

vana, to Arjuna. (M.B., Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 156).

(5) *Atri and King Vṛṣādarbhi*. In the Mahābhārata we find a story about a difference of opinion between King Vṛṣādarbhi and some Mahārṣis. This story was told by Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira about the kind of persons from whom Brahmins may accept gifts. Once the Munis, Kaśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, and Paśusakhā, with Arundhatī and Gaṇḍā, who were the wives of two Munis, travelled round the world. Their object was to go to Brahmāloka. At that time there was drought in the world. King Vṛṣādarbhi, the son of Śibi, suggested that the above-mentioned Munis should be called and given wealth. They refused to accept it. Vṛṣādarbhi became angry. He performed Homa in Āhavanīyāgni and from the agnikunḍa, the Rākṣasī Yātudhānī (Kṛtyā) arose. Vṛṣādarbhi sent Yātudhānī to destroy Atri and all other Munis. As Yātudhānī was guarding a lotus pond in the forest, the munis led by Atri happened to come that way. The Mahārṣis were able to recognize Yātudhānī. They beat her with their tridaṇḍu (Trident or a kind of magic wand) and reduced her to ashes. After satisfying their hunger by eating the lotus flowers the Mahārṣis went to Brahmāloka. (M.B., Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 93).

(6) *Atri and Śrāddha*. There is a passage in the Mahābhārata in which Atri gives advice to the emperor Nimi who belonged to Atri's family. The story of how Śrāddha originated in the world which Bhīṣma had told Dharmaputra was retold by Atri. A son named Dattātreyā was born to Atri, the son of Brahmā. Dattātreyā became King. Nimi was his son. Nimi's son died after one thousand years. Nimi who was in deep grief at the death of his son, ordained a Śrāddha in memory of his son. On that occasion Atri Mahārṣi came there and explained to Nimi the importance of Śrāddha. (M.B., Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 91, Verses 20-44).

(7) *How Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (Śiva) were born as sons of Atri*. There is no other woman in the Purāṇas who surpasses Śilāvati in her fidelity to her husband. In order to enable Ugraśravas, her husband, to satisfy his passion, she once carried him on her own shoulders to a prostitute's house. On the way, Māṇḍavya Muni pronounced a curse that Ugraśravas should die before sunrise. The grief-stricken Śilāvati pronounced a counter-curse that the sun should not rise on the next day. As the sun failed to rise, the Trimūrtis (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva), accompanied by Anasūyā, Atri's wife, went to Śilāvati. Anasūyā persuaded Śilāvati to withdraw her curse. The Trimūrtis who were happy at the success of their mission (of bringing about the Sunrise) asked Anasūyā to demand any boon she wanted. Anasūyā expressed her wish that the Trimūrtis (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) should be born as her sons and they agreed.

Mahāviṣṇu, under the name of Dattātreyā, was born as the son of Anasūyā. Śiva was born to her under the name of Durvāsas. There is a story about it in the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Once Śiva got angry with the Devas. They began to flee for life. But Brahmā alone did not run away. Śiva who became more furious at this, pinched off one of the heads of Brahmā. Still he was not pacified. Pārvatī who was alarmed, approached Śiva and begged him to suppress his anger. At her request, Śiva's fury was transferred and deposited in Anasūyā,

Atri's wife. Durvāsas is the embodiment of that element of Śiva's fury.

According to the promise, Brahmā also took his birth as the moon from Anasūyā, the wife of Atri. (For that story, see PURŪRAVAS). There is a story about that also in the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Once when Brahmā was performing the task of creation, he experienced carnal passion. Sarasvatī was the offspring of that passion. When Brahmā saw her, he fell in love with her also. This made him feel angry towards Kāmadeva. He pronounced a curse that Kāmadeva should be burnt up in the fire from Śiva's eye. (This is why Kāmadeva was later burnt to death by Śiva). Although Kāma had retreated from Brahmā his passion had not been suppressed. Brahmā transferred his passion to Atri Mahārṣi. The Mahārṣi gave it to Anasūyā, his wife. Since she was unable to bear such a violent passion, she gave it back to her husband. That passion emerged from Atri's eye in the form of the Moon. This is why lovers experience strong passion for each other at the time of the rising of the moon. (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapters 39-43).

(8) *Atri and Gaṅgā Devī*. Once, while Atri Mahārṣi was performing penance in Kāmada forest, there was a terrible drought in the country. At that time, his wife Anasūyā made a Śivaliṅga of sand and offered worship to it. Then Atri asked her to give him a little water. There was no water anywhere. Suddenly Gaṅgā Devī appeared there and said to Anasūyā : "There will be a hole here. Water will come out of it in a torrent." Pure water began to flow from the place pointed out by Gaṅgā Devī. Anasūyā begged Gaṅgā Devī to stay there for a month. Gaṅgā Devī agreed to do so on condition that Anasūyā would transfer her Tapaśśakti to her for one month.

Atri was pleased by drinking the water. He asked Anasūyā where she got such nice fresh water. She explained to him all matters. Atri expressed his desire to see Gaṅgā Devī. She appeared before him at once. Anasūyā prayed to her that Gaṅgā should continue to exist in the world always. Gaṅgā Devī answered that she would do so if Anasūyā was prepared to give her the fruit of one year's Tapaśśakti and of devoted service to her husband. Anasūyā agreed to that condition. Suddenly Śiva appeared there in the shape of a Liṅga. At the request of Atri and Anasūyā Śiva took his seat there permanently assuming the name of "Atriśvara". (Śiva Purāṇa).

(9) *Other Details*. 1. Besides Dattātreyā, Durvāsas and Candra. Atri had another son, Prācinabarhis. (M.B., Śānti Parva, Chapter 208, Verse 6).

2. Many Pāvakas had been born in Atri Vamśa. (M.B., Vana Parva, Chapter 222, Verses 27-29).

3. When the Kaurava-Pāṇḍava war was raging with great fury, many Mahārṣis went to Droṇa and advised him to stop the battle. Atri Mahārṣi was one of them. (M.B., Droṇa Parva, Chapter 190, Verse 35).

4. On another occasion, a King named Soma performed a Rājasūya (Royal sacrifice). Atri Mahārṣi was the chief priest at this yāga. (M.B., Śalya Parva, Chapter 43, Verse 47).

5. Atri was also among the Mahārṣis who had gone to witness Paraśurāma's tapas. (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapter 64).