

others unless and until it is given to him. (Śloka 3, Chapter 31; Ādi Parva).

GARIṢṬHA. A sage worshipping Indra in his assembly. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 7, Verse 13).

GARUḌA. King of birds.

1) *Genealogy.* Descended from Viṣṇu thus:—Brahmā—Marīci—Kaśyapa—Garuḍa.

2) *Birth.* Kaśyapa, grandson of Brahmā and son of Marīci married the eight daughters of Dakṣa called Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kālikā, Tāmrā, Krodhavaśā, Manu and Analā. And to Tāmrā five daughters were born, viz. Krauñcī, Bhāsī, Śyenī, Dhṛtarāṣṭrī and Śukī. Out of the five women Krauñcī became mother of the owls, Bhāsī delivered the bhāsas (types of birds) and from Śyenī were born vultures and kites. Hamsa, Kalahamsa, Koka etc. are children of Dhṛtarāṣṭrī. From Śukī was born Nalā and from Nalā, Vinatā; Aruṇa and Garuḍa were the two sons born to Vinatā. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Aranyakāṇḍa, Canto 15).

There is a story in the Mahābhārata about the birth of Aruṇa and Garuḍa. Kaśyapa who was much pleased with the service of Vinatā and Kadrū asked them to select any boon they desired. Kadrū chose to have a thousand nāgas as her children while Vinatā chose to have two sons more powerful and heroic than the thousand sons of Kadrū. After granting them the boon Kaśyapa retreated into the forest.

After some time Kadrū laid thousand eggs and Vinatā two eggs. Both of them kept their eggs in hot pots. In the 500th year the eggs of Kadrū hatched and thousand serpents of various kinds emerged out of them. But Vinatā's eggs did not hatch yet, and the sight of Kadrū playing with her children pained Vinatā much. She, therefore, broke open one of her eggs in secret, and a half-grown child stepped out of it. That child was Aruṇa. Aruṇa got angry that Vinatā forced open the egg prematurely. He told her that as punishment thereof she would become a slave of Kadrū. But, Aruṇa granted her redemption from the curse thus: After another 500 years the remaining egg of yours will hatch and a son endowed with exceptional power and prowess will be born to you. He will liberate you from slavery." After telling his mother so much Aruṇa rose to the sky where he became the charioteer of the Sun. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 16. See also Para 6 infra).

After 500 years the egg broke itself open and out came Garuḍa with blazing effulgence, and he rose up in the sky. His body glowed like the sun. The Devas who got themselves dimmed by his effulgence asked Agnideva the reason therefor. Agnideva told them about the birth of Garuḍa and also that he was equally effulgent as himself (Agnideva). Then all of them went to Garuḍa and lavished on his head all possible blessings, and Garuḍa, as requested by them, controlled his effulgence and returned to his mother. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 23).

3) *Slavery of Vinatā:* The churning of the Milk-ocean was done before Garuḍa was born. Indra got a horse named Uccaiḥśravas from the Ocean of Milk. Between Kadrū and Vinatā a dispute arose as regards the colour of the horse's tail, Kadrū saying that it was black while Vinatā asserted that it was white. They further agreed to test the colour the next day, betting that she who was proved to be wrong would become the slave of the victor. As the nāga sons of Kadrū hung on to the tail

of the horse the tail appeared to be black and Vinatā lost the bet and became Kadrū's slave.

It was at this juncture that Garuḍa was born, and he felt highly mortified to find his mother working as a slave of Kadrū.

Kadrū and her nāga sons once ordered Vinatā to carry them to the nāga residence in the middle of the ocean, called Rāmaṇīyaka (Ramaṇam). Accordingly Vinatā carrying Kadrū on her shoulders and Garuḍa carrying Kadrū's sons on his shoulders rose up in the sky. But, Garuḍa did not relish the slavish work, and he, carrying with him the nāgas, flew up to the sun's orbit. The nāga children fainted due to the excessive heat. But, on the request of Kadrū Indra sent heavy rain and the nāgas regained consciousness. By then they had reached Rāmaṇīyaka island.

4) *Attempt at freeing Vinatā from thralldom.* Garuḍa, extremely pained at the pitiable plight of his mother, one day asked Kadrū what price she and her children demanded for freeing Vinatā from slavery, and Kadrū demanded Amṛta from Devaloka as the price. Garuḍa decided to get it and informed his mother about his decision to fly to Devaloka. But, what about food till he reached Devaloka? Vinatā solved the problem by advising Garuḍa to eat the niṣādas he will meet on his way to Devaloka at the island called Niṣādālaya, at the same time specially forbidding him from eating on any account, brahmins who might be there, at Niṣādālaya. How to distinguish brahmins from others, queried Garuḍa, and his mother replied by pointing out that the brahmin will burn the throat of him who tries to eat him, like fire. Then Vinatā blessed her son that his wings would be protected by Vāyu, the lower half of his body by sun and moon, the rest of the body by the Vasus and the head by Agni. She also promised to wait there till her son returned.

5) *Garuḍa to Devaloka.* After saluting his mother Garuḍa set out on his quest for Amṛta. All the fourteen worlds shook at the lashing of his wings. He reached Niṣādālaya, where while consuming whole lots of Niṣādas a brahmin and his wife also happened to get into his throat. Garuḍa felt their presence immediately in his throat and requested them to get out of his mouth. Accordingly they got out and also blessed Garuḍa, who continued on his journey.

Next Garuḍa reached the forest where his father Kaśyapa was engaged in tapas. He told him about his mission and requested him for something to eat. Kaśyapa replied thus:—“You see a pool wherein an elephant and a tortoise are living for long as enemies. Long ago two brothers Vibhāvasu and Supratika quarrelled over their paternal wealth and at the height of it Vibhāvasu cursed Supratika to become an elephant when Supratika pronounced the counter curse that Vibhāvasu should turn out to be a tortoise. You, my son Garuḍa may eat that elephant and tortoise. May your journey for Amṛta be crowned with success.

Now, Garuḍa after saluting his father, flew up in the sky carrying in his beak the elephant and the tortoise from the pool. As trees were falling uprooted due to the terrific vibrations caused by the lashing of his wings Garuḍa did not find a convenient place to sit down to eat his food. While continuing the journey Garuḍa saw a big tree, its branches spread out in a circumference