

you should not utter words of falsehood, nor should you abstain from speaking the truth. If you do so your head will be cut into a hundred pieces by Indra with his Vajrāyudha (the weapon of thunderbolt)". Hesitating to take a decision, because of the words of Sudhanvā, Prahlāda went to Kaśyapa to clear his doubts, and asked: "Lord, do you know which are the future worlds destined for those who utter words of falsehood or abstain from giving out the truth?" Kaśyapa said, "On him, who abstains from speaking truth knowingly a thousand cords of death will fall. He who tells falsehood will have to perform many a deed of duty to attain heaven."

Having heard the words of Kaśyapa, Prahlāda said to Virocana, "Virocana, Sudhanvā is greater than you. Aṅgiras is greater than me. Likewise the mother of Sudhanvā is nobler than your mother. So according to your bet you owe your life to Sudhanvā." Pleased at the righteousness of Prahlāda, Sudhanvā gave Virocana a boon to live a hundred years more. (Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Chapter 63).

(6) *How Aṅgiras became the first son of Agni (Fire God)*. Once Aṅgiras was blazing out as a furious being. All the worlds were illuminated by that flame-fire. As Aṅgiras was performing the functions of Agni (fire), peoples of the worlds discarded Agni, who being sad at the derision shown towards him by the worlds went to a forest and hid himself there. The living beings were in trouble owing to lack of fire. When he became aware of this Aṅgiras went to the forest and pacified Agni. From that day onwards Aṅgiras agreed to become the first son of Agni, who resumed his duties as usual. (Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 217).

(7) *How Aṅgiras got the name Atharvāṅgiras*. After the slaughter of Vṛtrāsura, Indra went to the lake known as Amṛtasaras and hid himself there in a lotus flower. At this time the Gods anointed Nahuṣa as Indra. Agastya cursed him and turned him to a serpent and sent him to the earth. When Indra returned to heaven many persons gathered there to greet him. Aṅgiras also was one among them who did obeisance to Indra. He paid his homage by reciting the hymns of Atharvaveda. Indra who was greatly pleased at this, said to Aṅgiras, "Hereafter you shall be known as Atharvāṅgiras". Aṅgiras who got this boon from Indra, returned with gratitude. (Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 18, Stanzas 5 to 7).

(8) *Aṅgiras and Droṇa*. In the battle of Kurukṣetra, between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas the great teacher, Droṇa began to release his divine darts towards his enemies in all directions. Immediately Aṅgiras with many other hermits came to Droṇa and told him, "You have burned to death innumerable men with your Brahmāstra (The most powerful of all missiles). Your end is very near. So put your weapons down and stop your fight." Droṇa seems to have paid no heed at all to the advice of the hermits. He did not stop fighting too.

(9) *The sermon of Aṅgiras on the merits of Tīrthas or holy places (Baths)*. Dharmaputra once asked Bhīṣma about the importance of holy ghāṭṣ or tīrthas (Baths). Bhīṣma told Dharmaputra, what Aṅgiras had once told Gautama about the merits obtained by going on pilgrimage to holy tīrthas or Baths. Aṅgiras had described the holy nature and character of holy Baths in Bhārata such as Puṣkara, Prabhāsa, Naimiṣa, Sāgarodaka, Indramārga,

Devika, Svarnabindu, Hiranyabindu, Indratoya, and such other numerous tīrthas. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 25, Stanzas 7-71).

3) *Other details:*

(1) Dakṣa gave his two daughters in marriage to Aṅgiras. (Devī Bhāgavata, Skandha 7).

(2) Aṅgiras once saved the Sun. (Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 92, Stanza 6).

(3) While the Pāṇḍavas were in exile in forest, Aṅgiras had been chanting and meditating in Alakanandā in the region of the mount Gandhamādana. (Mahābhārata, Aranya Parva, Chapter 142, Stanza 6).

(4) When the hermits had stolen the lotus flowers of Agastya, Aṅgiras gave some hints about the culprits. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 94, Stanza 20: See Agastya).

(5) Aṅgiras once gave a discourse on fasting and the merits of fasting. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 106, Stanzas 11 to 16).

(6) Aṅgiras on another occasion delivered lectures on the secrets of duties. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 127, Stanza 8).

(7) Once Aṅgiras drank the water in the ocean to the last drop. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 153, Stanza 3).

(8) When his thirst was not quenched, even though he had drunk the entire water available in the world, he created new springs of water again and drank them dry. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 153, Stanza 3).

(9) Once Agni failed to show respect to Aṅgiras, who cursed Agni and thenceforward smoke came out from fire. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 153, Stanza 8).

(10) Aṅgiras conducted many of the important sacrifices of King Avikṣit. (Mahābhārata, Aśvamedhika Parva, Chapter 4, Stanza 22).

(11) Indra once gave Aṅgiras a boon. (Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 18, Stanzas 5 to 7).

(12) Aṅgiras blessed Dhruva who had been doing penance. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Amśa 1, Chapter 11).

(13) The daughters named Sinivālī, Kuhū, Rākā, Anumati were born to Aṅgiras by his wife Smṛtī. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 20).

14) Aṅgiras is the first of the Agni devas (Fire-Gods) and a hermit. He had a son called Hiranya-Stūpa, who also was a hermit (R̥gveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 7, Sūkta 31).

(15) The Hermit Aṅgiras began to invoke the Gods to get a son equal to Indra. Then Indra, thinking that nobody should be born as his equal, took birth as the son of Aṅgiras. He was called Savya. (R̥gveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 10, Sūkta 51).

(16) Indra sent Saramā, the bitch of the Gods, to find out the place where the cows had been hidden; Indra acted according to the advice of Aṅgiras. At first the bitch did not consent to go. But when Devendra promised to feed her young one with milk she agreed. Saramā found out the place where the cows were hidden and informed Indra of it. (R̥gveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 11, Sūkta 62).

17) Rbhus are the sons of Sudhanvā. (Son of Aṅgiras). The hermit Kutsa also is descended from Aṅgiras. (R̥gveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 16, Sūkta 10).