

PURUMITRA. II. The first Maṇḍala of the R̥gveda mentions a Rājarsi youth Vimada marrying the daughter of Purumitra.

PURUNITHA. See under Paruñitha.

PURŪRAVAS. I. A prominent king of Candravaiṃsa (lunar race).

1) *Origin of Candravaiṃsa and birth of Purūravas.* Descending in order from Brahmā came Atri—Candra—Budha Purūravas. The dynasty which came from Candra was called the Candravaiṃsa. Though Budha was the first king of Candravaiṃsa it was Purūravas who became celebrated. The story of the birth of Purūravas is given below :

Brahmā in the beginning deputed the sage Atri for the work of creation. Atrimaharṣi started the penance called anuttara to acquire sufficient power for creation. After some years Saccidānanda brahma with an aura of lustre reflected in the heart of that pure and serene soul. In sheer ecstasy tears rolled down his cheeks and the glittering flow of water was lustfully drunk by the zones taking the form of women with a view to producing progenies. They became pregnant but were unable to bear the embryo of Atri and so they threw them away. Brahmā took them all and made them into one armoured youth and took him in his chariot to his land. Then the brahmarṣis requested Brahmā to make him their lord. When the ṛṣis, devas, gandharvas and nymphs praised him reciting sāmaveda the majestic lustre of the youth increased. It was from this that auśadhas (medicines) originated and that is why Candra is considered to be the lord of medicines, dvija and Vedasvarūpa. The Candramaṇḍala is full of chemicals. It increases and decreases according to the white half and black half of the moon-based month.

Dakṣa gave in marriage to Candra twentyseven beautiful maidens. Then Candra did penance meditating on Viṣṇu for ten thousand Kalpas. Viṣṇu pleased by his penance asked him to name a boon and Candra said "When I perform a yāga in svarga all the devas like Brahmā should come in person to my yāgaśālā and take the yāgabhāga. Śūlapāṇi should remain as a watchman at my Rājasūya." Accordingly with the blessing of Viṣṇu, Candra conducted the yāga in which Atri, Bhṛgu, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Devas, Vasus, Maruts and Viśvadevas took part. Candra gave as yāga-fees to Rtviks all the three worlds. The yāga was complete and when Candra rose up after a bath nine devīs fell in love with the amorous beauty of Candra. Lakṣmī, wife of Viṣṇu, Sinivālī, wife of Kardama, Dyuti, wife of Vibhīvasu, Puṣṭi, wife of Dhātā, Prabhā, wife of Sūrya, Kuhū, wife of Haviṣmān, Kīrti, wife of Jayanta, Amūmālī wife of Kaśyapa and Dhṛti wife of Nanda, abandoned their husbands and went with Candra. Candra treated them all as his own wives and gave them erotic pleasure to their hearts' content. Those who saw this non-virtuous act stood dumbfounded unable to curse Candra.

Attracted by the dazzling brilliance of Candra Tārā, wife of Bṛhaspati, went with him. Enraged at this, Bṛhaspati joining with other devas prepared for a fight against Candra. Devas took sides and by the mediation of Indra a conference of both the parties was held and Tārā was sent back to Bṛhaspati. Tārā was pregnant then and Tārā confessed that the child in her womb was that of Candra. So when that child was

born Candra took it away and named it Budha. Brahmā and other ṛṣis gave Budha a seat among the planets.

Budha married Ilā and they got a son named Purūravas. (See under Ilā). After that Budha performed a hundred Aśvamedhayāgas. He then enjoyed world prosperity as lord of Saptadvīpa living in the beautiful Himādrī-śṛṅga, worshipping Brahmā. (Chapter 12, Bhāga 3, Padma Purāṇa).

2) *Testing Purūravas and the curse.* Purūravas by his brilliance performed a hundred Aśvamedhayāgas and lived in glory at Himādrī-śṛṅga. Great demons like Keśi became his servants. Urvaśi attracted by his beauty became his wife. While he was living like that Dharma, Artha and Kāma went in disguise to his palace to test him. He received them all well but paid more attention to Dharma. Artha and Kāma got angry and cursed him. Artha cursed him saying that he would be ruined by his greed and Kāma cursed him saying he would go mad by being separated from Urvaśi. Hearing that Dharma blessed him thus : "You will live long leading a virtuous life. Your race will increase and remain in glory till the end of the moon and the stars. The insanity caused by your passion for Urvaśi would end by the end of sixty years. That celestial maiden would remain then with you for one Manvantara." (Chapter 12, Bhāga 3, Padma Purāṇa).

Purūravas used to visit Indra daily. One day while he was going through air wellarmed with a bow and arrows he saw a demon named Keśi carrying away by force Urvaśi and Citralekhā and after defeating Keśi in a fight recovered the nymphs and gave them back to Indra. Indra praised Purūravas and in his honour a drama, Lakṣmīsvayaṃvara, was enacted by Urvaśi, Menakā and others. Urvaśi taking the part of Lakṣmī started to dance but seeing Purūravas before her she became lustful and made wrong steps. Nārada who was present at the function got angry and cursed her "You will forget all you have learnt. Not only that, you will live as a creeper separated from Purūravas for a period of sixty years." (For details see under Urvaśi). Padma Purāṇa says that it was Bharata who cursed Urvaśi. This story is slightly different from that found in the other Purāṇas.

3) *Sons of Purūravas.* Urvaśi got eight sons of Purūravas named Āyus, Dṛdhāyus, Vaśyāyus, Dañāyus, Vṛttimān, Vasu, Divijāta and Subāhu. Of these Āyus became the propagator of the dynasty. Of the sons born to Āyus five sons, Nahuṣa, Vṛddhaśarmā, Raji, Dambha and Vipāpmā became celebrities. A hundred sons were born to Raji. They were called Rājeyas. (Chapter 12, Bhāga 3, Padma Purāṇa).

Some Purāṇas state that Purūravas had six sons while some state that he had seven sons.

4) *Other details.* The following references are made about him in the Mahābhārata.

(i) Once Purūravas stole the wealth of some brahmins. The brahmins took Sanat Kumāra along with them and made representations to the king. Purūravas did not give back their wealth. The brahmins cursed him and as a result the prosperity of the King waned. Then Purūravas brought down from svarga three Agnis and performed a yāga and thus regained his lost splendour and prosperity. (Chapter 75, Ādi Parva).