

Uttara (Northern) Kosala and Dakṣiṇa (Southern) Kosala. The river Sarayū was the dividing line between the two provinces. Ayodhyā was the capital of the latter.³⁶⁷ Ancient tradition believes it to have been built by Manu.³⁶⁸

The history of Kośala, with its mighty King Prasenajit and his son Vidudabha pales into insignificance with the emergence of the Magadhan rulers as powerful antagonists. The Nandas, followed by the Mauryas, assimilated Kośala in their empire. Under the Śuṅgas, it was being ruled by a viceroy. An inscription from Ayodhyā mentions Puṣyamitra as having performed two horse-sacrifices. Under the Kuṣāṇas, the city remained more or less in oblivion. Subsequently in the Purāṇas it figures along with Prayāga and Magadha as forming part of the kingdom of the Guptas. The spurious Gayā Plate of Samudragupta (No. 21) mentions it as a seat of a Gupta camp of victory. The history of the city in the post-Gupta period is wrapped up in obscurity. It was within the empire of the Pratihāras and Gāhaḍavālas of Kanauj. Ayodhyā is described by Muslim historians³⁶⁹ to have been a wilderness.

The Slaves and Khilji rulers held sway over it, and subsequently it received importance as the headquarters of Oudh. It was under the charge of Muslim governors appointed from Delhi, but with the emergence of Jaunpur as a strong kingdom Ayodhyā was completely over-shadowed. It was a mint-town in the time of Akbar, but there is no reference to it in later Chronicles.³⁷⁰

Ayodhyā is important as a centre of pilgrimage. There are several places in the city connected with different events in the life of Rāma. Rāma was born at a place called Janmasthanā. At Chīrodaka also called Chīrasāgara, Daśaratha performed, with the help of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga Ṛṣi, the sacrifices for obtaining a son. At a place called Tretā-kā-Ṭhākur, Rāmacandra performed the horse sacrifice by setting up the image of Sītā. At Ratnamāṇḍapa, he held his Council,³⁷¹ at Swargadwāram in Fyzabad, his body was burnt. At Lakṣmaṇa-kunḍa, Lakṣmaṇa disappeared in the river Sarayū. Daśaratha accidentally killed Śravaṇa, the blind Ṛṣi's son, at Majhaurā in the district of Fyzabad.³⁷² Ayodhyā engaged the attention of the Muslim rulers some of