

BĀLAYOGI. A king of the Aṅga dynasty. He was the son of Bali, who had six sons named Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kāliṅga, Puṇḍra, Bāleya and Bālayogī. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 277).

BALĀYUS. One of the eight sons born to Purūravas by Urvaśī. (Padma Purāṇa, Śṛṣṭi, Chapter 12).

BĀLHIKA. (BĀLHIKA) I. A powerful king born in the family of Ahara. (M.B., Ādi Parva, Chapter 67, Stanza 25).

BĀLHIKA II. A king who in his previous life was the asura called Krodhavaśa. It is mentioned in Mahābhārata, Droṇa Parva, Chapter 96, Stanza 12, that this King helped the Kauravas in the battle of Kurukṣetra.

BĀLHIKA III. A king who was the third son of Janamejaya and the grandson of King Kuru. (M.B., Ādi Parva, Chapter 94, Stanza 56).

BĀLHIKA IV. A son of Pratīpa, a King of the Kuru dynasty. He had two brothers, Devāpi and Śantanu. It is said in Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 94 that Sunandā, the princess of the country of Śibi was their mother. Mention is made in Bhāgavata, Skandha 9, Chapter 22, Stanza 18 that this king Bālhika had a son named Somadatta. Bālhika was a friend of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. Bālhika exhorted them strongly, not to engage in a battle. Still, when the battle was begun, Bālhika sided with the Kauravas. Bālhika was once elected as the general of eleven divisions of the army of Duryodhana.

The achievements of Bālhika in the battle of Kurukṣetra are given below :—

1) There was a combat on the first day of the battle between Bālhika and Dhr̥ṣṭaketu. (M.B., Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 45, Stanza 38).

2) Bhīmasena defeated Bālhika. (M.B., Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 104, Stanza 26).

3) Fought with Drupada. (Mahābhārata, Droṇa Parva, Chapter 25, Stanza 18).

4) Bālhika fought with Śikhaṇḍī. (Mahābhārata, Droṇa Parva, Chapter 96, Stanza 7).

5) Bhīmasena killed Bālhika. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 157, Stanza 15).

BĀLHIKA V. The charioteer of Dharmaputra. (M.B., Sabhā Parva, Chapter 58, Stanza 20).

BĀLHIKADEŚA. A country in ancient Bhārata. Mention is made about this country in Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9.

BALI (MAHĀBALI) I. An emperor of the Asuras. He was the son of Virocana and the grandson of Prahlāda.

1) *Genealogy and Birth.* The Asuras or the Daityas are the sons born, of his wife Diti, to Kaśyapa Prajāpati, son of Marīci and grandson of Brahmā. There were so many Asuras born as the sons of Diti. But among them Hiraṇyākṣa, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Śūrapadmā, Simhavadaktra, Tārakāśura and Gomukha were notorious. Of their sisters Simhikā and Ajamukhī were famous.

Four sons called Prahlāda, Samhrāda, Hrāda and Anuhrāda were born to Hiraṇyakaśipu. Virocana was the son of Prahlāda and Mahābali was the son of Virocana. Bāṇa was born from Mahābali and four crores of Asuras called Nivātakavacas were born from Bāṇa.

2) *The churning of the ocean.* Once Mahābali had stolen the wealth of Devendra. While he was carrying it to his house, it all fell in the ocean. Mahāviṣṇu ordered the devas (gods) to recover the lost wealth from the

ocean. It was impossible to churn the ocean without the help of Mahābali. So the devas went to Mahābali and sought his help. Mahābali agreed to help them.

The real aim of the devas was not to regain the lost wealth but to obtain the celestial nectar known as Nectar of Immortality (Amṛta) and to defeat the Asuras in battle. On the side of the Asuras there was the knowledge of the Mṛtasañjivani (life-restoring remedy). So the dead were being brought to life. But it was not possible for devas to do so. It was to make up this deficiency, by obtaining Ambrosia from the sea, that the devas tried to churn the sea, under the pretence of recovering the lost wealth. Mention is made in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Amśa 1, Chapter 9 and Matsya Purāṇa, Chapters 250 and 251 that these events took place during the regime of the Indra named Mantradruma in the Cākṣuṣamanvantara (the period of the manu named Cākṣuṣa).

3) *War with Indra.* The great teacher Śukra again anointed Bali, who was brought to life again, as Indra. After that he performed the sacrifice of Viśvajit (conqueror of the world) on behalf of Bali. Assuming the responsibilities of government, Bali performed one hundred Aśvamedha yāgas (Horse sacrifices) (Bhāgavata, Skandha 8).

After the Viśvajit sacrifice, Yajñadeva (god of sacrifice) who was greatly pleased at the sacrifice, presented Bali with a divine chariot, equal in all aspects to that of Indra, a golden bow, two quivers, which would never become empty and a divine armour, and his grandfather gave him a garland that would never fade, and the teacher Śukra gave him a divine conch, and Brahmā presented a garland. (M.B., Śānti Parva, Chapter 216).

4) *Attainment of the Position of Indra.* Mahāviṣṇu had not been on good terms with the devas, for a time. Taking this opportunity, Śukrācārya the teacher of the Asuras, persuaded Bali to engage the devas in a battle. Bali defeated the devas completely in a pitched battle.

Thus the realm of the gods came under the sway of Mahābali. Once, during that period Bali invited his grandfather Prahlāda to heaven and requested him to accept the most honourable seat there. Prahlāda accepted his invitation and anointed Bali as Indra. Bali enquired of Prahlāda as to the method of carrying on the government of heaven. Prahlāda said thus in reply: "Only virtue will always win. Rule the kingdom without deviating from virtue." (Vāmana Purāṇa, Chapter 74). Because Bali had ruled his kingdom according to the advice of Prahlāda, he became famous in the three worlds. (Vāmana Purāṇa, Chapter 75).

According to the version of Bhāgavata, Prahlāda when he grew old, left his kingdom in the hands of his son Virocana and went to the forest for penance. Virocana was not as famous as Prahlāda. After the period of Virocana, Mahābali came to the throne. He was a mighty king. Within a short time he became the emperor of the Asuras. It was during this period that the churning of the Milk Sea took place. The Asuras and the Devas (gods) sat on either side and using the mount Mandara as churn-drill, churned the Milk Sea and obtained Amṛta (the celestial nectar of immortality). A battle took place between the Asuras and the Devas for the possession of Amṛtakalaśa (the Ambrosia and the container) and the emperor Mahābali was killed in the battle. The Asuras carried the dead body of Mahā.