

advice of his brother that he cut the messenger into pieces and served as food to the Rākṣasas.

Rāvaṇa mobilised his army against Kubera and the Devas, and decided first to attack Kubera. At the head of a huge army led by heroes like Mahodara, Prahasta, Mārica, Śuka, Sāraṇa, Vajradanīṣṭra, Dhūmrākṣa, Virūpākṣa, Yūpākṣa, Mahāpārśva, Matta, Unmatta, Vikaṭa, Suptaghna, Yajñāntaka, Makarākṣa, Kumbhakarṇa, Atikāya and Akṣakumāra, Rāvaṇa marched to Alakāpurī where a fierce battle ensued between Rāvaṇa's and Kubera's armies. Many Yakṣas were killed by Rāvaṇa's army, and the Yakṣa hero Maṇicara killed a large number of Rākṣasas. As a last resort Rāvaṇa thrashed Maṇicara on the head with a club and this turned the hair on his head to one side. From that day Maṇicara came to be known as Pārśvamauli (head turned to one side). In the fight that followed between Kubera and Rāvaṇa the former fell down unconscious. But, the Yakṣas brought two Vimānas and carried Kubera to the palace. Rāvaṇa plundered Kubera's palace and carried off to Laṅkā a lot of costly gems and other wealth. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa)

9) *Kubera became a Chameleon.* King Marutta once performed a Maheśvara yajña to which were invited Indra, Varuṇa, Kubera and Kāla. While the yajña was progressing Rāvaṇa came that way with his army. Indra and the others, in great fear, ran away and escaped disguised in various forms, Kubera assuming the form of a chameleon. After resuming his own form Kubera gave the Chameleon the gift to change its colour. It was further blessed that to the onlookers it would seem that there was gold on its cheeks. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

10) *Kubera cursed Virūpākṣa.* Kubera had a yakṣa called Virūpākṣa as Manager, and he was in charge of Kubera's treasures also. Virūpākṣa had employed a gigantic yakṣa to look after the treasures outside the capital. One day a brahmin called Pāśupata came in search of treasures to Alakāpurī. He knew a very peculiar art, viz. he would go about with a lamp lighted with 'the ghee of men' (oily substance extracted from human body) and the lamp would tumble down from his hands on earth exactly on spots where treasures lay hidden. Pāśupata tried to unearth Kubera's treasures by the above means, and Virūpākṣa who got scent of the brahmin's activities got him killed. Since a brahmin (Pāśupata) was killed the sin of brahmahatyā affected the Yakṣa community, and angered at this Kubera cursed Virūpākṣa into a man, and he was born on earth as the son of a brahmin. Virūpākṣa's wife complained about this curse to Kubera, who told her that she would be born as a daughter of the maid-servant of the brahmin as whose son her husband was born, and that he (son) would marry her. Kubera, further told her that association with her would redeem Virūpākṣa from the curse and that both of them would return to him. Accordingly she lay as a human child at the gates of a brahmin maid-servant, who took it to her master. The child and the brahmin's son grew up together in his father's house, and in due course they were wedded to each other. They felt so happy as though at a reunion after a long separation. First the brahmin boy and after him his wife expired, and they returned to Alakāpurī. (Kathāsaritsāgara)

11) *Kubera and emperor Pṛthu.* While emperor Pṛthu was ruling the land in the best interests of his subjects, mountains, trees, Devas, Asuras, Saptarṣis, Rākṣasas etc. came to the earth and sang his praises, and as ordered by the emperor the earth turned itself into a cow and they milked her. It was Kubera who served as calf when the Rākṣasas began to milk the cow. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 69, Verse 24).

The Devas crowned Pṛthu as emperor, and, on that occasion imperial symbols were presented to him. The throne was presented by Kubera; the royal umbrella by Varuṇa; the crown by Indra and the sceptre by Yama. (Bhāgavata, 4th Skandha Chapter 15, Verses 14 and 15).

12) *Kubera cursed Tumburu.* The Yakṣa called Tumburu once displeased Kubera, who cursed him into a Rākṣasa. He was to be redeemed from the curse on his death at the hands of Śrī Rāma. Tumburu, who was born as Virādha, the Rākṣasa in Daṇḍakāraṇya attacked Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa during their stay in exile in the forest and was killed by them. He was cremated in the forest. He resumed his former form as Tumburu and returned to Kubera's palace. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Araṇya Kāṇḍa, Canto 4).

13) *Kubera became Piṅgalākṣa.* Kubera once looked with jealousy at Pārvatī seated on the left thigh of Śiva, and therefore, he became blind in one eye. When Pārvatī regained her equanimity she turned that eye of Kubera into yellow in colour so that he might always remember the incident. Henceforth Kubera came to be known as Ekapiṅgala.

14) *Agastya cursed Kubera.* Kubera also was invited to the chanting of mantras held by the Devas at Kuśāvati. Kubera was on his way to Kuśāvati with Maṇimān when the latter spat on the head of Agastya, who was performing penance on the banks of river Kāṇḍī. Agastya cursed them thus:—"Oh Kubera, your attendant Maṇimān has insulted me. Therefore, he himself and the army will be killed by a man. You will grieve over their death. But, you will be absolved from this curse at the sight of the man, who had killed Maṇimān and his army."

Bhīmasena, who went to mount Gandhamādana in search of the Saugandhika flower could kill Maṇimān and his soldiers because of this curse of Agastya. After killing Maṇimān, Bhīma saw Kubera in person, and the latter got absolved from the curse. (Vana Parva, Chapter 161).

15) *Other information about Kubera.* (i) He comforted the Pāṇḍavas once during their life in exile in the forest. (Vana Parva, Chapter 161, Verse 41).

(ii) During the war with Rāvaṇa when Śrī Rāma fainted on the field, it was the water, purified by mantras, which Kubera sent through the Yakṣa, Guhyaka, which brought Rāma back to consciousness. (Vana Parva, Chapter 289, Verse 9).

(iii) Kubera once cursed the Yakṣa called Sthūnakarṇa. He went to live in forest. Ambā the woman became a male by getting the penis of Sthūnakarṇa. (See under Ambā and Sthūnakarṇa).

(iv) Śukrācārya once gave Kubera a lot of wealth. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 6, Verse 23).

(v) A King called Mucukunda once fought with Kubera. (Śānti Parva, Chapter 74, Verse 4). See under Mucukunda.