

of all living forces and drove away Kubera from Laᅅkā and took possession of Laᅅkā as the place of his abode. He took along with him all the demons residing in Pātālaloka.

3). *The design of Laᅅkā.* Viᅒvakarmā, the celebrated architect designed the beautiful Laᅅkā and the supreme building ability of Maya brought into form the enchanting city. On the top of Trikūᅒa was the all important Navaratnaśᅓᅓga and on a spacious plateau on its top stood the majestic city of Laᅅkā. In the centre was the ten-storeyed palace of Rāvaᅒa and around it in eight different places stood the nine-storeyed buildings of the great ministers of Rāvaᅒa. The nine edifices were like the Navagrahas (nine planets) of Laᅅkā. Each of the nine edifices was built with one of the nine gems and the royal palace in the centre was built by using all the nine gems. Even the sun avoided passing over these buildings and changed his path either a bit to the north or to the south making what is known as the Dakᅒiᅒāyāna and Uttarāyāna. (Yuddha Kāᅇᅒa, Kamba Rāmāyāᅒa).

4). *No sand in Laᅅkā.* The ancient belief is that there is no sand in Laᅅkā. The fourth taraᅅga of Kathāᅒmukha-lambaka of Kathāsaritsāgara gives a story relating to the reason for this belief.

Garuᅒa flew to Devaloka to bring Amᅓta (nectar) to redeem his mother from her servitude to his step-mother. On his way he took an elephant and tortoise from near the āśrama of Kaᅒyapa for his food. He sat on a huge banyan tree to eat them. On the ground below the Bālahhilyas were performing penance. The branch on which Garuᅒa sat with his food sagged and before it broke Garuᅒa took away the elephant and tortoise and deposited them on the mountain Gandhamādana near the ocean. The branch broke and fell into the ocean and the city of Laᅅkā was built on the branch and that was why the ancient people believed there was no sand in Laᅅkā.

5). *Other details.*

(i) Sahadeva sent Ghaᅒotkaca to collect tribute from the King of Laᅅkā for the Rājasūyayajᅒa of Dharmaputra. (Chapter 31, Dakᅒiᅒātyapāᅒha).

(ii) The people of Laᅅkā attended the Rājasūyayajᅒa of Dharmaputra and took charge of serving rice in the feast. (Śloka 23, Chapter 53, Vana Parva).

(iii) Hanūmān once burnt the city of Laᅅkā with a fire from his tail. (See under RĀMA).

(iv) It was Braᅒuᅒā who gave Laᅅkā at first to Kubera. (Śloka 16, Chapter 274, Vana Parva).

(v) After the death of Rāvaᅒa, Vibhīᅒaᅒa was crowned the King of Laᅅkā (Śloka 5, Chapter 291, Vana Parva).

LAᅒKĀLAKᅒMĪ. A Devī who was relieved of her curse by a hard stroke of his hand by Hanūmān.

1). *How she came to Laᅅkā.* LaᅅkālakᅒmĪ was VijayalakᅒmĪ in her previous birth. She was the watch-girl of the treasury of Braᅒmā and one day finding her negligent of her duties Braᅒuᅒā cursed her "Go to the earth and be the watch-girl of the palace-gate tower of Rāvaᅒa". She begged for relief and Braᅒmā said, "During the incarnation of Viᅒᅒu as Rāma his wife Sītā will be carried away by Rāvaᅒa and Hanūmān will come in search of her to Laᅅkā. You will then block the way of that mighty monkey and he will then strike you down by a fierce blow of his hand. You will be then released from the curse and come back to me."

VijayalakᅒmĪ accordingly was born in Laᅅkā and became the watch-girl of Rāvaᅒa's palace.

2) *Release from the curse.* Hanūmān coming to Laᅅkā in search of Sītā tried to find an opening through which to enter Laᅅkā. Then he saw a huge tower-gate on the northern side of the mountain Suvelagiri. When he reached the gate he found it closed. The mighty monkey beat hard on the door and the strong door burst into two and fell on to the floor. Instantly a ferocious woman of enormous size rushed to the gate with a piercing roar and blocked it. Hanūmān found the situation dangerous and so gave her a powerful blow and felled her. She then very politely asked Hanūmān who he was and Hanūmān revealed his identity and told her the purpose of his visit. LaᅅkālakᅒmĪ then took leave of Hanūmān and leaving Laᅅkā went to Śᅓ Rāma and worshipped him. Rāma blessed her and she returned to Satyaloka and started doing her duties as before. (Sundara Kāᅇᅒa, Kamba Rāmāyāᅒa).

LAPETĪKĀ. A holy place. If a man visits this place he would get the benefit of conducting a Vājapeya yajᅒa. (Śloka 15, Chapter 58, Vana Parva).

LAPITĀ. The second wife of a sage called Mandapāla. (See for details under Mandapāla).

LATĀ. A celestial maiden. She was the companion of another Devī of name Vargā. Though she became a crocodile by the curse of a braᅒmin she was set free by Arjuna. (See under Paᅅcatīrtha).

LĀᅒA. A particular division of the Kᅒatriyas. Because a set of the Kᅒatriyas showed jealousy towards the Braᅒmins they became Lāᅒas. (Śloka 17, Chapter 35, Anuᅒāsana Parva).

LATĀVEᅒᅒA. A mountain situated on the southern side of Dvārakā. It had five colours and so resembled the Indracāpa. (Chapter 33, Dakᅒiᅒātya Pāᅒha, Sabhā Parva).

LAUHITYA I. A country of Purāᅅic fame. This country of out-castes was conquered by Bhīma and he took from there different kinds of diamonds. (Śloka 26, Chapter 30, Sabhā Parva).

LAUHITYA II. A sacred place constructed by the powers of Śᅓ Rāma. If one bathes in a pond there one would become golden in colour. (Śloka 2, Chapter 85, Vana Parva and Chapter 25, Anuᅒāsana Parva).

LAVA. A son of Sītā. (See under Kuᅒa II for more details).

LAVAᅒA (M). A hell. (See under Kāla I).

LAVAᅒA I. A demon. He was the son of a demon called Madhu. Madhuvana on the banks of the river Kāᅒindī was the abode of this demon. This demon was a great oppressor of the Devas and Śatruᅒghna had to kill him. Śatruᅒghna then constructed a beautiful city there and lived there. In recognition of the increasing prosperity of the city it was named Madhurā. After the death of Śatruᅒghna his two sons lived there. (4th Skandha, Devī Bhāgavata).

LAVAᅒA II. A King who was a grandson of Hariᅒcandra. He once conducted a Rājasūya in his imagination and became a Caᅇᅒāla. (story in Jᅒānavāsiᅒᅒha). This story was narrated to Śᅓ Rāma by Vasiᅒᅒha to teach him the truth that man does not realise that this whole universe is an illusion only because of his ignorance.