

DĀŚŪRA. A sage. For further details see under Śaralomā.

DĀSĪ. An important river in India. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 31).

DASRA. The first of the gods called the Aśvinīdevas. The two gods Dasra and Nāsatya are known by the collective name Aśvinīdevas. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 208, Stanza 17).

DASYU. The ancient dwellers of North India. What we see in Ṛgveda is mostly a history of the Āryans from the period of their exodus from the plateau Kumbha till they reached the banks of the Yamunā. The plateau of Kumbha is Kabul. The Dasyus were the first people the Āryans had to confront with after passing the Indus. Ṛgveda bears testimony to the fact that the civilization of the Dasyus was far advanced than that of the Āryans. Śaṁbara, King of the Dasyus, was the ruler of hundred cities. All the cities were fortified with strong walls and fortresses, which are described as 'aśvamayī', 'āyasī', 'śatabhujī' etc. The greatest enemies of the Āryans were the 'Paṇis' of these cities. They were a particular class of people of these cities. In the 'Nirukta of Yāska' it is mentioned that paṇis were traders. Names of many of the Kings of the Dasyus occur in the Ṛgveda. Dhuni, Cumuri, Pipru, Varcas, Śaṁbara and such others are the most valiant and mighty among them. The most important of the several tribes of the Dasyus were the Śimiyus, the Kikaṭas, Śigrus and the Yakṣus. They are mentioned as the Anāsas in the Ṛgveda. (Anāsas—without nose). Perhaps their nose was flat; more over they are stated as having dark complexion. So it may be assumed that the Dasyus were Dravidians. They talked a primitive language, and they despised sacrificial religion. They did not worship Gods like Indra and others. They possibly worshipped the Phallus, Śiva, Devi and the like.

DĀTAKACCHA. An ancient country on the bank of the river, Narmadā. (Kathāsarisāgara).

DATTA (DATTAKA). See under Dattātreya.

DATTAMITRA. This is another name of Sumitra the King of Sauvīra. Arjuna, during his conquest of the countries, defeated this King. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 183, Stanza 20).

DATTĀTMAN. A Viśvadeva. (A class of gods concerned with sacrifice to the manes). (M.B. Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 91, Stanza 34).

DATTĀTREYA. (DATTA). A hermit famous in the purāṇas.

1) *Birth*. Anasūyā, the wife of hermit Atri gave birth to Dattātreya. But Dattātreya was the incarnation of Mahāviṣṇu.

There is a story in Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa how Mahāviṣṇu came to incarnate as Dattātreya.

Once there was a hermit called Aṇimāṇḍavya (Māṇḍavya). While the hermit was engaged in silent meditation, some robbers passed by that way. The King's men who were chasing the robbers, came to the hermit and asked him about the robbers. The hermit did not break the silence. The King's men, thinking the hermit to be the thief bound his hands and legs and took him to the palace. The King ordered Māṇḍavya to be killed by piercing his body with a trident. Accordingly a trident was posted on a hill far away and Māṇḍavya was seated

1. Dattātreya is known by the name 'Datta' also in the Purāṇas.

on the tip of it. Māṇḍavya lay there in agony.

It was at this time that Śilavatī, famous for her conjugal fidelity, went to the house of a harlot, carrying her husband Ugraśravas on her shoulder. When they passed by that way Ugraśravas scolded Aṇimāṇḍavya; getting angry at this Aṇimāṇḍavya cursed Ugraśravas that he would get his head broken and die before the sun-rise. Śilavatī became very sorry when she heard the curse and she also cursed. "Let the sun not rise tomorrow". The sun did not rise next day. Everything in the world was in chaos. The devas were flurried. They went to Brahmā. Brahmā took them to Śiva. They could not find a solution. So all of them approached Mahāviṣṇu. The Trimūrtis (three gods) told the devas that the problem would be solved, and the devas returned. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara went to Śilavatī. Before seeing Śilavatī, they went to Anasūyā the wife of Atri and sought her help to persuade Śilavatī to recall her curse. Thus Anasūyā and the Trimūrtis approached Śilavatī and spoke compassionate and consolatory words. At last Śilavatī recalled the curse. The Trimūrtis convinced Śilavatī, that Ugraśravas would not die. The pleased Trimūrtis asked Anasūyā to ask for any boon. She replied that she did not want any boon except that the Trimūrtis should take birth as her sons. Accordingly Mahāviṣṇu took birth as Dattātreya, Śiva as Durvāsas and Brahmā as Candra, in the womb of Anasūyā. This is how Dattātreya was born.¹ Dattātreya did penance from his childhood and became a hermit. (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapters 39 to 44).

2) *Kārtavīryārjuna and Dattātreya*. When Kārtavīryārjuna became King Dattātreya had become very famous. Kārtavīryārjuna wanted to obtain supernatural powers. So he called the hermit Garga and asked for his advice. Garga advised him that Dattātreya was the incarnation of Viṣṇu and that he would grant his wishes. So Kārtavīryārjuna and his wife came to the river Narmadā, and taking bath in the river, began to worship Dattātreya, who was doing penance closeby. Dattātreya was pleased and went to Kārtavīryārjuna and asked him what his desire was. He requested for thousand hands and to be a youth for ever, and such other things. Dattātreya granted his wishes. After that Kārtavīryārjuna would very often go to the hermit Dattātreya for his advice. (Brahma Purāṇa, Chapter 44).

3) *Cursing Rāvaṇa*. Once Rāvaṇa went to the hermitage of Dattātreya. The hermit had placed a waterpot purified by reciting spells and incantations. Rāvaṇa stole that waterpot. When the hermit knew this, he cursed Rāvaṇa saying, "Since the water, which was evoked by spells and incantations, has fallen on your head, Monkeys will pollute your head by treading on it." (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Yuddha Kāṇḍa).

4) *Exhortation to the Sādhyas*. Mention is made in Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 36, Stanza 4, that the hermit Dattātreya gave exhortations to the Sādhyas (the sons of Dharmadeva by his wife Sādhyā).

5) A boon for the birth of Nahuṣa. See Nahuṣa.

DATTOLI. A son born to hermit Pulastya by his wife Prīti. This Dattoli was in his previous birth, Agastya of the Svāyambhuva manvantara. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Amśa 1, Chapter 10).

DĀYAKRAMA. (INHERITANCE). Dāyakrama is