

life. He did not eat meat. Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 15) mentions that he was one of the few Kings who deserve to be remembered with reverence at dawn and dusk. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 1, Verse 233; Śānti Parva, Chapter 153, Verse 68; Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 115, Verse 69).

ŚVETA II. A King. Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Dākṣiṇātya Pāṭha, Chapter 14 mentions that he was one of the prominent Kings in India.

ŚVETA III. A son of the Virāṭa King. Śveta was the son of King Virāṭa by his chief wife Surathā, who was a princess of Kosala. Śveta had attended Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājāsūya. This distinguished warrior was killed by Bhīṣma in Bhīrata Yuddha. (M.B. Dākṣiṇātya Pāṭha, Virāṭa Parva, Chapter 16; Sabhā Parva, Chapter 44, Verse 20; Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 48).

ŚVETA IV. A warrior of Subrahmaṇya. (Mahābhārata, Śalya Parva, Chapter 45, Verse 64).

ŚVETA V. Son of the elder brother of King Sudeva. There is a story of how Śveta, who was a sinner, attained mokṣa (salvation) by a vision of sage Agastya. Towards the end of his life, Śveta attained Mokṣa by performing austere tapas. But since he failed to earn God's grace by giving food to the hungry, even in Heaven, he was tormented by hunger and thirst. His hunger was so severe that he began eating his own flesh. At last as suggested by Brahmā he was born again on earth and after a visit to Agastya re-entered Heaven.

ŚVETA VI. A daughter of Dakṣa. Ten daughters were born to Dakṣa by his wife Krodhavaśā, including Śvetā. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Araṇya Kāṇḍa, 14th Sarga).

ŚVETA VII. A mountain in Uttarā Khaṇḍa. In Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 139, Verse 1, we find that the Pāṇḍavas crossed the Śveta mountain during their life in the forest.

ŚVETA VIII. A country situated on the northern side of the Nila mountain. The region known as "Hiranyakam" is situated to the north of this country. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 6, Verse 37).

ŚVETABHADRA. A Guhyaka (guardian of treasury). Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Chapter 10, Verse 15 mentions that he serves Kubera in Kubera's assembly. He was the guardian of Kubera's treasury.

ŚVETADVĪPA. An island. It was on this island that Mahāviṣṇu performed his austere tapas for obtaining "Brahma Vidyā". It is situated on the northern side of the ocean of milk. It is 32,000 miles above Meru mountain. The inhabitants of Śvetadvīpa are without the sense organs. They do not take food. They are rich in "Jñāna" (knowledge). Their bodies give out perpetual fragrance. These sinless people are of white complexion. Their bodies and bones are as hard as Vajrāyudha. Their heads are as broad and flat as umbrellas and their voice as loud as thunder. Each of them has four arms and sixty teeth. All of them worship Śiva. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Dākṣiṇātya Pāṭha, Chapter 335).

ŚVETAKETU. A Maharṣi.

1) *Birth.* Śvetaketu was the son of the sage Āruṇi or Uddālaka who was born in the Gautama clan. Śvetaketu had a sister named Sujātā. Aṣṭāvakra was her son by the sage, Kahotaka. Thus Śvetaketu was Aṣṭāvakra's uncle. Śvetaketu and Aṣṭāvakra grew up together in Uddālaka's āśrama. (See under Aṣṭāvakra).

2) *Pride perishes.* Under his father's training Śvetaketu became a great scholar. With the increase in his scholarship, he became very proud. The father who understood this called him to his side and asked him :- "By studying all about what you can see, hear and understand, have you learnt anything about what you cannot see, hear or understand?" Śvetaketu admitted that he did not know. Then Uddālaka explained to him the mystery of Paramātmā (universal soul) which is without beginning or end. (Chāndogyopaniṣad).

3) *Śvetaketu in Pāñcāla.* After completing his education under his father, Śvetaketu went to Pāñcāla. There, in the royal assembly Jaivali, the Pravāhaṇa King asked him the following questions :- "Where do people go from this world? How do they return? Where do Devayāna and Pitṛyāna meet? From where do they diverge? Why is Pitṛloka imperfect? What is the fifth yajñabali?"

Śvetaketu answered that he did not know because his father had not taught him these things. Then he went to his father Āruṇi and told him about his failure to answer these questions. The father admitted that he too did not know them and suggested that they should ask Pravāhaṇa himself. Since Śvetaketu refused to go with him to see the King, Uddālaka himself went to Pravāhaṇa. The King enlightened him on the above topics and sent him back. (Chāndogyopaniṣad 1.8).

4) *Ācārya of Yajña Rules.* In Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, Śvetaketu is described as the Ācārya of the rules of Yajña. He has laid down definite rules and procedures for priests officiating in Yajñas. Besides, he has suggested the different customs and practices to be observed by Brahmācārins and tapasvins. In the treatises dealing with Dharmasāstra before his time, food of sweet taste was denied to Brahmācārins. But Śvetaketu has pointed out that it was an entirely wrong doctrine. (Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, 1.33; Sāmkhyāyana Brāhmaṇa, 1.33).

Once an ācārya named Jātukaṇya became the priest of the Kings of Kāśī, Kosala and Videha. Śvetaketu who was angry at this complained bitterly about this to his father. Then Uddālaka reminded his son that priests should yearn for wisdom instead of being attracted by worldly pleasures.

5) *Author of Kāmasāstra.* It is more or less clear that it was Śvetaketu who abridged the original work on Kāmasāstra by Nandi, into 500 chapters. This abridgement of Śvetaketu was again abridged after some years by Bābhavya. It was after abridging it again and adding Dattakācārya's "Vaiśika" and Suvarṇanābha's "Sāmprayogika" etc., that Vātsyāyana composed his famous treatise "Kāmasūtra". Really speaking, the basis of Vātsyāyana's "Kāmasūtra" was the works of Bābhavya and Śvetaketu on Kāmasāstra.

It has been observed that the first person who raised his voice against the evils of drinking and adultery by the Brāhmaṇa community was Śvetaketu. There is a story in the Mahābhārata about the fact which prompted him to bring marriage within the framework of law. Śvetaketu was Uddālaka's son, born to his wife by one of his disciples. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 35, Verse 22). Once his mother was abducted by a Brāhmaṇa. This incident inspired him to make stringent laws insisting on monogamy for men and women.

ŚVETAKI. A King. He was mostly occupied in perform-