

22) *Agastya cursing Duṣpanya*. Duṣpanya was the last son of the King of Pāṭaliputra. The wicked Duṣpanya had slain a large number of babies, and the King therefore expelled him from the palace. Duṣpanya went into the forest, where he caught hold of the child of Ugraravas and killed it by putting it under water. Ugraravas cursed him and accordingly he fell into water and died and his spirit became a ghost and wandered about tormented with pain and anguish. At last the spirit approached Agastya, who called his disciple Sutīṣṇa and asked him to go and bathe in the Agnitūrtha (a bath) in the Gandhamādana mountain and bring some water from the tūrtha and sprinkle it on the spirit of Duṣpanya. Sutīṣṇa acted accordingly and immediately the spirit of Duṣpanya received divine figure and entered heaven. (Setu Māhātmya).

23) *How Agastya got golden Bangle*. Once Agastya entered a forest of about a hundred yojanas wide. The forest was devoid of life. When he had walked a few more steps some Gandharvas (semi-gods) and celestial maids came there singing and dancing. From among them a noble male being came forward to the bank of a lake in the forest and ate without any hesitation, the corpse of a man that was lying there. After that he walked round Agastya and made obeisance to him. Agastya asked him why he had eaten the corpse of a man. The noble man told Agastya thus: "In tretā yuga (the third age) there lived a King named Vidarbha. I am his son and my name is Śveta. After having ruled over my kingdom for a long time, I came to the bank of this lake and began to do penance. After that discarding my body I entered heaven. Though I attained heaven my hunger was not appeased. I asked Brahmā how, I, a dweller of heaven, got this hunger. Brahmā said that when I was King I had given nothing to anybody and so I got this hunger even after entering heaven. As a remedy Brahmā suggested that I should come here everyday and eat corpse and when I had completed ten thousand days the hermit Agastya would come here and that when I offered him a golden bangle my sin would be washed away." Saying thus Śveta offered to Agastya the golden bangle given by Brahmā and then he vanished and the corpse also disappeared. Śveta went to heaven. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

24) *Other informations concerning Agastya*.

(1) Agastya had a brother called Sutīṣṇa. (Agnipurāṇa, Chapter 7).

(2) Sutīṣṇa was Agastya's disciple too. (Setu Māhātmya).

(3) Ilvala and Vātāpi were the sons of the giantess Ajamukhī. In the valley of a mountain Ajamukhī prayed to Durvāsas for love and thus Ilvala and Vātāpi were born from Durvāsas. These two sons demanded that Durvāsas should impart to them all his merits of penance. Getting angry Durvāsas cursed them that they would meet with death at the hands of Agastya. (Skandapurāṇa, Āsura Kāṇḍa).

(4) Agastya had been the priest of the King Khela. (Rgveda, 112th Sūkta).

(5) When Śrī Rāma returned to Ayodhyā, with Sitā from Laṅkā, hermits from various parts visited him, among whom, Dattātreya, Namuci, Pramuci, Śrī Vālmiki, Soma, Kaṇḍu, Agastya and their disciples were from the South. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

(6) Agastya gave Śrī Rāma an arrow, which, when shot at an asura (demon) would pierce his heart, pass on to the other side, fly to the sea and bathe in the sea-water and return to the quiver, it is said. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

(7) Once Agastya visited the hermitage of Āpastamba. He asked Agastya, who, of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, was the Supreme deity. Agastya replied: "These three are only three different manifestations of the one supreme Being". (Brahmapurāṇa).

(8) For the story of how Agastya cursed the sons of Maṇibhadra and transformed them to seven palms, see the word 'Saptasāla'.

(9) There was a hermit called Sutīṣṇa, to whom Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa paid a visit when they were wandering in the forest. This Sutīṣṇa is the younger brother of Agastya. (See the word Sutīṣṇa).

(10) Agastya cursed Śuka and deformed him into a Rākṣasa. (See the word Śuka ii.).

25) *Conclusion*. It is believed that the great hermit Agastya, who had performed such wonderful deeds by the merits of his penance, is still doing penance in the Agastya Kūṭa hills. Agastya who had travelled throughout the length and breadth of Bhārata had several hermitages. In the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Āraṇyakāṇḍa, Sarga 11, a description is given, of a beautiful hermitage of Agastya, and the peaceful atmosphere that prevailed in and around it. Agastya had presented to Śrī Rāma a bow got from Viṣṇu, when the brothers visited his hermitage. Agastya had accompanied Śrī Rāma and his followers on his return journey to Ayodhyā from Laṅkā, with Sitā after killing Rāvaṇa. There is a legend in the Tamilnād that Agastya was a member of the first two 'Saṅghas' (groups) of the "three Saṅghas", mentioned in Tamil literature. As Agastya was dwarfish he is mentioned as Kurumuni, (short hermit) in Tamil works. He has written a Tamil grammar on music, literature and drama. But this work is not available now. The Tamil Grammar 'Tolkāpyam', which is considered to be the oldest grammar, was written by Tolkāpyār, one of the twelve disciples of Agastya. Even today in certain temples in the Tamilnād, Agastya-worship is carried on. Kambar, has mentioned about Agastya in his Rāmāyaṇa. A great Tamil author Villiputturan says that the Tamil language is the beautiful maiden presented by Agastya. It is believed that the following works have been composed by Agastya:

1) Agastya Gītā ; in the Varāhapurāṇa, Paśupāloṣkhyāna.

2) Agastya Saṁhitā; in Pañcarātra.

3) Agastya Saṁhitā, in the Skandapurāṇa.

4) Śiva Saṁhitā, in Bhāskara Saṁhitā.

5) Dvaidha-nirṇaya Tantra.

AGASTYA KŪṬA. This is the sacred mount where the sage, Agastya, sat and did penance during his sojourn in the southern parts of India. In the Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa of Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa we find King Sugrīva commanding that all his soldiers going in search of Sitā should pay homage to the sage Agastya.

AGASTYA PARVATA. This is a mountain in South India believed to belong to the Kālāñjara mountain range. Agastya Kūṭa is in this mountain.

AGASTYA SARAS. This is another name for Agastya tīrtha.