

he did not prevent her from doing anything, auspicious or otherwise (*tubham vā yadi vāśubham*); should the king question her, she would abandon him 1. 92. 31-35; when the king consented, she, full of lustre, attended on him as his wife 1. 92. 39-40; Gaṅgā, as the wife of Śaṁtanu, gave birth to eight sons seven of whom, as soon as they were born, she threw away in the waters of the river Gaṅgā; the king did not object to her on the first seven occasions, but on the eighth occasion he asked her to spare him a son; he also wanted to know who she really was 1. 92. 44-47; when thus questioned, she told Śaṁtanu that she was the river Gaṅgā, the daughter of Jāhnu, and that she lived with him to achieve some purpose of the gods (*devakāryārthasiddhyartham* 1. 92. 49); the eight sons she bore him were the eight Vasus who were born as human beings due to the curse of Vasiṣṭha; she had promised the Vasus that she would release them from their human birth as soon as they were born (cf. 1. 93. 40); she blessed the king before her departure (*svasti te 'stu gamiṣyāmi*); she told the king that she had lived with the Vasus (while they were in her womb) in succession (*eṣa paryāyavāso me vasūnām saṁnidhau kṛtaḥ*) and that the eighth son who was to be given to him later by her was the one born of her (Gaṅgā) (*matprasūtaṁ vijānīhi gaṅgā-dattam imaṁ sutam*) 1. 92. 48-55; Śaṁtanu asked Jāhnavī who was Āpava (Vasiṣṭha) and what fault the Vasus had committed to invite the curse of Vasiṣṭha; he also asked why the eighth son (Gaṅgādatta) was required to live long among human beings 1. 9. 1-3; Gaṅgā Jāhnavī then told the king the whole story 1. 93. 5-42; Gaṅgā then disappeared taking the last-born son with her 1. 93. 43;

many years later, King Śaṁtanu, while once hunting along the river Gaṅgā Bhāgīrathī, noticed that the river had little water (*alpa-jatām* 1. 94. 21) and was not flowing as before (*syandate kiṁ nv iyaṁ nādyā* 1. 94. 22); trying to find out the cause of it the king saw a young boy who had covered waters of the entire Gaṅgā with his arrows 1. 94. 24-25; Śaṁtanu suspected the boy to be his son and hence asked Gaṅgā to show herself to him; Gaṅgā appeared before the king holding the boy in her right hand, but the king did not immediately recognize her; Gaṅgā handed over the son to the king 1. 94. 28-31, 36; Śaṁtanu's marriage with Gaṅgā Bhāgīrathī and the birth of Devavrata by her mentioned in 1. 57. 76; 1. 90. 50; 5. 179. 5; 12. 38. 8; 12. 46. 15; the birth of the Vasus from Bhāgīrathī in the house of Śaṁtanu mentioned in 1. 2. 78; 1. 61. 68; (2) Her role in Bhīṣma's fight with Rāma Jāmadagnya: When the fight between Bhīṣma and Rāma Jāmadagnya was imminent, the latter threatened to kill Bhīṣma so that Jāhnavī might see him lying on the bed of arrows and the daughter of Bhāgīratha (Gaṅgā), who gave birth to him, might weep seeing him dead 5. 179. 3-5; when Bhīṣma was ready to fight with Rāma, his mother appeared before him in her original form (*svatūpiṇī*) to try to dissuade Bhīṣma from the fight, and expressed her readiness to go to Jāmadagnya to beg him not to engage Bhīṣma, who was his pupil, in fight; Bhīṣma then told her the incidents which had led to the fight; then the river (Gaṅgā) went to Rāma to dissuade him; when told that it was Bhīṣma who was to be dissuaded, Gaṅgā returned to Bhīṣma and again pleaded with him; but Bhīṣma, angered, did not agree to her request 5. 179.