

UTTĀNAPĀDA. A King. He was the son of Svāyambhuva Manu, the son of Brahmā. Svāyambhuva Manu had two sons Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. (Devī Bhāgavata, Skandha 8). A son named Uttama was born to Uttānapāda by his wife Suruci. Uttānapāda had another wife called Sunīti. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Amśa 1, Chapter 11). See under Dhruva.

UTTĀŅKA (UTĀŅKA). An ideal disciple of Veda who was the disciple of Āpodadhaumya.

1) *Uttāṅka and the Guru's wife.* After entrusting management of the āśrama to Uttāṅka, Veda once went out on a tour of the country, and Uttāṅka stayed in the Āśrama carrying out the instructions of the Guru. Then came the menstrual period of Veda's wife, and his other wives requested Uttāṅka to do the needful, so that the fertile period of their co-wife was not wasted. Uttāṅka's reply to them was as follows:- "Asked by women, I shall not do this improper act; and the preceptor has not asked me to do such a thing though it might be improper."

His Guru, Āpodadhaumya returned to the Āśrama some time after this, and was very pleased to hear about the above incident. He blessed Uttāṅka. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 3).

2) *His tuition fee.* His education being over, it was now time for Uttāṅka to give due offerings—tuition fee to his guru, and Uttāṅka enquired of the guru as to what he would have by way of dakṣiṇā. The guru asked Uttāṅka to get his wife's instruction in the matter and act accordingly. Because of the aforesaid incident (Uttāṅka not acting on the guru's wife during her menstrual period) she had a grouse against him, and therefore, asked him to bring as his tuition fee the ear-rings worn by the Kṣatriya wife of King Pauṣa.

Uttāṅka set out to procure the ear-rings. On the way he saw an ox, and on its back a big man, who called out to Uttāṅka to eat the excretion of the ox. When Uttāṅka hesitated to do so, the man on the ox asked him again to eat it, pointing out that his guru, Veda, had done it. Then did Uttāṅka consume both the excretion and urine of the ox, and did his oblations, in his perplexed mood, standing. Uttāṅka arrived at the palace of King Pauṣa and told him about the object of his visit. The King agreed to it. But, when Uttāṅka entered the Zenana Pauṣa's Kṣatriya wife could not be seen. When Uttāṅka told the King about this, he remained thoughtful for some time and told the former that he might surely have become impure due to performance of oblations in the wrong manner, and that his wife would not be visible, due to her chastity, to the eyes of such impure folk. Uttāṅka admitted to having, on his way, performed oblations not in the proper manner, and then he sat down facing the east after washing his hands, feet etc. and performed oblation in the correct manner. Then did the wife of King Pauṣa become visible to him, and she, pleased at his humility, handed over her ear-rings to him. She also advised him to be very careful about the ear-rings as they had once been coveted by Takṣaka, King of the serpents. Bidding adieu to the queen, Uttāṅka saw the King and they sat together to take food. Not only was the rice cold; but a hair was also found in it. Uttāṅka cursed the King and rendered him blind, and the King, in turn, cursed Uttāṅka not to have

children. But, both of them became calm quite soon and withdrew their curses.

On his way back to the Āśrama with the ear-rings, he had only just stepped into a pool for a wash, when a naked Buddha sannyāsin, who was following him, snatched and ran off with the ear-rings. It was really Takṣaka disguised as the sannyāsin who thus snatched the ear-rings. Uttāṅka chased him and caught him when he assumed his original form of the serpent King and disappeared into a cave. Uttāṅka waited at the mouth of the cave stupefied, when Indra deputed his Vajrāyudha to help Uttāṅka. The Vajrāyudha cut a tunnel-like route to Pātāla from the earth and through the cave Uttāṅka reached Pātāla by this route and found out the palace of Takṣaka.

Though Uttāṅka praised and cajoled the Nāgas (serpents) their King Takṣaka did not make his appearance. Uttāṅka saw there two women, who had been weaving clothes, and on one machine there were black and white threads. The machine had one wheel with twelve spokes and was turned by six boys. Also was there a horse, and a man. When Uttāṅka praised them, the horse and the man approached him. The man advised Uttāṅka to blow through the anus of the horse so that the snakes could be brought round. Uttāṅka did so, when lo ! from all the pores on the body of the horse, flames of fire began sprouting out. When the Nāgaloka (country of serpents) got thus filled with fire and flames, Takṣaka lost his nerves and came out with the stolen ear-rings, which Uttāṅka received back. But, that was the last day on which the rings had been promised to be given to his guru's wife by Uttāṅka, who remained there gloomy and sorrow-stricken at the thought that he would not be able to travel all the distance before sunset and give the ear-rings to the guru's wife. Then the horseman gave the horse to Uttāṅka, who reached the Āśrama just in time when the guru's wife was about to curse Uttāṅka for not returning with the rings though it was nearly dusk time. Now the guru and his wife blessed Uttāṅka, who detailed to them his experiences since leaving the Āśrama in quest of the ear-rings. Then the guru spoke thus to Uttāṅka—"The two women whom you found engaged in weaving were Dhātā and Vidhātā, the white and black strings, day and night, and the six boys who turned the wheel with twelve spokes were the six seasons. The ox seen by you on the way was Airāvata (Indra's elephant), the horse seen in Pātāla was Agni-deva, and the horseman, Indra. The excretion you ate on your way was nectar and that was the reason why you did not die in the Nāgaloka. Indra who is my friend blessed you because of mercy towards you, my disciple. You could bring back the ear-rings also because of Indra's blessings."

Then the guru blessed Uttāṅka and the latter took leave of him. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 3).

3) *Uttāṅka and Janamejaya's serpent yajña.* Uttāṅka, determined on taking vengeance on Takṣaka, went away directly from the āśrama to Hastināpura, where he met Janamejaya and told him the fact that it was Takṣaka, who had bitten to death Parikṣit, his (Janamejaya) father. It was thus prompted by Uttāṅka to take revenge upon Takṣaka that Janamejaya performed the serpent yajña. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 3).