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**Markendeya on
Creation and
Dissolution**

**Āranyaka Parva
Chapters 186-187**

Swami Tadatmananda
Arsha Bodha Center

वैशम्पायन उवाच

Rishi Vaishampayana said,
vaiśampāyana uvāca

ततः स पुनरेवाथ

At some later time,
tataḥ sa punar evātha

मार्कण्डेयं यशस्विनम् ।

of Markandeya who was illustrious
mārkaṇḍeyaṁ yaśasvinam

पप्रच्छ विनयोपेतो

and humble, asked
papraccha vinayopeto

धर्मराजो युधिष्ठिरः ॥

Yudhishtira, king of dharma.
dharmarājo yudhiṣṭhiraḥ (186.1)

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

Yudhishtira said,
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

नैके युगसहस्रान्तास्
Many thousands of eons
naike yuga-sahasrāntās

त्वया दृष्टा महामुने |
have been seen by you, Markandeya.
tvayā dr̥ṣṭā mahāmune

न चापीह समः कश्चिद्
In the world, no one is equal
na cāpīha samaḥ kaścīd

आयुषा तव विद्यते ||
to you in lifespan.
āyuṣā tava vidyate (186.2)

प्रलये चापि निर्वृत्ते
When the time dissolution ended
pralaye cāpi nirvṛtte

प्रबुद्धे च पितामहे |
and when Brahmaji woke up,
prabuddhe ca pitāmahe

त्वमेव सृज्यमानानि
you indeed saw
tvam eva sṛjyamānāni

भूतानीह प्रपश्यसि ||
everything created here.
bhūtānīha prapaśyasi (186.4)

एतत्प्रत्यक्षतः सर्वं
You have witnessed all this
etat pratyakṣataḥ sarvaṁ

पूर्ववृत्तं द्विजोत्तम |
that happened before, O Markandeya.
pūrva-vṛttaṁ dvijottama

तस्मादिच्छामहे श्रोतुं
Therefore, we want to hear
tasmād icchāmahe śrotuṁ

सर्वहेत्वात्मिकां कथाम् ||
the story of the origin of everything.
sarva-hetvātmikāṁ kathām (186.11)

मार्कण्डेय उवाच
Rishi Markandeya said,
mārkaṇḍeya uvāca

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि

Unto you, I will tell this,
hanta te kathayiṣyāmi

नमस्कृत्वा स्वयम्भुवे |

after bowing to the self-created
namaskṛtvā svayambhuve

पुरुषाय पुराणाय

eternal being
puruṣāya purāṇāya

शाश्वतायाव्ययाय च ||

who is timeless and undecaying.
śāśvatāyāvyayāya ca (186.13)

तस्मिन्युगसहस्रान्ते

After thousands of eons,
tasmin yuga-sahasrānte

सम्प्राप्ते चायुषः क्षये |

when people's lifespan had grown short,
samprāpte cāyuṣaḥ kṣaye

अनावृष्टिर्महाराज

there was a drought, O Yudhishtira,
anāvṛṣṭir mahārāja

जायते बहुवार्षिकी ||

lasting many years.
jāyate bahu-vārṣikī (186.56)

ततः संवर्तको वह्निर्

Then, the world-devouring fire,
tataḥ saṁvartako vahnir

वायुना सह भारत |

accompanied by the wind, O Yudhishtira,
vāyunā saha bhārata

लोकमाविशते पूर्वम्

spread through the world
lokam āviśate pūrvam

आदित्यैरुपशोषितम् ||

already dried up by the sun.
ādityair upaśoṣitam (186.60)

ततस्ते जलदा घोरा

Then, terrible clouds,
tatas te jaladā ghorā

राविणः पुरुषर्षभ |

thundering loudly, O Yudhishtira,
rāviṇaḥ puruṣarṣabha

सर्वतः प्लावयन्त्याशु

quickly flooded everything,
sarvataḥ plāvayanty āśu

चोदिताः परमेष्ठिना ||

as commanded by Brahmaji.
coditāḥ parameṣṭhinā (186.71)

वर्षमाणा महत्तोयं

(Those clouds) raining down much water,
varṣamāṇā mahat-toyaṃ

पूरयन्तो वसुन्धराम् |

filled the Earth.

pūrayanto vasundharām

सुघोरमशिवं रौद्रं

The terrible, inauspicious, fearsome
sughoram aśivaṃ raudraṃ

नाशयन्ति च पावकम् ||

fire - they did destroy.

nāśayanti ca pāvakam (186.72)

ततः कदाचित्पश्यामि

Then, after some time, I saw
tataḥ kadācit paśyāmi

तस्मिन्सलिलसम्प्लवे |

immersed in the floodwaters
tasmin salila-samplave

न्यग्रोधं सुमहान्तं वै

a great banyan tree

nyagrodhaṃ sumahāntaṃ vai

विशालं पृथिवीपते ||

with widespread branches, O Yudhishtira.

viśālaṃ pṛthivīpate (186.81)

तस्मिन्नेकार्णवे घोरे

After the terrible floodwaters
tasminn ekārṇave ghore

नष्टे स्थावरजङ्गमे |

had destroyed everything sentient and insentient,
naṣṭe sthāvara-jaṅgame

अनन्तरिक्षे लोकेऽस्मिन्

in the realm of the sky

anantarikṣe loke 'smin

भ्रमाम्येकोऽहमादृतः ||

I wandered alone, watching attentively.

bhramāmy eko 'ham ādr̥taḥ (186.77,78)

उपविष्टं महाराज

O Yudhishtira, sitting in that tree was
upaviṣṭaṃ mahārāja

पूर्णेन्दुसदृशाननम् |

a boy, beautiful as the full moon,
pūrṇendu-sadr̥śānanam

फुल्लपद्मविशालाक्षं

with eyes like big lotus flowers.

phulla-padma-viśālākṣaṃ

बालं पश्यामि भारत ||

I saw that boy, O Yudhishtira.

bālaṃ paśyāmi bhārata (186.83)

ततो मे पृथिवीपाल

Then, O Yudhishtira,
tato me pṛthivīpāla

विस्मयः सुमहानभूत् |

I became greatly amazed.
vismayaḥ sumahān abhūt

कथं त्वयं शिशुः शेते

How could this child lie here
kathaṁ tvayaṁ śiśuḥ śete

लोके नाशमुपागते ||

when the whole world had been destroyed?
loke nāśam upāgate (186.84)

ततः प्रविष्टस्तत्कुक्षिं

Then, after entering his stomach,
tataḥ praviṣṭas tat-kukṣiṁ

सहसा मनुजाधिप |

suddenly, O Yudhishtira,
sahasā manujādhipa

सराष्ट्रनगराकीर्णां

filled with land and cities -
sarāṣṭra-nagarākīrṇāṁ

कृत्स्नां पश्यामि मेदिनीम् ||

the entire world I saw.
kṛtsnāṁ paśyāmi medinīm (186.92)

ततो बालेन तेनास्यं

Then, the boy
tato bālena tenāsyam

सहसा विवृतं कृतम् |

suddenly opened his mouth wide.
sahasā vivṛtam kṛtam

तस्याहमवशो वक्रं

Into his mouth, I was helplessly
tasyāham avaśo vakraṁ

दैवयोगात्प्रवेशितः ||

drawn by a divine power.
daiva-yogāt praveśitaḥ (186.91)

अन्तः शरीरे तस्याहं

Within his body, I stayed
antaḥ śarīre tasyāham

वर्षाणामधिकं शतम् |

for over a hundred years.
varṣāṇām adhikaṁ śatam

न च पश्यामि तस्याहम्

But I never saw
na ca paśyāmi tasyāham

अन्तं देहस्य कुत्रचित् ||

the edge of his body anywhere.
antaṁ dehasya kutracit (186.110)

ततोऽहं सहसा राजन्

Then, O King, suddenly I was
tato 'haṁ sahasā rājan

वायुवेगेन निःसृतः |

blown by a current of air
vāyu-vegena niḥsṛtaḥ

महात्मनो मुखात्तस्य

out from that great one's
mahātmano mukhāt tasya

विवृतात्पुरुषोत्तम ||

open mouth, O Yudhishthira.
vivṛtāt puruṣottama (186.113)

देव उवाच

The deva said,
deva uvāca

तमहं प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा

Folding my hands and
tam ahaṁ prāñjalir bhūtvā

नमस्कृत्येदमब्रुवम् |

bowing to him, I said,
namaskṛtyedam abruvam

ज्ञातुमिच्छामि देव त्वां

"O Lord, I want to know you
jñātum icchāmi deva tvāṁ

मायां चेमां तवोत्तमाम् ||

and your supreme power of maya."
māyāṁ cemāṁ tavottamām (186.122)

कामं देवापि मां विप्र

O brahmana, even the gods
kāmaṁ devāpi māṁ vipra

न विजानन्ति तत्त्वतः |

cannot know me in reality.
na vijānanti tattvataḥ

त्वत्प्रीत्या तु प्रवक्ष्यामि

Due to fondness for you, I will describe
tvat-prītyā tu pravakṣyāmi

यथेदं विसृजाम्यहम् ||

how I created all this.
yathedaṁ visṛjāmy aham (187.1)

अहं नारायणो नाम

By name I am Narayana,
aham̐ nārāyaṇo nāma

प्रभवः शाश्वतोऽव्ययः |

the eternal, undecaying creator,
prabhavaḥ śāśvato 'vyayaḥ

विधाता सर्वभूतानां

the sustainer of all beings
vidhātā sarva-bhūtānām̐

संहर्ता च द्विजोत्तम ||

and their destroyer, O brahmana.
samhartā ca dvijottama (187.4)

अग्निरास्यं क्षितिः पादौ

Fire is my face, the earth is my feet,
agnir āsyaṁ kṣitiḥ pādau

चन्द्रादित्यौ च लोचने |

the moon and sun are my eyes,
candrādityau ca locane

सदिशं च नभः कायो

space with its directions is my body,
sadiśam̐ ca nabhaḥ kāyo

वायुर्मनसि मे स्थितः ||

the wind is my thoughts.
vāyur manasi me sthitaḥ (187.7)

अहं विष्णुरहं ब्रह्मा

I am Vishnu, I am Brahma,
aham̐ viṣṇur aham̐ brahmā

शक्रश्चाहं सुराधिपः |

and I am Indra, king of the gods.
śakraś cāham̐ surādhipaḥ

अहं शिवश्च सोमश्च

I am Shiva, I am Soma,
aham̐ śivaś ca somaś ca

कश्यपश्च प्रजापतिः ||

and I am Kashyapa, Lord of people.
kaśyapaś ca prajāpatiḥ (187.5,6)

प्राप्नुवन्ति नरा विप्र

O brahmana, whatever people gain
prāpnuvanti narā vipra

यत्कृत्वा कर्म शोभनम् |

through their good karmas,
yat kṛtvā karma śobhanam

मद्विधानेन विहिता

they receive it according to my rules.
mad-vidhānena vihitā

मम देहविहारिणः ||

Their activities are ruled by me.
mama deha-vihāriṇaḥ (187.21,22)

एवं सर्वमहं कालम्
Thus, O great sage, for all time
evaṁ sarvaṁ ahaṁ kālam

इहासे मुनिसत्तम |
I remain here
ihāse munisattama

अशिशुः शिशुरूपेण
in the form of a child, though I am not a child,
aśiśuḥ śiśurūpeṇa

यावद्ब्रह्मा न बुध्यते ||
until Brahmaji wakes up.
yāvad brahmā na budhyate (187.40)

मार्कण्डेय उवाच
Rishi Markandeya said,
mārkaṇḍeya uvāca

ततो विबुद्धे तस्मिंस्तु
Then, when he awakes -
tato vibuddhe tasmim̐s tu

सर्वलोकपितामहे |
the grandfather of all people (Brahmaji) -
sarva-loka-pitāmahe

एकीभूतो हि स्रक्ष्यामि
I alone create everything
ekībhūto hi sraḁṣyāmi

शरीराद्विजसत्तम ||
from my body, O great brahmana.
śarīrād dvija-sattama (187.46)

इत्युक्तान्तर्हितस्तात
O Yudhishtira, having spoken thus,
ity uktvāntarhitas tāta

स देवः परमाद्भुतः |
that utterly amazing deva disappeared.
sa devaḥ paramādbhutaḥ

प्रजाश्चेमाः प्रपश्यामि
Then I saw all these creatures
prajāś cemāḥ prapaśyāmi

विचित्रा बहुधाकृताः ||
and the manifold world (come into existence).
vicitrā bahudhākṛtāḥ (187.48)