

1) *General.* Owing to a curse Jaya and Vijaya who were gate-keepers at Vaikuṅṭha were born as two asuras, Hiraṇyākṣa (elder brother) and Hiraṇyakaśipu (younger brother). These brothers are known also as the Hiraṇyas. (See Jayavijayas).

2) *Birth.* Three sons called Hiraṇyākṣa, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Vajrāṅga and a daughter, Siṅhikā were born to Kaśyapaprajāpati by his wife Diti. To Hiraṇyakaśipu were born four sons called Anuhlāda, Hlāda Prahāda and Saṁhlāda. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Part 1, Chapter 15).

There is yet another story relating to the birth of these asuras. Though the other wives of Kaśyapa became mothers Diti alone was not blessed with a child for a long time. One day at dusk while Kaśyapa was immersed in meditation Diti rushed into his room and began lamenting and complaining about her having not yet been made a mother, and urgently asked Kaśyapa to make her one. But, Kaśyapa pointed out that it was not the proper time for such things. It was dusk when Śiva with his attendants would be out sight-seeing covered with ashes from burning ghats spread all around by storms. So Kaśyapa wanted to wait for some time more. But, she was not in a mood to pay heed to his advice and Kaśyapa had to yield to her proposal. After obliging her, once again he took his bath and began meditation.

Diti became pregnant. She also got alarmed about the indiscretion committed at dusk time that day and, Kaśyapa told her : "Your mind became impure, you did not obey me, you insulted the Devas also. There are two kids of a very low type in your womb. They will oppress the three worlds and kill innocent people. Mahāviṣṇu will never tolerate such things. He will incarnate himself to kill them. But since you feel penitent now, a grand-son of yours will become liked by all good people, and he will be a great devotee of Mahāviṣṇu. (This was Prahāda).

At any rate, one hundred years after her getting pregnant Diti delivered twin sons. The first born was named Hiraṇyākṣa and the next one Hiraṇyakaśipu. (According to certain Purāṇas Hiraṇyakaśipu was the first born).

3) *Hiraṇyākṣa.* The boys grew up to become a growing menace to the whole world. Hiraṇyākṣa toured all the three worlds with a club. He besieged svarga. Devas ran away in fear. Hiraṇyākṣa, shaking his club, jumped from the sky into the sea and engaged himself in the sport of thrashing the waves with his club. Years passed by like this, and at last he went to Vibhāvārī, the capital of Varuṇa and challenged him to fight. Varuṇa came out of the palace, admitted his incapacity to fight Hiraṇyākṣa, and suggested to him to challenge Mahāviṣṇu. Accordingly he set out in search of Mahāviṣṇu. It was during this period of time that the earth got engulfed in water. Svāyambhuvamanu requested his father, Brahmā to raise up the earth from water. But, nowhere could be seen the earth, everywhere it was only a vast expanse of water. Brahmā then meditated upon Mahāviṣṇu, who came out through Brahmā's nose in the form of a tiny boar. It grew up into a very big boar within no time, and jumped from the sky into the ocean, and within a few minutes it picked up from under the ocean the earth on its tusks and appeared on the surface of the water. Hiraṇyākṣa understood that the boar, which without the least fear picked up the earth from

Pātāla was none other than Mahāviṣṇu and he challenged Viṣṇu to fight. After replacing the earth in its old position Viṣṇu fought with Hiraṇyākṣa and killed him.

4) *Hiraṇyakaśipu.* With the killing of his brother, Hiraṇyakaśipu's hatred and enmity towards Viṣṇu increased very much. He, by doing tapas for very long years, secured boons from Brahmā and conquered the three worlds and ruled them as Triloka Cakravartī (Emperor of the three worlds). He prohibited throughout the empire not only the chanting of Viṣṇu's name, but even thinking about him (Viṣṇu) by his subjects. "Hiraṇyāya namaḥ" (salutations to Hiraṇya) replaced the old custom of chanting 'Nārāyaṇāya namaḥ' (salutations to Nārāyaṇa). Meantime, a son called Prahāda, a great devotee of Mahāviṣṇu was born to Hiraṇyakaśipu. (For the story of Hiraṇyakaśipu's death see Prahāda). (Kamba Rāmāyaṇa, Yuddha Kāṇḍa; Padma Purāṇa, Bhūmikhaṇḍa, Chapter 20).

5) *Story about the name Hiraṇyakaśipu.* Sage Kaśyapa once conducted an Aśvamedha yajña. A golden seat was put up there for the great sages who came to participate in the yajña. Diti was pregnant during the time of the yajña, and while it was duly progressing she one day came and sat on the above-mentioned golden seat, and very shortly she delivered a child. As the child was delivered on the golden seat the child came to be called Hiraṇyakaśipu. (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, 8, 5, 7-12; Vāyu Purāṇa 67, 69).

HIRAṆYABĀHU. A nāga born in Vāsuki's dynasty. He was burnt to death at the sarpa satra of Janamejaya. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 57, Verse 6).

HIRAṆYABINDU. A sacred place near the Himālayas. During his pilgrimage Arjuna visited this place also. A bath in this tīrtha will wash off one's sins. Hiraṇyabindu is situated on the top of Mount Kālāñjara.

HIRAṆYADHANUS. A King of forest tribes. Ekalavya, the great master of archery was Hiraṇyadhanus's son (See Ekalavya).

HIRAṆYAGARBHA. A synonym of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (Śānti Parva, Chapter 342, Verse 96).

HIRAṆYAHASTA. A son born to princess Vadhrimatī thanks to the blessing of the Aśvinīdevas. She was married by a eunuch. Sorrow-stricken at such a marriage the princess requested the Aśvinīdevas for children and they gave her a son, (R̥gveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 17, Sūkta 116) who was called Hiraṇyahasta. He became a sage and married the beautiful daughter of King Madirāśva. (Śānti Parva, Chapter 234, Verse 35).

HIRAṆYAKAŚIPU I. (See Hiraṇya).

HIRAṆYAKAŚIPU II. A dānava. He once shook Mount Meru and Śiva granted him welfare and prosperity. (Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 14, Verse 73).

HIRAṆYĀKṢA I. A brother of Hiraṇyakaśipu. (See Hiraṇya).

HIRAṆYĀKṢA II. One of the sons of Viśvāmitra, who was a Brahmavādin. (Anuśāsana Parva. Chapter 4, Verse 57).

HIRAṆYANĀBHA I. A King born in the solar dynasty. He was the son of Vidhṛti and the father of Puṣya. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

HIRAṆYANĀBHA II. A son of Sṛñjaya. A child named Suvarṇaṣṭhīvī was born to Sṛñjaya, but it died before long, and then it was Nārada who brought it