

Diti's womb was cut into 49 pieces which became 49 Maruts. is given in Chapter 71 of Vāmana Purāna as follows:

Kaśyapa's first wife Aditi became the mother of Devas and his second wife Diti became the mother of Daityas. The chief of the Devas was Indra and the chiefs of Daityas were Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu. At the request of Indra, Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu were slain by Mahāviṣṇu. Diti who was grieved at the death of her sons, approached Kaśyapa and requested him to give her a son who would be strong enough to kill Indra. Kaśyapa told her that if she could perform tapas for 10,000 Divyavarṣas with due observances, she would get a son who would be able to kill Indra and conquer the three worlds. He gave her a long list of conditions to be observed during the tapas, some of which were as follows:—Do not injure any creature; do not curse; do not tell lies; do not cut nails or hair; do not touch any unclean object; do not get angry, do not speak to wicked people; do not wear soiled clothes; do not wear garlands used by others; do not eat what is left over by another; do not eat meat touched by a Śūdra woman. Putting on clean, white dress, carrying auspicious substances, everyday before breakfast, cows, Brāhmaṇas, goddess Lakṣmī and Kaśyapa himself should be worshipped." This observance is known as "Pumsavana." He said that if she performed the tapas with this austere observance, a son capable of killing Indra would be born to her.

Diti started the observance as advised by her husband. Kaśyapa left for Udaya mountain. After his departure, Indra came to the Āśrama and pretending friendship offered to serve Diti as an attendant. Diti accepted his offer and allowed him to serve her. One day Diti who was utterly tired fell asleep and Indra took advantage of this opportunity and gained entrance into her womb through her nostrils. He cut the child in Diti's womb with his weapon Vajra into seven pieces. At that time the child cried aloud and Indra said to it "Mā ruda" which means "Do not cry". He cut each of the seven pieces again into seven pieces and thus 49 Maruts were born out of the 49 pieces. Since Indra said "Mā ruda" they came to be known as "Maruts". All these Maruts subsequently became Indra's servants.

After this, Indra with his weapon came out of Diti's body. With joined palms he begged Diti's pardon and explained to her that he destroyed the child in her womb since he was destined to be his (Indra's) enemy.

MARUTTA I. A wealthy king who lived in Kṛtayuga.

). *Genealogy.* Descended from Viṣṇu in the following order:—Brahmā, Marīci, Kaśyapa, Vivasvān, Vaivasvata Manu, Mahābāhu, Prasandhi, Kṣupa, Ikṣvāku, Viṁśa, Kalyāna, Khanīetra, Suvarca, Karandhama and Marutta.

2) *How Marutta got gold.* As soon as Marutta became king he began to perform a Yāga. Money was required for it. He was puzzled as to how to raise funds. Besides, Indra was trying to obstruct the Yāga. At last he consulted Nārada who told him that Brhaspati's brother Samvartaka was performing tapas in the forest and if Marutta approached him, he would give him enough money for this purpose. So Marutta went to Samvartaka. He advised Marutta to worship Śiva. Accordingly Marutta went to Kailāsa and got plenty of gold by worshipping Śiva and returned with it and

began his Yāga. In spite of their efforts, Indra and other gods were not able to spoil Marutta's Yāga. After the Yāga Marutta stored up the surplus wealth in the neighbourhood of Himālayas where his capital was situated.

After the Bhārata Yuddha, Dharmaputra was in need of money to re-establish his administration and for conducting an Aśvamedha yāga. At that time sage Vyāsa informed him about the gold which Marutta had left in the neighbourhood of the Himālayas. It was by fetching that gold that the Pāṇdavas conducted their Aśvamedhayāga. (M.B. Aśvamedha Parva, Chapters 3-10).

3) *Marutta and Rāvaṇa.* Once Rāvaṇa started on a triumphal tour in his Puspaka Vimāna with his followers. It was at that time that Marutta was performing his famous Yāga. The various gods were also present on that occasion. Alarmed at the sight of Rāvaṇa who was invincible by virtue of a boon he had received, the gods assumed the shape of different animals and birds. Indra became a peacock, Dharmarāja (Yama) became a crow; Kubera became a chameleon; Varuṇa transformed himself into a swan, and so on. Rāvaṇa entered the precincts of the Yajña and said to Marutta:—"Either you fight with me or else admit defeat from me." To this Marutta replied calmly:—"May I know who you are?" Rāvaṇa answered with a smile of contempt:—"I am amused at your strange pretence! Do you mean to say that you do not know Rāvaṇa who is the younger brother of Kubera? There is no one but you in all the three worlds, who does not know me. I have won the Puspakavimāna after defeating my elder brother." Marutta retorted with bitter irony:—"As a younger brother who has defeated his elder brother, you are certainly a great man. There is no praiseworthy hero equal to you in all these three worlds. Do you brag that you have defeated your elder brother? I do not know whether you have received the boon by your righteous conduct. I have not heard the stories which you have told just now. You wicked fellow, stop there! I don't think that you will return alive!" Saying this Marutta took his bow and arrows and got ready for a fight.

But Samvartaka stopped Marutta saying "O King! If you would please heed my advice, do not prepare for a fight here. We have started "Mahevarasatra". If we do not bring it to a conclusion, the whole family will come to an end. One who performs this Yāga should not be engaged in a fight. He should not even become a victim to anger. This Rākṣasa (Rāvaṇa) is invincible. Your victory is doubtful." At this, Marutta put down his bow and began to occupy himself again with the affairs of the Yajña. Just then Sukra shouted, "Rāvaṇa has won." The Rākṣasas and their leader Rāvaṇa continued their tour after eating the Maharṣis who had come to take part in the Yāga. After Rāvaṇa left the place, the Devas resumed their own forms. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

4) *Other Details.*

(i) Marutta flourished in Yama's assembly. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 8, Verse 16).

(ii) Marutta is considered as one of the "Pañcamahā-samraṭs" (five great emperors). The five great emperors