

out of his four hands would be lost. After having said this the Jin disappeared.

News about this peculiar child spread far and wide and many kings visited him. Damaghoṣa placed the child on the lap of each of them. But, no physical change occurred to him. Then one day Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balabhadra came to see the child, whose mother Śrutaśravas (she was also the sister of Kṛṣṇa's father) placed him on Kṛṣṇa's lap. Immediately two hands and the third eye of the child vanished, and with tears in her eyes the mother prayed Kṛṣṇa never to kill Śiśupāla, and Kṛṣṇa promised that he would forgive the crimes of Śiśupāla a hundred times. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 43).

3) *Other information.*

(i) Śiśupāla was present at the wedding of Draupadī. In his attempt to draw the bow he fell down on his knees. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 185, Verse 23).

(ii) He was present at the wedding of the daughter of the King of Kaliṅga also. (Śānti Parva, Chapter 4, Verse 6).

(iii) He was the Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Jarāsandha. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 14, Verse 10).

(iv) When Bhīma conquered all the kingdoms Śiśupāla honoured him. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 29, Verse 11).

(v) He too was present at the Rājasūya of Yudhiṣṭhira. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 234, Verse 14).

(vi) At the Rājasūya, Kṛṣṇa heaped insulting words on Śiśupāla. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 37).

(vii) Śiśupāla objected to the selection of Kṛṣṇa as president of the Rājasūya and controversy followed it. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 39, Verse 11).

(viii) Śiśupāla insulted Bhīṣma at the Rājasūya. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 41).

(ix) Once in the absence of Kṛṣṇa Śiśupāla attacked Dvārakā. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 45 Verse 7).

(x) He stole the sacrificial horse of Vasudeva. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 9).

(xi) He abducted the wife of Babhru. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 10).

(xii) He abducted the daughter of his uncle, the King of Viśālā. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 11).

(xiii) Following the above he was killed in battle by Kṛṣṇa. (Chapter 45, Verse 25, Sabhā Parva).

(xiv) After death his effulgence got absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 26).

(xv) Kṛṣṇa once told Arjuna that he killed Śiśupāla for his (Arjuna's) good. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 181, Verse 21).

ŚIŚUPĀLAVADHAPARVA. A Sub-Parva of Sabhā Parva, Chapters 40-45.

ŚIŚUROMĀ. A nāga (serpent) born in the family of Tākṣaka. This Nāga was burnt to death in Janamejaya's Sarpasatra. (Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 57, Verse 10).

SITĀ. A warrior of Subrahmaṇya. (Mahābhārata, Śalya Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 69).

SITĀ. Wife of Śrī Rāma.

1) *Who is Sitā?* Sitā is the incarnation of Mahālakṣmī. Lakṣmī took the birth of a woman because of the curse of Sarasvatī. Vedavatī, Sitā, Pāñcālī, all these women of chastity were the incarnations of Lakṣmī. The stories of Lakṣmī passing from birth to birth such as Vedavatī, Tulasī, Sitā, Pāñcālī and so on until at last she reached the

world of Viṣṇu, occurring in various Purāṇas are collected and given here.

Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā were the wives of Mahāviṣṇu. One day Viṣṇu was sitting with his three wives and entertaining them with conversation when Devī Gaṅgā looked at Viṣṇu amorously. Instantly a quarrel arose among the three of them. When the row became uncontrollable, Sarasvatī cursed Lakṣmī to take birth in the earth as a plant. Gaṅgā cursed Sarasvatī and made her a river. Sarasvatī cursed Gaṅgā and made her a river. At the end of all these rows and curses Viṣṇu stood up and said to Lakṣmī. "Lakṣmī! you will take birth as the daughter of Dharmadhvaja on the earth with the name Tulasī. In order that the curse of Sarasvatī may come true, a plant called Tulasī (holy basil) will grow up on the earth from a portion of you. While you are living as the daughter of Dharmadhvaja, an asura named Śaṅkhacūḍa born from my portion will marry you."

The curse was realized. Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā became rivers. Lakṣmī was about to be born as the daughter of Dharmadhvaja. Who was Dharmadhvaja? He was a man of righteous deeds and good qualities, born of the family of Dakṣasāvarnī who was born from a portion of Mahāviṣṇu. Brahmasāvarnī was born from Dakṣasāvarnī. Dharmasāvarnī begot Rudrasāvarnī, Indrasāvarnī begot Vṛṣadhvaja. Rathadhvaja was the son of Vṛṣadhvaja. Two sons named Dharmadhvaja and Kuśadhvaja were born to Rathadhvaja. Dharmadhvaja and Kuśadhvaja were performing penance before Devī Lakṣmī to regain the wealth and prosperity lost by the curse of the Sun.

How did Dharmadhvaja and Kuśadhvaja lose their prosperity? Their grandfather Vṛṣadhvaja was a devotee of Śiva. He performed penance before Śiva for a long time. Śiva became pleased with Vṛṣadhvaja and lived in his hermitage for the period of three Devayugas. This king Vṛṣadhvaja made a proclamation that none other than Śiva should be worshipped. As all the other gods were despised, the Sun got angry and cursed Vṛṣadhvaja. "Let the prosperity of yours and your posterity be destroyed." Śiva did not like the action taken by the Sun against his favourite. Śiva took his trident and went against the Sun, who took refuge near his father Prajāpati Kaśyapa. Kaśyapa complained to Brahmā. Brahmā ran to Vaikuṅṭha. Śiva also came there with his trident. Viṣṇu looked at them and said "You gods, hear this. What is the need of all this hurry? Within the short time you have taken to run up to this place so many years have elapsed in the world. It is a long time since Vṛṣadhavaja died. His son Rathadhvaja also is dead. Rathadhvaja has two sons named Dharmadhvaja and Kuśadhvaja. They both have become Kings. But because of the curse of the Sun, they are devoid of any radiance. They are now worshipping Mahālakṣmī for radiance." Hearing this talk of Mahāviṣṇu all of them returned to their places.

It has been mentioned that Dharmadhvaja and Kuśadhvaja had been engaged in penance before Mahālakṣmī. Devī Mahālakṣmī appeared before them and granted their wish. Devī promised them that she would take birth as the daughter of each of them, and she would recover for them all the wealth and prosperity they had lost. Accordingly Mahālakṣmī took birth by her portion as the daughter of Mādhavī, the wife of Dharmadhvaja