

ROHIṆĪ V. The mother of Utatthya, a famous hermit. (For details see under Satyatapas).

ROHITA (ROHITĀŚVA). The son of Hariścandra. This son, who was born by the blessing of Varuṇa, was wanted to be sacrificed by Varuṇa himself. In connection with this Hariścandra had to bear much sorrow and misery. (For details see under Hariścandra).

ROHITAKA (ROHITAKĀRANYA). A mountain famous in the Purāṇas. Places surrounding this mountain also were known by the name Rohitaka. It is mentioned in Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Chapter 32, Stanza 4, that during the regional conquest of Nakula, he passed through this country. The present name of this country is Rohtak (Haryana).

ROMAHAṚṢAṆA. A famous disciple of Vyāsa. The great Vyāsa gave the collection of Purāṇas to Romaharṣaṇa. Sumati, Agnivarcaś, Mitrāyus, Śāmsāpāyana, Akṛtavraṇa and Sāvarni were the six disciples of Romaharṣaṇa. (See under Guruparamparā).

ROMAKA. A country in ancient India. The inhabitants of this country were called the Romakas. Mention is made in Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Chapter 51, Stanza 17, that the Romakas came with presents to the horse-sacrifice performed by Yudhiṣṭhira.

ROMAPĀDA. See under Lomapāda.

ROMAŚĀ. A daughter of Brhaspati. The reply given by Romaśā to her husband when he teased her, is given in Rgveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 19, Sūkta 126.

RṢABHA I. A King of the Lunar dynasty. He was the great grandson of Uparicaravasū.

Mahābhārata, Droṇa Parva, Chapter 20, Verse 12 says that he fought within the Garuḍavyūha formed by Droṇa.

RṢABHA II. A muni (sage) who was the grandson of King Agnīdhra.

1) General information.

Rṣabha was the son of King Nābhi by his wife Meru-devī. One hundred sons were born to Rṣabha by his wife Jayantī. After entrusting his kingdom to Bharata, the eldest of his sons, Rṣabha went to the forest and did tapas in Pulaha's āśrama.

2) *Rṣabha and Rṣabhakūṭa* Rṣabha did tapas in the forest for many years. The mountain peak on which he performed his tapas got the name "Rṣabhakūṭa". The sage who wished to observe strict silence did not like the presence of strangers and visitors in the vicinity. So he pronounced a curse that the mountain should drop boulders on anyone who ventured to come there. Once he ordered the wind to blow without noise as it passed by the side of the mountain. He declared that anyone who made noise in Rṣabhakūṭa would be struck with thunder. A place of holy waters came into existence there. (M.B. Aranya Parva, Chapter 11).

3) *The power of Rṣabha's Yāga*. Rṣabha became a devotee of Śiva by worshipping him.

Once a Brāhmaṇa named Mandara had an illicit alliance with Piṅgalā, a prostitute. Both of them died together. Mandara was re-born as Bhadrāyū, the grandson of Nala and Piṅgalā as Sumati, the wife of King Vajrabāhu (Amśumān). Sumati became pregnant. Her co-wives who were jealous of her poisoned her. As a result of it, she and the child born to her fell victims to diseases. Daśārṇa abandoned them in the forest. Sumati lived in the house of a Vaiśya with her child. While living there, the child died of disease. Rṣa-

bha went to the grief-stricken Sumati and comforted her. (Śiva Purāṇa).

4) *Rṣabha's End*. Rṣabha performed tapas according to the rules of Vānaprastha āśrama and conducted yāgas as ordained by Śāstras. On account of his austerity he became so lean and thin that all the veins in the body could be seen. Putting a pebble in his mouth, he went about in the forest, determined to renounce his body. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Chapter 1, Section 1).

In the course of his wanderings in the forest a wild fire broke out in which his body was burnt up. Śiva Purāṇa says that the soul of Rṣabha who died in the wild fire, attained Śiva Loka.

RṢABHA III. A Nāga born in the Dhṛtarāṣṭra family. In Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 57, Verse 11, we read that this nāga was burnt to ashes at Janamejaya's Sarpasatra. (Snake sacrifice).

RṢABHA IV. An Asura. (M.B. Śānti Parva, Chapter 227, Verse 51).

RṢABHADVĪPA. A holy place on the banks of the river Sarasvatī. Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 84 says that by bathing in this place, one would obtain Devavimāna.

RṢABHAKŪṬA. See under Rṣabha II and Rṣabha-parvata.

RṢABHAPARVATA. There are twenty mountains on the four sides of Mahāmeru. Rṣabha is one of them. (Devī Bhāgavata, Aṣṭama Skandha).

There is a reference to Rṣabha Parvata when Sugrīva gave instructions about the way to the army of monkeys going out in search of Sītā. Sugrīva speaks about the Rṣabha mountain as situated in the middle of the ocean of milk. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa, 4th Sarga, Verse 44).

RṢABHATĪRTHA. An ancient place of holy waters in Ayodhyā. Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 84 says that an observance of fast at this tirtha is equivalent to the gift of 1,000 cows and a Vājapeyayajña.

RṢĪ. Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 348 states that the letter "R" means "sound". The word "Rṣi" is derived from this root. During the period when the art of writing was not known, Vedas, Śāstras and other sacred lore were communicated through the mouth of the Rṣis. The voice of Ārṣa Bhārata itself is the voice of the Rṣis. Hindus believe that the Vedas are the outcome of the inspiration, introspection and spiritual vision of the Rṣis. There is a Saṁskṛta stanza defining a Rṣi, which is given below :

Ūrdhvaretāstapasyāgaḥ
Niyatāśīca saṁyamī /
Śāpānugrahayoḥ śaktaḥ
Satyasandho bhavedrṣiḥ //

India has given birth to numerous Rṣis. The word "Rṣi" may be found throughout the Vedas. Rṣis born in all classes of people had lived in India. The general belief is that the number of Rṣis may come to about 48,000. It is not possible to know the names of all of them. In the Rāmāyaṇa we find that when Śrī Rāma returned to Ayodhyā after his life in the forest and took up the reign, many Rṣis came to Ayodhyā from all parts of the country. Among them, Viśvāmitra, Yavakṛita, Raibhya, Kaṇva and Garga came with their party of disciples from the east; Dattātreyā, Namuci, Pramuci, Vālmiki, Soma, Kuṇḍu and Agastya came with their disciples from the south; Vṛṣaṅgu, Kaviṣa, Kaumya,