

Agni and Soma. These two sons were collectively called Agnisomas.

AGNIŚAUCA(M). A cloak with magical properties given to Nala by the serpent, Kārkoṭaka. After separating himself from Damayantī, Nala was wandering in the forest. Then he was bitten by the poisonous serpent, Kārkoṭaka. This deformed Nala beyond recognition. Then the serpent gave him this shawl (Agniśauca). Anybody who wore that cloak would regain his original form and colour. (Kathāsaritsāgara-Alaṅkāravatī-lambaka-Taraṅga 6).

AGNISTHALĪ. (See the word PURŪRAVAS).

AGNISTHAMBHA(M) A mantra that will reduce the burning power of Agni.

AGNIŚTOMA. (See AGNIŚTU).

AGNIŚTU. (AGNIŚTOMA).

1) *Genealogy.* Descended from Viṣṇu in this order:—Viṣṇu-Svāyambhuvamanu - Uttānapāda-Dhruva-Sṛṣṭi-Ripu-Cāksuṣamanu-Agniṣtu.

2) *Birth.* Ten good sons were born to Manu by his wife, Nadvalā and Agniṣtu was one of them. The other nine sons were: Ūru, Pūru, Śatadyumna, Tapasvī, Satyavāk, Kavi, Atirātra, Sudyumna and Atimanyu. (Agni Purāna, Chapter 18).

AGNIŚVĀTTA. One of the seven Pitṛs. The other six Pitṛs are : Vairāja, Gārhapatyā, Somapā, Ekaśṛṅga, Caturveda and Kāla. (M.B., Sabhā Parva, Chapter 11, Verses 44, 45 and 46).

AGNIVEŚA. A Sage. He was the preceptor of Droṇa and Drupada. It is believed that he learned archery and the military arts from Sage Agastya. Droṇa had the greatest respect for this guru, Agniveśa. He was a master in the use of all weapons. There are references to this in Chapter 139, Ādi Parva of the Mahābhārata.

AGRAHA. The name of an Agni, a son of the Agni named Bhānu. Bhānu married Suprajā, daughter of the sun and Agraha was one of the six children born to them. In the Cāturmāsikayajña Agraha receives eight kinds of havis (Oblations). (M.B., Vana Parva, Chapter 221).

AGRANĪ. The name of an Agni. He was the fifth son of the Agni named Bhānu and his wife, Niśādevī. (M.B., Vana Parva, Chapter 221, Śloka 15 to 22).

AGRASANDHANĪ. The name of the book which Yama (the God of Death—Kāla) keeps in which all the virtuous and sinful actions of men are recorded.

AGRAYANĪ. One of the hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He is also known by the name, Anuyāyī. (M.B., Ādi Parva, Chapter 116, Verse 11).

AHA I. One of the aṣṭavasus. His father was Dharma and mother, Ratidevī. (M.B., Ādi Parva, Śloka 17 to 20, Chapter 66).

AHA II (AHAH). A sacred pond. If one bathes in it he will go to the land of the Sun. (M.B., Vana Parva, Śloka 100, Chapter 83).

AHA III. One born of the dynasty of demons (asura-vaṁśa). (See under Hetti, the genealogy chart of the demon dynasty).

AHARA. A son born of Danu to Kaśyapa. (M.B., Ādi Parva, Śloka 25, Chapter 65).

AHALYĀ. Turned into stone by the curse of her husband, Gautama. Ahalyā was a princess of the Pūru dynasty.

1) *Genealogy.* Descended in order from Viṣṇu as follows: Brahmā-Atri-Candra-Budha - Purūravas-Āyus-Nahūṣa-Yayāti-Pūru-Janamejaya - Prācinvā - Pravira-Namasyu-Vitabhaya - Suṇḍu - Bahuvīdha - Saṁyāti - Rahovādi-Raudrāśva-Matināra-Santurodha - Duṣyanta - Bharata-Bṛhatkṣetra-Hastī-Ajamīdha-Nīla-Sānti-Suśānti-Puruja-Arka-Bharṁyaśva-Pāncāla-Mudgala-Ahalyā.

2) *How Ahalyā got a curse and became a stone.* The story of how Ahalyā was cursed by her husband, Gautama, and was turned into a stone is told in different versions in different purāṇas. The following is the version in the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa. When Viśvāmitra was taking back Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa from the forest to the palace of Janaka they came across an āśrama on their way. Giving details about that āśrama Viśvāmitra told the princes thus : "This is the āśrama where the sage, Gautama, was living with his wife, Ahalyā. Indra fell in love with the beautiful Ahalyā and while the sage was out for bathing Indra entered the āśrama in the disguise of the sage himself and took bed with her. But before Indra could get out Gautama himself came to the āśrama and enraged at what he saw, cursed them both. Indra was to lose his testicles and Ahalyā was to turn into a stone. But taking pity on her the sage declared that she would take her original form the moment Rāma of tretā yuga came to that place and touched the stone by his foot. Testicleless Indra went to devaloka and there his friends feeling sorry for him, substituted a goat's testicle and got him to normal." While Viśvāmitra was talking to the princes, Śrī Rāma's foot touched the stone and Ahalyā stood up in all beauty. Ahalyā and Gautama lived in the same āśrama again for another long period.

In Kathāsaritsāgara this story is told in a slightly different yet more interesting way. As soon as Gautama entered the āśrama Indra turned himself into a cat. Angrily the sage questioned Ahalyā, "who was standing here when I came in?" Ahalyā replied, "Eso thiyo khu majjara" (Eṣaḥ sthitaḥ khalu mājjāraḥ). It was a cat which was standing there. Here Ahalyā used a pun on the word 'majjara' and tried to be honest. 'Majjara' is the Prakrit form of the word 'mājjāraḥ' which means cat. But 'majjara' has another meaning also. (ma=mine jara=lover i.e. majjara=my lover). So Ahalyā did not lie to her husband. (Kathāsaritsāgara, Lāvāṇakalambaka).

3) *How Ahalyā happened to bring up the mighty monkeys, Bālī and Sugrīva.* Once Aruṇa, the charioteer of Sūrya (the Sun) went to devaloka to see the dance of the celestial maidens there. Since there was no admission to the dance for men Aruṇa disguised himself as Āruṇidevī and sought admission; seeing the beautiful form of Āruṇidevī Indra fell in love with her and that night a child was born to Indra by her. On the advice of Indra Āruṇidevī took the child to Ahalyā before daybreak and left it there to be looked after by her. It was this child which later on became the famous Bālī.

Aruṇa went a bit late that morning to his master, the Sun. The latter wanted an explanation and Aruṇa told him what had happened. The Sun then asked Aruṇa to become Āruṇidevī again and seeing the enchanting figure the Sun also got a child of her. This child also was taken to Ahalyā and it was this child that later on became the famous Sugrīva.

AHALYĀHRADA(M). A sacred pond in the tapovana