

3) *Rebirth of Aṣṭavasus*. The Aṣṭavasus were pondering over the curse and were thinking of how to bear it without hardship when Gaṅgādevī appeared before them and they then appealed to her: "Devī, if you become the queen on earth of some noble King we shall be born as your sons and you must throw us into the river as soon as we are born". Gaṅgādevī accepted their request. Once there was a King called Pratīpa in the Candra dynasty. One day when this ascetic King was worshipping Śūrya on the banks of the river Gaṅgā a beautiful damsel arose from the waters and sat on the right thigh of the King. Surprised the King told her thus, "Oh beautiful maiden, who are you? Do you realise what unrighteous thing you have done? I am not one who goes after women and it was a bit daring of you to have taken me as a beau. Please understand that the right thigh is intended for a daughter and daughter-in-law. You can claim this right when you become the wife of my son." The beautiful girl was none other than Gaṅgādevī herself and she disappeared soon on receiving the rebuke.

Pratīpa got a son named Śantanu and Gaṅgādevī became the wife of Śantanu. (For more details about this see under Gaṅgā). When Gaṅgādevī became the wife of Śantanu she made a condition to be his queen. "Whether good or bad you should not obstruct any action of mine. You must never give me any opinion of yours on any matter. You must obey what I order. If at any time you break any of these promises I will leave you that instant."

It was while Gaṅgādevī was living on earth as the wife of Śantanu that the Aṣṭavasus were born to her. One after the other she threw into the river seven sons but when she was about to throw the eighth the King objected to it and Gaṅgā disappeared immediately. That son was Bhīṣma, who was none other than Dyau born on earth by the curse of Vasiṣṭha. All the others, released from the curse, went to heaven. (More details under Bhīṣma).

4) *A missile to Bhīṣma*. When Bhīṣma had to fight against his guru, Paraśurāma, the Aṣṭavasus gave him the missile, Prasvāpā. (See Ambā) (Śloka 11 to 13, Chapter 183, Udyoga Parva, M.B.).

5) *Sons of Aṣṭavasus*. The sons of Āpa, the first of the Vasus, are : Vaitaṇḍha, Śrama, Śānta and Dhvani. Kāla, the destroyer of all, is the son of Dhruva. Varcas is the son of Soma. Dharmā got of his wife Manoharī five sons Draviṇa, Hutahavyavāha, Śīśira, Prāṇa and Varuṇa. Śivā was Anilā's wife and she got two sons, Manojava and Avijñātagati. Agni's son Kumāra was born at Śarastamba. Kumāra got three brothers, Śākha, Viśākha and Naigameya. Kumāra is known as Kārttikeya because he was born of Kṛttikas. The sage, Devala is the son of Pratyūṣa. Devala got two sons of great intelligence and forbearance. Varastri, sister of Brhaspati and a woman of great yogic powers and world-wide travels became the wife of Prabhāsa. She gave birth to the famous Viśvakarmaprajāpati. He was the inventor of a great many handicrafts and ornaments. He became the consulting architect of the devas and ranked first in that art. The aeroplanes of the devas were designed by him. Men on earth depend on his art even now. That architect had four sons : Aj ikāpāt, Ahirbudhnya, Tvaṣṭā and Rudra, the bold. The great ascetics, Viśvarūpa, Hara, Bahurūpa, Tryambaka, Aparājita, Vṛṣākapi,

Śambhu, Kapardi, Raivata, Mrgavyādha, Śarva and Kapāli were the sons of Tvaṣṭā. These are known as the twelve Rudras. Purāṇas say that there are a hundred Rudras like this. (Chapter 15, Amṣa 1, Viṣṇu Purāṇa).

AṢṬAVIDHANĀYIKĀ(S). Eight kinds of heroines of the stage :

(1) *Svādhinapatikā*. Fit to be a counterpart in a love scene and play the role of one who is always fondled by her husband.

(2) *Vāsakasajjikā (Vāsakasajjā)*. Adorning herself well and waiting for her lover in a well decorated bedroom.

(3) *Virahotkaṇṭhitā*. Exhausted by the sorrow of separation from her lover.

(4) *Viṣṭralabdhā*. Cheated by her lover after fixing a date and a rendezvous.

(5) *Khaṇḍitā*. Angered at the arrival of the husband in the early hours of the morning with suspicion about his character.

(6) *Kalahāntarītā*. Repenting after having arrogantly disobeyed her husband.

(7) *Proṣitabhartṛkā*. One who has gone weak and moody thinking about her husband in a foreign place.

(8) *Abhisārikā*. One who approaches her husband with great passion. (Nāṭyakrama).

AṢṬAVIDHAPRAKṚTYAVASTHĀ(S). Earth, Water, Agni, Air, Ether, Mind, Intelligence and Egotism.

AṢṬAVIDHAPRATIMĀ(S). Śilāmayī, Dhātumayī, Lohamayī, Lepyā, Lekhyā, Mṛṇmayī, Maṇimayī and Manomayī.

AṢṬAVIDHAKUṢṬHA(S). Vimarccika, Bhadru, Maṇḍala, Sukti, Siddhmaka, Kṛṣṇa, Śukla and Taruṇa. (Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya).

AṢṬAVIVĀHA(S). Eight kinds of marriage. (1) Brāhma

(2) Daiva (3) Ārṣa (4) Prājāpatya (5) Gāndharva

(6) Āsura (7) Rākṣasa (8) Paiśāca. Brāhma is the one where the father gives her daughter with sacred water to a bachelor without accepting anything in return. When the father gives his daughter to the priest at the time of a yāga it is called Daiva. It is Ārṣa if the father gives the daughter and gets in return a cow or bullock. When the father gives the daughter with her blessings it is Prājāpatya. The marriage between two lovers is Gāndharva. It is Āsura when the male takes his mate by force and it is Paiśācika (most cruel and mean) when the girl is taken as his wife when she is in a state of unconsciousness.

AṢṬAYOGINĪ(S). The eight hermit-maidens who are the attendants of the goddess, Durgā. (1) Mārjātī (2) Karpūratilakā (3) Malayagandhinī (4) Kaumudikā (5) Bheruṇḍā (6) Mātalī (7) Nāyakī (8) Jayā (Śubhācārā).

ASTOPĀYA(S). Eight ways of attaining salvation. Yajña, Dāna, Vedādhyayana, Tapas, Dama, Satya, Rjuṣila, and Mārdava. These are the qualities required for attaining salvation.

ASTĪ. Daughter of Jarāsandha, King of Magadha. Kāṁsa married Astī and also another daughter of Jarāsandha. (Śloka 29 to 32, Chapter 14, Sabhā Parva, M.B.). Chapter 12 of Agni Purāṇa states that Jarāsandha went to war with the Yādavas because of the persuasion of these daughters.

ASTRA. After killing the demoness, Tātakā, Viśvāmitra reveals to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa the secret of using a great many varieties of Divyāstras (Divyāstra is a missile