

owl. He was also given redemption from the curse that he would regain his form the day he helped Indradyumna. (Skanda Purāna).

GHANṬA II. See under Ghaṇṭākarna.

GHANṬĀKARṆA I.

1) *General.* Ghaṇṭa and Karṇa were two Rākṣasa brothers who attained salvation by worshipping Viṣṇu. (Bhāgavata, daśama Skandha). But the elder brother, Ghaṇṭa alone is sometimes called by the name Ghaṇṭākarna in the Purānas.

2) *Birth.* There is a reference in Dārukavadha (killing of Dārukāsura) about the birth of Ghaṇṭākarna. Dāruka, after having secured a boon from Brahmā, used to harass the world too much and when his deprecation became unbearable Śiva created Bhadrakālī from his third eye and she killed the asura. Mandodarī wife of Dāruka and daughter of Maya was sunk in grief at the death of her husband. She began to do tapas. Śiva appeared and gave her a few drops of sweat from his body saying that the person on whom she sprinkled the sweat drops would suffer from small-pox and that such patients would worship her (Mandodarī) and supply her necessary food. From that day onwards Mandodarī became the presiding deity over small-pox. On her way back to the earth with the sweat-drops Mandodarī met Bhadrakālī at whom she threw the sweat-drops to take revenge for her husband's death. Immediately Bhadrakālī fell down with an attack of small-pox. Hearing about the mishap Śiva created a terrible Rākṣasa called Ghaṇṭākarna. According to Śiva's directions Ghaṇṭākarna licked off the small-pox from Bhadrakālī's body. But, when he tried to lick it off from her face she prevented him saying that she and Ghaṇṭākarna were sister and brother and that it was improper for the brother to lick the face of the sister. And, even to this day the small-pox on Bhadrakālī's face remains as an ornament to her.

3) *The name Ghaṇṭākarna.* This Rākṣasa, at first, was an enemy of Viṣṇu, and did not tolerate even the mention of Viṣṇu's name. Therefore, he went about always wearing a bell so that the tinkling of it warded off the name of Viṣṇu from entering his ears. Because he wore a ghaṇṭā (bell) in his Karṇas (ears) he came to be known as Ghaṇṭākarna. (M.B. Bhaviṣya Parva, Chapter 80).

4) *Turned out to be a devotee of Viṣṇu.* Ghaṇṭākarna became a servant of Kubera. Once he did tapas for salvation. Śiva appeared and asked him to do tapas to please Viṣṇu as Viṣṇu was greater than himself (Śiva). From that day onwards he removed the bells from his ears and became a devotee of Viṣṇu. (Bhaviṣya Parva, Chapter 80).

5) *Attained salvation.* Handing over charge of government to Sātyaki Śrī Kṛṣṇa once went to Kailāsa mounted on Garuḍa to see Śiva. On his way he dismounted at the Badaryāśrama, and while sitting deep in meditation there he heard the thundering voice of Piśācas (souls of dead people roaming about without attaining salvation). He also heard the barking of dogs, and thus he understood that Piśācas were hunting animals. The hunters came to Kṛṣṇa's presence. They were led by Ghaṇṭākarna who was reciting the name of Viṣṇu. Śrī

Kṛṣṇa felt pity for him. Ghaṇṭākarna told Kṛṣṇa that his aim and ambition were to see Viṣṇu and that Śiva had blessed that he would realise his ambition at Badaryāśrama. Pleased at all this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed his Viśvarūpa (representing in his person the whole universe), and at once Ghaṇṭākarna brought half of the corpse of a brahmin and submitted it as a present before the Lord. He explained to Kṛṣṇa that according to the custom of the Rākṣasas that was the best present which could be made. Without accepting the present Kṛṣṇa patted Ghaṇṭākarna on his back with the result that he cast off his body and rose up to Vaikuṇṭha. (Bhaviṣya Purāna, Chapters 80-82 and also Bhāgavata, Daśama Skandha).

6) *Ghaṇṭākarna Pratiṣṭhā.* (Installation of his idol in temples). Though Ghaṇṭākarna was a Rākṣasa, as he attained Vaikuṇṭha due to the blessings of God Almighty his idol is still installed in temples and worshipped. The installation ceremony is described in Chapter 59 of the Agni Purāna thus: "Ghaṇṭākarna should have 18 hands. He cures diseases born as a result of sins. He holds in his right hand Vajra, sword, Cakra, arrow etc. And in his left hand broom, sword, cord bell, pickaxe etc. He also holds the triśūla (trident). Ghaṇṭākarna who turned out to be a Deva is believed to cure small-pox.

GHANṬĀKARṆA II. One of the four attendants presented by Brahmā to Subrahmaṇya. Nandisena, Lohitākṣa, Ghaṇṭākarna and Kumudamālī are the four attendants. (Śalya Parva, Chapter 45, Verses 23-24).

GHANṬODARA. An asura, who was a member of Varuṇa's assembly. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 134).

GHARMA. - A King of the Aṅga royal dynasty.

GHATA. An urban area in ancient India. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 63).

GHATA. A notorious thief. He had a friend called Karpara. They were jointly known as Ghāṭakarparas. Once both the friends went to commit theft. Leaving Ghata at the door-steps Karpara entered the chamber of the princess who, after enjoying sexual pleasures with him gave him some money asking him to repeat such visits in future. Karpara told Ghata all that had happened and handed over to him the money which the princess had given him. Karpara went again to the princess. But, owing to the weariness caused by the night's enjoyment both the princess and he slept till late in the morning. Meantime the palace guards found out the secret and took the lovers into custody. Karpara was sentenced to death and led out to be hanged. Ghata was present on the spot and Karpara asked him secretly to save the princess. Accordingly Ghata, without anybody knowing about it, took the princess over to his house.

The King ordered enquiries about the absence of the princess. Under the natural presumption that some relation or other of Karpara alone might have carried away his daughter the King ordered the guards of Karpara's corpse to arrest anybody who approached the corpse and expressed grief. Ghata came to know of this secret order of the King. Next day evening Ghata posing himself as a drunkard and with a servant disguised as

1. According to certain Purānas Ghaṇṭākarnas are two individuals, Ghaṇṭa and Karṇa. The term Ghaṇṭākarna—singular number—is used because the brothers were inseparable from each other.