

Maandatha-king born to a man

Retold by

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Maandatha was a very valorous king of the Ikshuvaku clan. His father Yuvanaswa married one hundred queens and could not beget a child. He was terribly depressed by this and was wandering from forest to forest in search of holy men. At last he reached a forest where a group of divine sages resided. Seeing him highly depressed, the sages sought the reason for his sorrow. Then he told them that he did not have children. The sages took great pity on the king and decided to perform, the Pooja called Indra daivatha. They filled a pot with water and were making it holy by chanting of several sets of prayers. This continued for several days. One night after the Pooja, the saints were sleeping. At that time Yuvanaswa got very thirsty and could not find water any where. So he entered the Yaga sala and drank all the water from the pot which contained the holy water. Next day the saints found out what has happened. Then they told the king, that this water was supposed to be taken by his queens to get a baby. Since he has taken it, he will have a baby. The apprehensive king became pregnant. After ten months, the child was taken out of the right part of his stomach by cutting it open. The ministers and other learned men advised the king to abandon this unnatural baby in the forest. In the forest, left alone the baby became hungry and started crying. The devas and Indra took pity on the baby and told the baby” Maam Datha (Eat myself)” and made it suck the thumb of its right leg. Milk was produced from this thumb and the baby grew extremely wise and very strong. He was called Maandatha, because of what Indra told him.

After Yuvanaswa, Maandatha became the king. Due to his wisdom and valour, he made his country great. He married a virtuous lady called Bindumathi. Two sons called Puruguthsa and Muchukunda were born to him. These two sons became very great and noble kings later.

Once there was famine in Maandatha’s country because of the failure of rain for three years. When Maandatha consulted the sages, they told him, “This is Krutha Yuga and during this period only Brahmins are supposed to do penance. But in your country one sage who is not a Brahmin is doing penance. If you find him out and kill him, then everything would be set right.” Maandatha was horrified at the idea and refused to follow their advice. Then as an alternative, they advised him and all his countrymen to observe the penance of Ekadasi along with people from all castes. There was a torrential rain and the country’s problem was solved.