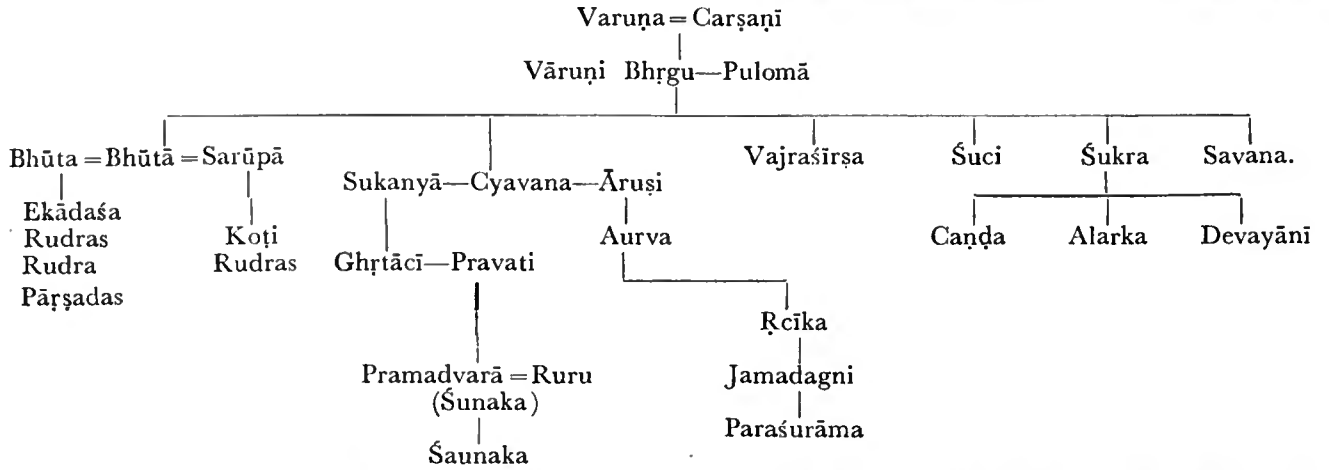


(Attendants of Rudra) and by his second wife Sarūpā he had a crore of Rudras. Cyavana had two wives, Sukanyā and Āruṣi. Aurva, a son was born to Āruṣi. From Aurva was born Ṛcika, from Ṛcika Jamadagni and from Jamadagni, Paraśurāma. Cyavana had a son, Pravati, by his wife Sukanyā. Ruru or Śunaka was the son of Pravati by the Apsarā Ghṛtācī. Ruru and his wife Pramadvarā had a son, Śaunaka. Śuka, the son of Bhr̥gu had two sons, Caṇḍa and Alarka and a daughter, Devayānī. This is the second Bhr̥gu Var̥ṣa.¹ The family tree is given below.



4) *Bhr̥gu cursed Mahāviṣṇu.* Once a terrible war broke out between Devas and Asuras. In that war, not only were the Asuras defeated but many of them were also killed. Diti, the mother of the Asuras, with tears in her eyes, complained to Bhr̥gupati. Pulomā, Mother of Śukra, promised to find a remedy for this somehow. She at once went to the forest and started a tapas for the annihilation of the Devas. As the tapas gained force, the Devas were alarmed and they sought the protection of Mahāviṣṇu. Mahāviṣṇu used his Vajrāyudha (Vajra weapon) against Bhr̥gu's wife, Pulomā. Under the stroke of Vajra she fell down, a headless corpse. The enraged Mahārṣi Bhr̥gu cursed Mahāviṣṇu to be born as a mortal in this world and to suffer the pangs of separation from his wife. When the curse was pronounced against Mahāviṣṇu, he directed his weapon Cakra against the Mahārṣi. Bhr̥gu fled in panic and at last begged pardon and prayed for shelter to Mahāviṣṇu himself in the ocean of milk. Viṣṇu withdrew his Cakra. Bhr̥gu himself restored Pulomā to life. To fulfil the condition of Bhr̥gu's curse, Viṣṇu agreed to incarnate in the world as Śrī Rāma, the son of Daśaratha and to experience the pain of separation from his wife. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

5) *Bhr̥gu kicked Viṣṇu.* Long ago all the Mahārṣis joined together to perform a yāga on the bank of the river Sarasvatī. A dispute arose among them as to who was the most mighty among the Trimūrtis. Some of them voted for Brahmā, others declared that Viṣṇu was more mighty than the other two, while a third group stood for Śiva's superiority. They unanimously elected Bhr̥gu to ascertain and find out the truth of the matter.

Bhr̥gu set out to Devaloka. First he went to Brahmā's assembly. There, in the presence of Brahmā who was seated in the midst of many Munis, Bhr̥gu took his seat on a stool. Brahmā was provoked by this act of disrespect. Bhr̥gu left the place without a word and went to Śiva's place. Śiva rose from his seat and approached him to embrace and welcome him. Bhr̥gu, shrank back saying, "Do not touch me?" Śiva became angry and was about to hit him with his trident when Pārvatī stopped him.

Bhr̥gu then turned his steps to Vaiṣṇava, the abode of

Mahāviṣṇu. There he saw Mahāviṣṇu in a deep slumber. Seeing Mahāviṣṇu whose task is the preservation of the world, sleeping like an irresponsible person, Bhr̥gu gave him a kick on his breast. Viṣṇu who sprang up suddenly, saw Bhr̥gu standing before him. He begged pardon of the sage. He declared that he would carry Bhr̥gu's footprint permanently on his chest as a sign of his repentance for having shown disrespect to the Mahārṣi. This foot-print still remains on Viṣṇu's chest and is known by the name "Śrīvatsa". In this way, the Munis came to the conclusion that Mahāviṣṇu is the noblest of the Trimūrtis. (Bhāgavata, Daśama Skandha).

6) *The origin of Bhr̥gu Tīrtha.* There is a sacred spot called, "Bhr̥gu Tīrtha" on the western side of Daśāśvamedha. It is here that Bhr̥gu once offered tapas to Śiva. Owing to the austerity of his tapas, his hair became matted and discoloured. His body was completely covered with earth heaped up by termites. When Śiva was still not propitiated, Pārvatī interceded with him on behalf of Bhr̥gu, Śiva agreed to bless Bhr̥gu.

Śiva sent his bull to the place where Bhr̥gu was sitting. The bull in the course of its gambols broke up and destroyed the earthen covering on his body which was made by the termites. Bhr̥gu became angry and chased the bull. But he was stunned by the sight of the bull rising up to heaven through the air. A divine light spread there. Śiva appeared before him and asked him what boon he wanted. Bhr̥gu prayed that the place where he was doing tapas should become a holy spot. Śiva granted his prayer and from that day, the place became famous under the name "Bhr̥gu Tīrtha".

1. Devi Bhāgavata, Saptama Skandha says that Bhr̥gu had married two daughters of Dakṣa. Mahābhārata Anuśāsana Parva Chapter 85, Verse 127 says that Bhr̥gu had seven sons, namely Cyavana Vajraśila, Śuci, Aurva, Śukra, Varenṇya, and Savana.