

contains rules about propitiating deities by offerings of horse, elephant etc.

**ŚĀNTIPARVA.** An important Parva of the Mahābhārata (See under Mahābhārata).

**SANTURODHA.** A king of the Pūru dynasty. He was the son of Matināra. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 278).

**SAṆU.** A country of ancient India. (Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma Parva Chapter 9, Verse 43).

**SANYĀSA (SANNYĀSA)** One of the four stages of Brahminical life. The four stages are Brahmacharya (Religious student), Gārhaṣṭhya (householder), Vānaprastha (Forest-dweller) and Sannyāsa (hermit or sage). (For further details see under Āśrama).

*Duties of a hermit.* Manu has ordained that one should perform sannyāsa (renunciation) at the fourth stage of life renouncing every tie with the world. After becoming a hermit he should travel daily alone. He should enter villages only for food. He should have renounced wealth. He should not acquire any wealth. He should be a sage filled with knowledge. He should have a skull as the pot for taking alms. He should sleep under trees. He should wear poor cloth and should be solitary. He should consider everybody as equal. Having become a hermit he should not delight in death or life.

A hermit should put every step looking straight down to the earth. He should drink water filtered by cloth. Words and deeds should be pure and true. The shells of water-gourd (pumpkin), wooden pots and earthen pots are the Vaiṣṇava sign of hermits. A hermit should beg for food daily from houses where no smoke comes out, where pestle is placed and where there is no charcoal, and after all have taken food and the pot for preparing food is placed upside down.

It is said that the food got by hermits by begging is of five types. They are Mādūkara (collected alms), asaṅkṛpta (unlimited), Prākpraṇīta (prepared much earlier), Ayācitam (got by not begging) and tātkālika (for the time being). In whichever stage of life he may be, he should be staunch in that stage and should perform the duties with honesty.

If by ignorance a hermit engaged himself in killing animals by day or night, to remove the impurity and get purity, he should bathe and perform six prāṇāyāmas (restraints of the breath) daily. The hermit should discard his body made of five elements.

The signs of duty are, resolution, forbearance, self-restraint, not robbing, cleansing, control of sense-organs, modesty, knowledge, truth, not resorting to anger, and so on. Hermits are of four grades, such as Kuṭīcaka, Bahūdaka, Haṁsa and Paramahaṁsa, the last-mentioned being the noblest grade. The hermit who wears one or three daṇḍas (rod) will be freed from ties of birth and death.

The five Yamas or restraints are not killing (Ahimsā), truth, not stealing, celibacy and not receiving. The five Niyamas or religious duties are cleansing, joy or contentedness, penance, self-study and meditation on God. The sitting postures suitable for hermits are Padmāsana etc. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 161).

**SANYASTAPĀDA.** A famous Purāṇic region in India. The king of this kingdom, fearing Jarāsandha, ran away to the south with his son. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 14, Verse 28).

**SAPTACARU.** A holy place. The reason for giving this place the name Saptacarū is given in Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 82 as follows:

The word 'Caru' means sacrifice. Once devas (gods) and men together put the fat parts of sacrificial animals, as burnt offerings in the sacrificial fire, each singing seven verses from the R̥gveda. By this sacrifice they obtained more prosperity than the fruits of giving one lakh of cows as alms or performing hundred Rājasūya sacrifices or thousand horse-sacrifices.

"The wise said that it was an endless gift to the manes. The gods, the manes, the Gandharvas, the celestial maids, the gaṇas, the yakṣas, Kinnaras, the siddhas, the Vidyādhara, the people of the earth, the Rākṣasas, the daityas, the Rudras, Brahmā, all these joined together with vow and fast taken for a thousand years and performed a sacrifice each exalting Viṣṇu by singing seven verses from R̥gveda. Keśava was much pleased at the caru and gave them Āṣṭaiṣvāryasiddhi (the eight miraculous attainments) and everything they wished. Thus giving them all kinds of prosperities, the god Mukunda disappeared in this place as lightning in the clouds. Therefore this place became famous everywhere by the name Saptacarū."

**SAPTADVIJA (S).** The seven Brahmins who killed and ate on the way the cow brought for the teacher. These seven Brahmins were the disciples of a teacher in Kuṇḍinapura. Once owing to a severe famine people were in a very difficult situation. The teacher sent these seven disciples to beg for a cow from his son-in-law who had a very large number of cows. They did accordingly. The son-in-law gave them a cow for his father-in-law. The disciples began the return journey with the cow. When they reached half-way they became so weary and tired of hunger and walking that they could not proceed a step further. When they reached the stage of death, those celibates killed the cow according to the Vedic rites, and ate the flesh. Carrying the remaining flesh they reached the house of the teacher and told him all the truth. As they had tried to be righteous as far as possible, the teacher only felt proud of his disciples. (Kathāsaritsāgara, Madanamañcukālabhāṣya, Taraṅga 1).

**SAPTADVĪPAS (SEVEN ISLANDS).**

1) *General information.* The seven islands are Jambūdvīpa, Plakṣadvīpa, Śālmalidvīpa, Kuśadvīpa, Krauñcadvīpa, Śākadvīpa and Puṣkaradvīpa. Each of these islands is surrounded by sea. The sea that surrounds Jambūdvīpa is the Lavaṇa sea (salt sea), the Plakṣadvīpa is surrounded by the sea of Sugarcane-juice, Śālmalidvīpa by the sea of liquor, Kuśadvīpa by the sea of ghee, Krauñcadvīpa by the sea of curd Śākadvīpa by the sea of milk and the Puṣkaradvīpa by the sea of pure water. In the centre of all, lies the Jambūdvīpa and in the centre of this island, stands the golden mountain meru. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Amśa 2, Chapter 2).

2) *Origin.* There is a story about the origin of these seven islands and the surrounding seas, in Devī Bhāgavata Skandha 8.

Two famous sons named Priyavrata and Uttānapāda were born to Svāyambhuva Manu. Priyavrata and his children ruled the country for a period of eleven arbudas, that is a hundred million years. Though he was aged so much the power of his mind and body did