

a place newly built for the purpose. Devayānī delivered a child in due course and it was named Yadu. Śarmiṣṭhā one day met Yayāti in the forest and requested for a child by him. Though at first he was reluctant to oblige remembering only too well the injunction of Śukrācārya, he at last succumbed to the eloquence of Śarmiṣṭhā. She got pregnant by him and the child she delivered was called Druhyu.

Devayānī was alarmed at the birth of a child to Śarmiṣṭhā, who was unmarried, and questioned her about it. Śarmiṣṭhā's answer that a brahmin stranger, who came that way was the father of her child satisfied Devayānī.

Ere long another son, Turvasu, was born to Devayānī, and Śarmiṣṭhā too delivered two children called Anudruhyu and Pūru. Thus the mistress (Devayānī) had two sons and her servant, Śarmiṣṭhā three sons.

While Yayāti and Devayānī were one day strolling in the garden the sons of Śarmiṣṭhā came there. She noticed the close resemblance of those boys to her husband (Yayāti) and it kindled her wrath. Though Yayāti did not, because of the presence of Devayānī, notice the children, when she asked them who their father was, they answered "Yayāti", whereupon in great rage she ran up to her father. Yayāti too followed her. Devayānī told her father about the infidelity of Yayāti and he (Śukra) cursed that Yayāti be afflicted with old age. When Yayāti asked for redemption from the curse Śukrācārya told him that he could exchange his old age for the youth of somebody else.

Yayāti then called together all his five sons and asked them whether anyone of them was prepared to exchange his (son's) youth for his (Yayāti's) old age for one thousand years. The three elder sons refused to agree to the proposal, but the fourth son Pūru gladly exchanged his youth with his father's old age. After spending his life in youthful enjoyment for one thousand years Yayāti returned his youth to Pūru, and Pūru assumed Kingship of the country. (Ādi Parva, Chapters 81-83).

5) *Synonyms for Devayānī.* Auśanasī, Śukratanayā and Bhārgavī.

DEVI. (Mahāmāyā). Though Devī is without a beginning it is told how she became first visible to living beings.

1) *Beginning:* While Mahāviṣṇu was resting on a fig leaf in the assumed form of a child he began thinking as to who he was, who created him and how he should act. And then a celestial voice announced as follows:

Sarvaṁ khalvidamevāham

Nānyadastī sanātanam.

(All that is, I am. There is nothing eternal but me.). This declaration astonished Viṣṇu, but he could not understand who made it. While he was meditating upon it, Devī appeared to him in the following manner. Devī¹ held in her four sacred hands weapons like the conch, the disc, the club and the lotus flower and was clad in divine clothes and wore divine ornaments and was attended upon by powers¹ like Rati (the erotic), Bhūti (riches and prosperity), Buddhi (intelligence), Mati (intellect), Kīrti (reputation), Dhṛti (understanding

capacity), Smṛti (ability to remember), Śraddhā (attention, concentration), Medhā (intellect), Svadhā, Svāhā, Kṣudhā (thirst), Nidrā (sleep), Dayā (compassion), Gati, (momentum), Tuṣṭi (pleasure, happiness) Puṣṭi (growth, progress), Kṣamā (patience, forbearance), Lajjā (sense of shame), Jṛmbhā and Tandrā (laziness).

And, the Devī spoke to Mahāviṣṇu as follows:—After all, what is there to be wondered at. Whenever the world faced the phenomenon of Srṣṭisthitilaya (creation, existence and absorption into the primordial force) you too have come up due to the power of Mahāśakti. As for Parāśakti (the ultimate, universal force) it is above and beyond all attributes. We, all of us, possess attributes. From the nābhi (navel) of yourself in whom sattva-guṇa (gentle attributes) predominates will be born Brahmā in whom rajoguṇa (active attributes) will predominate, and from the centre of his brows will be born Rudra with tamoguṇa (black, destructive attributes). Brahmā, by the force of his tapas will earn powers of creation and will with his rajoguṇa create the world blood-red in colour, and you will be the sustainer and guardian of that world. The very same world will be annihilated by Rudra at the end of the Kalpa era. You please do know that I am the sāttvic force which depend on you for the purpose of creation. All creations of worlds have been made according to the suggestions of Devī.

2) *Origin of Devī.* Once King Janamejaya questioned Vyāsa about the birth of Devī to which he replied as follows:—

Even Brahmāviṣṇumahēśvaras (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva—the Hindu trinity) are not capable of thinking about the origin of Devī. Then, what about me? Yet let me make an attempt. All the forces—everything—which appear in various names and forms are in fact Devī herself, her different manifestations. Just as a master actor appears on the stage in different roles for the delectation of the audience the formless Devī, on behalf of the Devas, assumes many forms and imposes upon herself attributes though in fact she is without any attribute whatsoever. Thus, depending on her various forms, actions etc. she is addressed by different names. (Devī Bhāgavata, Pañcama Skandha).

3) *Five forms of Devī.* When primordial nature (Mūla-prakṛti) incarnated or manifested in the form of Viṣṇu the desire for creation raised its head in him. And, at once the Devī—female—aspects in Viṣṇu manifested in five forms like Durgā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī and Rādhā. These five forms are designated as the Pañcādevīs. Brief notes on the five Devīs are given below.

(1) *Durgādevī.* Mother of Gaṇeśa bhagavān. (God with the elephant's head). She is the consort of Śiva. Nārāyaṇī, the Viṣṇumāyā, is none else than Durgā. She is also perfect Brahma, the one and the only one with no second to it. She is worshipped by Devas like Brahmā and by sages and maharṣis. She is the basis, the root and root cause of everything. She is eternal, upholder of dharma, truth itself and the giver and promoter of happiness, reputation, welfare, salvation etc. as also of sorrow, grief, pain etc. She takes great

1. Ratir bhūtiastibā buddhirmati kīrtiḥ smṛtirdhṛtiḥ /
Śraddhā, medhā, svadhā, svāhā Kṣudhā, nidrā, dayā, gatiḥ /

Tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣamā lajjā jṛmbhā tandrā ca śaktayaḥ /
Samsthitāḥ sarvataḥ pārśve Mahādevyāḥ prthak prthak. //

(Devī Bhāgavata, Prathama, Skandha).