

oceans, rivers, streams etc. and all of them together gave him immense wealth. Śiva became a particular friend of Kubera. (Śalya Parva, Chapter 47).

4) *Kubera in Laṅkā*. Afterwards Kubera performed penance for ten thousand years in water with head submerged, to please Brahmā. Yet, Brahmā did not appear. Then he performed penance standing on one foot in the centre of Pañcāgni. Brahmā appeared and asked him to choose any boon. Kubera requested that he might be made a lokapālaka (protector of the universe) and the custodian of wealth, and Brahmā responded by supplying Kubera the treasures Śaikha nidhi and Padmanidhi and also the Puṣpaka Vimāna as vehicle. He was also appointed one of the Aṣṭadīkपालakas. (Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirṛti, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Kubera and Īśa are the eight protectors of the eight regions). Kubera's city is called Mahodaya.

Kubera felt really happy and told his father Viśravas about his new status and dignity. The father also blessed the son. Kubera requested his father to get a city built for him to live in, and his father asked him to settle down in Laṅkā built by Maya on top of the mountain Trikūṭa in the middle of the south sea. From that day onwards Kubera took his abode in Laṅkā. (It was originally built for Indra).

5) *Old history of Laṅkā*. Once upon a time when Brahmā was repeating the Vedas he felt hungry. He was annoyed that at that untimely hour he should have felt hungry, and from his angry face emerged the Rākṣasa called Heti. From his hunger emerged the Yakṣa called Praheti. The Rākṣasa turned out to be an unrighteous being, and the Yakṣa a righteous person. Heti married Bhayā, daughter of Kāla, and a son Vidyutkeśa was born to them, who wedded Sālakaṭaṅkā, daughter of Sandhyā. To them were born a child, whom they forsook in the valley of mountain Manthara and went their own way. Śiva and Pārvatī came that way just then, saw the forsaken child and blessed it. At once the child became a youth. Śiva named him Sukeśa, and he married Devavatī, the daughter of a Gandharva called Maṇimaya. To them were born three sons called Mālyavān, Sumālī, and Mālī. Thanks to the blessings of Śiva all of them became youths as soon as they were born. By means of penances they secured from Brahmā the boon to conquer the three worlds.

They then returned to their father. They did not relish the advice of their father to lead a righteous life. They went round the three worlds harassing people. Maya built for them the city called Laṅkā on the top of the Mountain Trikūṭa.

There is a story about the origin of Trikūṭa. Once a controversy arose between Vāsuki and Vāyubhagavān as to who was the greater of the two. To prove that he was greater than Vāyu, Vāsuki enveloped with his body mountain Mahāmeru so that Vāyu (wind) could not enter it, and Vāyu tried to blow off the mountain with the result that a dust storm concealed the whole world from view. The Devas took refuge in Viṣṇu, who pacified Vāsuki, and he then unwound one coil round the mountain. Vāyu took advantage of the opportunity and swept off one peak of the mountain to the South into the sea, and that peak is Trikūṭa.

Mālyavān, Sumālī and Mālī settled down in Laṅkā, and they married Sundarī, Ketumatī and Vasudhā, the three daughters of Narmadā, a Gandharva woman. Seven

sons called Vajramuṣṭi, Virūpākṣa, Durmukha, Suptaghna Yajñakośa, Matta and Unmatta and a daughter called Nalā were born to Mālyavān and Sundarī. Ten sons called Prahasta, Akampa, Vikaṭa, Kālakāmukha, Dhūmrākṣa, Daṇḍa, Supārśva, Saṁhrāda, Prakvāta and Bhāsakarṇa and four daughters called Vekā, Puṣpotkaṭā, Kaikasī and Kumbhīnasī were born to Sumālī and Ketumatī. Four sons called Anala, Anila, Aha and Sampātī (these four were the ministers of Vibhīṣaṇa) were born to Mālī and Vasudhā.

When the harassments of the Rākṣasas became unbearable the Devas sought protection from Śiva, and Indra detailed to him about the unrighteous actions of Mālyavān, Sumālī and Mālī. Śiva directed the Devas to Viṣṇu, who set out, to fight against the Rākṣasas. Mālī cut at Garuḍa, and Viṣṇu killed him (Mālī) with his Sudarśana Cakra. The other Rākṣasas retreated to Laṅkā. As their presence in Laṅkā was dangerous to the Devas, Viṣṇu directed the Sudarśana Cakra to go to Laṅkā every day and kill the Rākṣasas in groups. The Cakra began its work, and the remaining Rākṣasas escaped to Pātāla. Laṅkā became thus deserted and Kubera took his abode there. The Yakṣas, born from the hunger of Brahmā roamed about without a leader and ultimately settled down in Laṅkā under the leadership of Kubera. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

6) *Kubera left Laṅkā*. The other sons of Viśravas like Rāvaṇa returned with boons from Brahmā for the conquest of the earth, and the first thing Rāvaṇa did was to drive away his brother Kubera from Laṅkā. He also took by force the Puṣpaka Vimāna of Kubera, who cursed Rāvaṇa thus: "This will never be your vehicle, but will become that of his, who kills you." Kubera, with the Yakṣas, Kinnaras etc. went north and settled on mount Gandhamādāna. (Vana Parva, Chapter 275).

7) *Kubera's sabhā*. The assembly hall of Kubera is 100 yojanas in length and 100 yojanas wide. High walls surround the city. In the centre of the city is a beautiful mansion studded with gems where Kubera sits surrounded by thousands of women. Māruta Deva carrying fragrance from Kalpavṛkṣa worships him. Gandharvas and Apsarā women entertain Kubera with music. Mīrakesī, Rambhā, Menakā, Urvaśī, Citrasenā, Śucismitā, Ghṛtācī, Puñjikasthālā, Viśvācī, Sahajanyā, Pramlocā, Vargā, Saurabheyī, Samīcī, Budbudā, and Latā are the chief among them. Maṇibhadra (Māṇibhadra), Dhanada, Āśveta, Bhadra, Guhyaka, Kaśeraka, Gaṇḍakaṇḍu, Pradyota, Mahābala, Ka, Tumburu, Piśāca, Gajakarṇa, Viśāla, Varāhakarṇa, Tāmroṣṭha, Halakakṣa, Halodaka Hamsacūḍa, Śaṅkhāvarta, Hemanetra, Vibhīṣaṇa, Puṣpānana, Piṅgalaka, Śoṇitoda, Pravālaka, Vṛkṣabāṣpaniketa, Cīravāśas and Nalakūbara are the chief members in the court of Kubera. Śiva, a good friend of Kubera, very often visits him. Gandharvas and sages like Viśvāvasu, Hāhā, Hūhū, Parvata, Tumburu and Śailūṣa live in Kubera's assembly. Nārada told Dharmaputra that the Kuberasabhā was thus always sweet and pleasant. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 10).

8) *Fight between Kubera and Rāvaṇa*. Kubera got secret information that the Devas and the brahmins had decided jointly to complain to Mahāviṣṇu about their unbearable harassment by Rāvaṇa. He sent a messenger to his brother Rāvaṇa warning him to lead a more righteous life. Rāvaṇa got so much enraged at the