

Twin sons, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa were born to Diti. For the rest of the story, see under Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa. (Bhāgavata, Prathama Skandha).

5) Diti flourishes in the assembly of Brahmā. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 11, verse 39.)

DIVAḤPUTRA. One of the twelve sūryas who were born in the form of the Sun. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter I, Verse 42).

DIVĀKARA I. A synonym of Sūrya (Sun).

DIVĀKARA II. A son of Garuḍa. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 101).

DIVĀKARA III. See under Niśākara II.

DIVĀKARA IV. A king. During the reign of this king the Matsya Purāṇa was composed.

DIVIRATHA I. A King born in Bharata's dynasty. He was the grandson of Bharata and the son of Blumanya. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 94, Verse 24).

DIVIRATHA II. A king. He was the son of Dadhivāhana. In the course of Paraśurāma's extermination of Kṣatriyas, the sage Gautama rescued a son of Diviratha and gave shelter to him. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 49, Verse 80)

DIVODĀSA. (ATITHIGVA). A king of Kāśī.

1) *Genealogy.* From Viṣṇu descended in the following order:—Brahmā - Atri - Candra - Budha - Purūravas - Āyus - Anenas - Pratikṣatra - Srījaya - Jaya - Vijaya - Kṛti-Haryaśva-Sahadeva - Nadina - Jayatsena - Saṃkṛti-Kṣatradharmā-Śuhotra-Śala - Ārṣṭiṣeṇa-Kāśa - Dīrghatapas - Dhanvantari - Ketumān - Bhīmaratha - Divodāsa.

Divodāsa's great grandfather's father, Kāśa had many sons. They were called the Kāśis. It was from Kāśa's reign that Vārāṇasī came to be called Kāśī. (Hari Vamśa, Chapter 29).

2) *Divodāsa's Reign.* When Divodāsa began his rule in Vārāṇasī, there was a Rākṣasa named Kṣemaka. Divodāsa killed him and extended his kingdom. At that stage, Bhadrāsreṇya, King of Hehayas invaded Divodāsa. Divodāsa killed the hundred sons of Bhadrāsreṇya. At that time the sage Kumbhaka (Nikumbha) came to Kāśī. His practice was to live for a thousand years at any place where he reached at the time of dusk. Since he had reached Vārāṇasī at dusk, he set up an āśrama and lived there for a thousand years. At that time there was a famine in Vārāṇasī. The whole land was in the grip of a severe drought. Kumbhaka's āśrama and its surroundings alone remained green and cool. Herdsmen used to take cattle to graze in the neighbourhood of the āśrama. Once when they returned in the evening, they took with their cows, the sacrificial cow of Kumbhaka. It was dark and the sage searched for the cow everywhere but could not trace its whereabouts. At last he came to know by intuition that his cow was taken away by the herdsmen. In his rage he cursed that Vārāṇasī should be ruined and left the place with his disciples. (See under Kumbhaka).

The story of the ruin of Vārāṇasī in Harivamśa is different. It was the time when Śiva had married Pārvatī, the daughter of Himavān. After marriage Śiva shifted his residence to his wife's house. Śiva whose task was to look after the affairs of the world, was never available for the purpose at Kailāsa, his own seat. The gods were in a helpless condition. They approached Pārvatī's mother, Menā and requested her

to persuade Śiva to return to his own place by any means. Menā called her daughter and ridiculed her husband as a vagabond who had no place to lay his head on. Pārvatī could not bear this insult. Her mother's stinging remarks got circulation in Devaloka. So she urged Śiva to settle down somewhere on earth with her. Śiva agreed and promised to take up residence at Kāśī.

The ruler of Kāśī in those days was Divodāsa. It was a prosperous period in the country. As a rule, man turns to God only when faced with misfortunes. So Śiva decided to bring about a famine among the people of the country by ruining it. For that he sent sage Kumbhaka to Vārāṇasī. Kumbhaka arrived in Kāśī and appeared to the barber Kaṇaka to whom he communicated Śiva's intentions. The barber cheerfully fell in with the proposal and built a temple on the next day for the residence of Kumbhaka. Living in the temple, Kumbhaka began to participate in the spiritual matters of the people. His blessings were much sought after and people came to have deep faith in him.

Divodāsa had no children. He had made many pious offerings to gods and performed many holy rites for removing his wife's sterility, but it was all in vain. At last, at the King's suggestion, she began to offer pūjā to Kumbhaka praying for issue. But even after a long period of devoted worship, she received no blessing or boon from the sage. Moved by the pathetic condition of his queen, Suyaśas, Divodāsa reproached Kumbhaka very severely. He reprimanded him for denying his blessings to the queen while he was showering them on all and sundry in the country. Provoked at the King's rebuke, Kumbhaka pronounced a curse that the country should be ruined. As a result of it the country began to decline. (Harivamśa, Chapter 29).

Śiva and Pārvatī came and settled down in Vārāṇasī. After some years, Pārvatī began to press her husband to leave the place and to go somewhere else. Śiva was not inclined to do so. He said the place was "Avimukta" and therefore insisted that he would not leave it. From that time the place came to be called "Avimukta."

3) *Other details.*

(1) Towards the end of his life Divodāsa became a Rājarsi (Royal Saint). There are numerous references to this Rājarsi in the Ṛgveda. Since Divodāsa was of a very hospitable nature he was known by another name, "Atithigva". In Ṛgveda, 1st Maṇḍala, 16th Anuvāka, 127th Sūkta, we read that once he hid himself under water to escape from an Asura called Śarībara.

(2) Divodāsa had a son named "Parucchepa", who was a Ṛṣi. Ṛgveda 1st Maṇḍala 19th Anuvāka, 127th Sūkta relates to Parucchepa.

(3) Bhīmaratha, the father of Divodāsa, had two other names, Bhīmasena, and Sudeva. Divodāsa purchased Mādhavī, the daughter of Yayāti after paying two hundred Śyāmakarṇāśvas (beautiful horses with dark-coloured ears) to Gālava, so that he might have children. After the birth of his children, he returned Mādhavī to her father. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 117).

(4) He sits in Yama's assembly and offers Pūjā to Yama. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 8, Verse 12).