aswini angels severed the head of Dadheechi and fixed the head of a horse in its place and then learnt what they want from him. Devendra furiously cut off Dadheechi's head. Then the Aswini Angels took the original head of Dadheechi that they preserved and restored the same to Dadheechi.

Lived to help the Angels

Once upon a time Dadheechi had a fight with his childhood friend, Kshupa. Dadheechi believed that the

power of Brahmin is greater than the power of kshathra where as Kshupa felt otherwise. Having got angered, Kshupa killed Dadheechi with a horrid weapon. Having known it Saint Sukra (Bhargava) ran to him and got him back to life by his supernatural power and blessed to be valiant by an undaunted devotion to Lord Siva.

Following his advice Dadheechi won the grace of Lord Siva and procured a power which would be invincible in the three worlds and the ability to embrace death only when he desired.

Lord Vishnu's Teachings to Dadheechi

The enmity between Kshupa and Dadheechi did not end up even then. Kshupa raged a war once again with many weapons but once again got defeated. He prayed Lord Vishnu and came to the war accompanying Him. When Lord Vishnu flung his Chakrayudha on him, Dadheechi could withstand it by means of his extraordinary power of penance. He could even shatter the Maya of Lord Vishnu sent on to him. Moreover he ridiculed the power of Lord Vishnu which was inferior to that of Lord Siva. Then Lord Vishnu taught him his oneness with Lord Siva and informed him that he came to the war only to test him and to bless him with enlightenment. He forced Kshupa to accept his defeat and told to seek the pardon of Dadheechi. He blessed Dadheechi and suggested him to strive for the welfare of the angels.

Thus Dadheechi became extraordinarily powerful. He was hailed as an exponent of penance who was

deeply committed to his responsibilities and won the grace of both Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva.

Protecting the weapons of the Angels

Dadheechi, the bold and invincible, told his wife that it was his sacred duty to protect the weapons of the Angels. Gabhasthini, his wife also realized the importance of the service to the others and so accepted the decision of her husband.

The Slackening of the Angels

Thousands of years elapsed and the angels had forgotten about their weapons as they were deeply immersed in the passionate and lecherous activities. They neglected their responsibilities and forgot about the threat of the Demons. They turned their back to the worshiping of the Gods also. Having ignored their part in the divine set up they became inactive.

But the warriors of the Demons could not forget the humiliation they faced in the hands of the angels and they were eagerly waiting for an opportunity to seek vengeance.

The crime of Devendra and the birth of Vruthra

Once upon a time Devendra killed Viswarupa, a Brhamagnani. When Bruhaspathi, the preceptor of angels was away, the demons defatted the angels and drove them off The Heaven. Then the angels made Viswarupa as their preceptor on the advice of Lord Brahma and secured the armour of Narayana through

him. With the help of it, they defeated the demons. By killing the same Viswarupa, Devendra committed a terrible crime.

Saint Thwashta, the father of Viswarupa became furious and decided to kill Devendra by staking his penance. He conducted a yagna to beget a great warrior who can kill Devendra. In the yagna an extraordinarily powerful, ferocious and a giant-like man called Vruthrasura was born.

The rise of Vruthrasura - The flight of angels

Having learnt reason for his birth from his father (Thwashna), Vruthrasura set out to kill the Angels to avenge the death of his brother, Viswarupa. He learnt all the arts of warfare from Sukra, the preceptor of the Demons and went for a war on the angels along with his demons.

The weakness of angels

Then the angels got terribly frightened and shocked. They had forgotten that their weapons were stored at the ashram of Dadheechi. They never verified at any time whether they were in a good shape or not. So they did not have any option except for attacking Vruthrasura with the weapons they had at that time. But Vruthrasura could easily destroy their weapons. The Angels soon realized that they were in a danger. However righteous they were their inactive nature was not powerful enough to withhold the active demonic power. Nothing could be gained from inactiveness.

The plight of the Angels

Then the angels sought the help of Lord Brahma desperately. When Lord Brahma expressed his inability they went to Lord Vishnu. But Lord Vishnu also expressed his inability due to many reasons. As Vruthrasura was born out of penance and as he was raging a war in a right way, he was praised by one and all.

Vruthrasura - A great devotee

Though Vruthrasura was a demon, he was a great devotee. He became a demon only because of his inclination to kill people. He led a pious life, never deviating the path of virtue. Lord Vishnu told the angels that he couldn't kill him as he was His devotee.

The way to kill Vruthrasura

But Lord Vishnu revealed the Angels that the only way to kill Vruthrasura was to procure the help of a greater preceptor than Viswarupa. Viswarupa's father presented him the armour of Narayana which he got from Dadheechi. So Lord Vishnu suggested the Angels to seek the help of Dadheechi.

How could Dadheechi save them?

As Dadheechi was known for his righteousness, he did not want to kill anybody. Then how could Dadheechi save them?

The need of the bones of Dadheechi

Then Lord Vishnu suggested the angels that they should get the bones of Dadheechi and get the weapons

made out of them by Viswakarma. How to get Dadheechi's bones? It was possible only by requesting him to die for their welfare. How could Dadheechi sacrifice his life for the sake of the angels whose king, Devendra, severed his head at one time? Moreover Vruthrasura set out to punish Devendra as he killed Viswarupa who was the son of Saint Thwashta, a student of Dadheechi. How could Dadheechi sacrifice his bones for the sake of those who killed his student? How could the bones of a person become greater weapons than the divine ones?

Lord Vishnu brushed off their doubts asserting that Dadheechi was committed to help the angels and he would never hesitate to help others. He told them that the bones of a pious person would be very much sacred and powerful and promised them that he would lend his divine power to those weapons prepared by Viswakarma.

The sacrifice of Dadheechi

The angels went to Dadheechi and reported him about their plight in the hands of Vruthrasura. They prayed him to provide them weapons.

But the weapons which the angels stored at his place were not available by that time as they got destroyed by Dadheechi himself. When he felt that it was improper to have such weapons in his hermitage some time back, he derived their power by drinking the holy waters sprinkled on them. The weapons which

became powerless got destroyed in the due course. Then the Angels told him that they did not come there to acquire the old weapons and they revealed him the way out suggested by Lord Vishnu. Thus they selfishly requested him to sacrifice his life to help them to regain power over the heaven.

Then Dadheechi furiously asked them, “Do you want me to die then?”

The tricky and hypocritical angels related him the greatness of the ideals like sacrifice, charity and service. They told him to emulate the ways of the great people like Sibi, Bali, Mayuradhwaja and Ranthideva.

Dadheechi laughed and said, “I was speaking on a lighter vein. Why should one live except for helping others? What do I need more than helping the angels? I think that there is nothing more sacred than sharing the problems of the others? I am prepared to give you my bones.”

Dadheechi's last desire

Then Dadheechi told them that he wanted to fulfil a desire before the death. He was so immersed in the penance that he did not have the opportunity of undertaking pilgrimages to all holy places. He wanted to take it up before the death. The angels were afraid that the fulfilment of their desire might demand more time or Dadheechi might keep his promise in the mean time or his wife might work against them in the due course. So they brought all the holy rivers to that place

immediately by using their powers and Dadheechi took a holy bath in those sacred waters and worshipped all the Gods. Then he requested the angels to keep those holy rivers there itself so as to enable the devotees to worship all the Gods at a single place. That holy place became popular with the name, Naimisaaranya afterwards. Thus Dadheechi helped human beings also.

The great sacrifice of Dadheechi

After fulfilling his desire Dadheechi embraced the death happily. Then Devendra summoned Viswakarma and ordered him to make vajrayudha out of Dadheechi's bones. But Viswakarma hesitated to touch the divine body of Dadheechi though there was no life in it. Then Devendra summoned the cows and ordered them to purify the body of Dadheechi. The cows licked the dead body of Dadheechi till it got dried up and the bones alone remained. Then Viswakarma prepared all kinds of weapons with those bones and Lord Vishnu lent his aura to them. Thus the Angels could procure pious, invincible and indomitable weapons and Dadheechi's sacrifice was eulogized everywhere.

The Sati of Gabhasthini

Gabhasthini, the wife of Dadheechi prepared herself for the death along with her husband. But she was not allowed to do it as she was pregnant at that time. She plucked off the baby out of her womb, placed it securely under the shade of a big tree and committed sati. The child was brought up under the tree was named after it as Saint Pippala .

The war of the Angels

After procuring the weapons, the angels waged a mighty war with Vruthrasura, the king of the demons. Devendra wearing the armour of Lord Vishnu and holding the Vajrayudha fought valiantly with Vruthrasura, the ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu who was born in the yagna performed to root out Devendra. The three worlds were eager to know about the result.

By then the angels could get rid of their ego by the grace of Lord Vishnu and also by the sacrifice made by Dadheechi. They were repentant and they became purified. Moreover they regained the enthusiasm by procuring new weapons.

Vruthrasura was also a pious devotee and a sound intellectual. He was divinely powerful and deeply committed. But the angels had the power of righteousness whereas the demons were passionate by nature. It clearly illustrates that it is the virtues that discriminate the good from the bad and as long as the angels had the flaws they were on par with the demons.

The flight of demons

The war began and the angels fought with their new weapons and the demons found it difficult to withstand. Mighty warriors of the demons like Samuchi, Sambara, Anarva, Dwimoordha, Rishabha, Ambara, Sankusira, Viprachithi, Ayomukha, Puloma, Vrishaparva, Prahechi and Hechi were all defeated. But the weapons of the angels could not resist Vruthrasura.

He began to infuse courage into his followers and accused the angels for resorting to unethical methods.

The Fate is always whimsical

The irony was that Vruthrasura who was born to kill Devendra could not think of it at the right time. The ways of fate were always peculiar. Thwashta muni performed a yagna to be booned with a son who could kill Devendra. But he pronounced the incantation wrongly at that time. He chanted “Killed by Devendra” instead of “Kill Devendra.” And so a diagonally opposite thing was produced. A single misspelt word made a lot of difference.

The warning of Devendra

Then Devendra decided to use the powerful Vajrayudha. He roared, “Oh! Vruthrasura! Now you have to face dire consequences. It is Vajrayudha made from the bones of saint Dadheechi which has imbibed the power of Lord Vishnu. You are getting your end now.”

The fervent devotion of Vruthrasura

Vruthrasura got spell bound the moment he heard the name of Lord Vishnu. He was moved by the devotion; his eyes were filled with tears and got into meditation. After regaining consciousness, he said, “Devendra! What more do I want than embracing the grace of Lord Vishnu? What more do I want than reaching Lord Vishnu? So take up your Vajrayudha and kill me”.

The war field then got transformed into a platform for preaching:

Devendra got perplexed by the words of Vruthrasura. He was shocked by the devotion of his opponent. He too got transformed by the words of Vruthrasura. He said, “How can you be defeated if you are a true devotee of the God?”.

Vruthrasura replied, “If your weapon got consecrated by the grace of Lord Vishnu, I am going to attain eternal victory and get myself relieved from the bonds of Karma. It is true that I don’t have any defeat at all”.

Vruthrasura, the divine intellectual

Devendra told Vruthrasura that he could find out a divine intellectual in him. All the angels, demons and the saints heard the discussion which took place between them and were in ecstasy. Vruthrasura did not have the fear of death and he lost interest towards life. He was completely taken over by the devotion to the God and began to pray Him rapturously. He was eager to reach Lord Vishnu. The God observed the devotee’s ecstasy very closely. Vruthrasura had relief only when the god Lord Vishnu was revealed before him.

The discussion with Vruthrasura made Devendra spell bound and he realized that he was an extraordinary devotee and a divine intellectual par excellence. He finally regained his strength after lot of struggle and flung the Vajrayudha on him.

Vruthrasura was cut off into pieces

Vruthrasura remained undaunted and simply opened his mouth and devoured Devendra along with his mighty elephant, Iraavatha. The angels got perturbed and ran off astray. There was a confusion for some time. Was it the end of Devendra? What happened to the will of the angels including Lord Vishnu? Did the desire of Saint Thwashta fulfil? Was the sacrifice of Dadheechi gone futile? Did the heaven fall in the hands of demons? Did the wisdom the angels regained go unrewarded? What happened to the divine armour of Lord Vishnu?

No, No, Not at all. God’s will remain undaunted

Devendra equipped with mighty Vajrayudha tore off the womb of Vruthrasura and came out on his Iraavatha. Then Vruthrasura lost his hands and his womb was torn. But yet he was alive. It took one complete year for Devendra to cut off the head of Vruthrasura.

Om Santhi, Santhi, Santhihi

Lord Vishnu, the divine director witnessed the entire drama with all smiles. Vruthrasura got completely satisfied and got immersed in Him with a sense of fulfilment. He was a blessed one.

Vruthrasura gained the grace of the God only because of the sacrifice of Saint Dadheechi who set himself as an example for the future generations.

