

AGASTYA



Maharishi Agastya was born as a result of the spilling of seeds in a pot by the gods. When they beheld the lovely apsara Urvashi, the celestial damsel, first Mitr and then Varun (sea-god) deposited their seed in a pot. Agastya was generated from the combination of the two deposits hence he was termed as a son of Mitravarun. Later from the same pot, Vashishtha was born from the seed of varuna . Hence he was also considered an offspring of Mitravaruna. However, before this birth, he had been divested of his earthly body as a result of the curse of King Nimi, hence by attaining a new body, he was known as an earthly son of Brahma. Being born from a “ghat” (earthen pot), Agastya was also called “Ghat” Yogi (sage). According to the tales told in Puranic literature, Agastya is considered to be a brilliant sage.



Misery or Blissfulness

One Sufi mystic who had remained happy his whole life — no one had ever seen him unhappy ...

Once upon a time the nest of a bird dwelling on the banks of the sea was swept away by the ocean waves. The eggs of the bird were carried away in the nest. The bird couple was sad but helpless and appeared to **Agastya Rishi** for help. Agastya called out to the ocean and asked for the eggs to be returned. The ocean did not pay any heed to him. Now Agastya was furious. With three palms full of water that he picked up, the entire water of

the ocean was soaked up. It was only on a request from Lord Brahma that Agastya restored the waters back to the ocean.

Once, the **Vindhyachal Mountain** was so filled with vanity that it rose higher and higher till it blocked the path of the sun. As soon as the chariot of the sun was stopped, the creation was clothed in darkness. The gods then prayed to Brahma for help. Brahma said that the Vindhyachal considers Agastya as his guru and only he is the one who can help us out now. In those days Agastya used to live in Kashi in the North of India. To help the gods, he began a journey from the north to the south of India. When he saw Rishi Agastya approaching, Vindhyachal bowed down with respect at his feet and lay prone in a “dandavat” (full body including head and feet flat on the ground) posture. **Sage Agastya** crossed over his bent form and said. Till I return from the south, stay in this prone position. Agastya then settled down in the Dandaka forest in **South India**. He did not ever return to the North. So the **Vindhyachal Mountain** remains low, in a prone position. Tadaka and Mareech too became man-eating demons as a result of a curse given by Agastya. There are several such tales of Agastya’s power and prowess.



Who is teaching whom?

A letter arrived to the old professor's home where he had retired after teaching and gradu ...

Lord Rama bestowed the ultimate bliss to Rishi Sharabhanga in Dandaka forest and reached Sootikshana’s ashram. Sootikshana was a disciple of **Sage Agastya**. Along with him, Rama, Sita and Lakshman went to ashram of **Sage Agastya**. Shri Rama spent many peaceful days there. **Sage Agastya** gave him many celestial weapons. It was on his suggestion that Rama chose to build his forest dwelling at Panchavati on the banks of the river Godavari and stayed there for a long time.

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During the battle between Rama and Ravana after the abduction of Sita, **Sage Agastya** went to Rama and gave him the “Aditya Hriday” (prayer for invoking the Sun God). It was this special invocation prayer that helped Rama to overpower and kill Ravana. When Rama was crowned King of Ayodhya, **Agastya Rishi** came and gave several discourses on his duty, ethics and royal decorum. For a long time Rama, Lakshman , Bharat and Shatrughna had the benefit of his good company. Like Guru

Vashishtha and Vishwamitra, Sage Agastya had a major contribution in the role Rama played out in his avatar (incarnation) on earth.

Agastya – Ramayana Characters

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Agastya is a revered [Vedic](#) sage of [Hinduism](#).^{[4] [5]} In the Indian traditions, he is a noted recluse and an influential scholar in diverse languages of the [Indian subcontinent](#). He and his wife Lopamudra are the celebrated authors of hymns 1.165 to 1.191 in the Sanskrit text [Rigveda](#) and other Vedic literature.

^{[5] [6] [7]} Agastya is considered by many to be the "father of Tamil language" and to whom is attributed the origin of the Tamil grammar text Agastyam.^{[2] [3]}

Agastya is a character in numerous inconsistent mythologies and regional epics including the major [Ramayana](#) and [Mahabharata](#).^{[7] [8]} He is one of the seven or eight most revered [rishis](#) in the Vedic texts,^[9] as well as a subject of reverence and controversies for being the first Tamil [Siddhar](#) in the [Shaivism](#) tradition, a non-[Brahmin](#) Sanskritist, a [Dravidian](#), an [Indo-Aryan](#), a protector of both the Arya and the Dasa,^[10] a maverick rishi, and so on.^{[2] [11] [12]} He is also revered in the [Puranic](#) literature of [Shaktism](#) and [Vaishnavism](#).^[13] He is one of the Indian sages found in ancient sculpture and reliefs in Hindu temples of South Asia, and Southeast Asia such as in the early medieval era Shaiva temples on [Java](#) Indonesia. He is the principal figure and [Guru](#) in the ancient [Javanese language](#) text Agastyaparva, whose 11th century version survives.^{[14] [15]}

Agastya is traditionally attributed to be the author of many Sanskrit texts such as the [Agastya Gita](#) found in [Varaha Purana](#), [Agastya Samhita](#) found embedded in [Skanda Purana](#), and the Dvaidha-Nirnaya Tantra text.^[7] He is also referred to as **Mana**, **Kalasaja**, **Kumbhaja**, **Kumbhayoni** and **Maitravaruni** after his mythical origins.^{[14] [16] [17]}

Etymology and nomenclature

The etymological origin of Agastya is unclear and there are several theories. One states that it is derived from a flowering tree called Agati gandiflora, which is endemic to the Indian subcontinent and is called Akatti in Tamil. This theory suggests that Agati evolved into Agastih, and favors Dravidian origins of the Vedic sage.^[18]

Another theory states that the root is Aj or Anj, which connotes "brighten, effulgent one" and links Agastya to "one who brightens" in darkness, and Agastya is traditionally the Indian name for the second most brilliantly shining star found in South Asian skies, next to Sirius.^[18]

A third theory links it to Indo-European origins, through the Iranian word *gasta* which means "sin, foul", and *a-gasta* would mean "not sin, not foul".^[19] The fourth theory, based on folk etymology in verse 2.11 of the Ramayana states that Agastya is from *aga* (unmoving or mountain) and *gam* (move), and together these roots connote "one who is mover-of-mountains", or "mover-of-the-unmoving".^[20]

The word may have links to *aga-m* "inside, house, place", *aga-tt-u* or "within, inside the house", or *aga-tt-an* in Tamil language.

The word is also written as **Agasti** and **Agathiyar** (**Tamil**: அகத்தியர் *Agathiyar*;

^[21]**Telugu**: అగస్త్య; **Kannada**: ಅಗಸ್ತಯ; **Malayalam**: അഗസ്ത്യൻ or അഗസ്ത്യമുനി **Malay**: Anggasta; **Thai**: Akkhot).

^[21] *Agathiyar*(அகத்தியர்) in **Tamil** means one who is focussed inward அகம் - அகத்து + இயர் = அகத்தியர்
A-ga in Sanskrit means a mountain, and *Asti* means thrower.^{[22] [22] [23]}

Biography

The origins of Agastya are mythical. Unlike most Vedic sages, he has neither a human mother nor a father. According to Hindu mythology, his miraculous birth follows a [yajna](#) being done by gods Varuna and Mitra, where the celestial [apsara](#) Urvashi appears.^[24] They are overwhelmed by her extraordinary sexuality, and ejaculated. Their semen falls into a mud pitcher, which is the womb in which the fetus of Agastya grows. He is born from this jar, along with his twin sage [Vashistha](#) in some mythologies.^[25] This mythology gives him the name *kumbhayoni*, which literally means "he whose womb was a mud pot".^{[24] [26]}

Agastya leads an [ascetic](#) life, educates himself, becomes a celebrated sage. He is not born to Brahmin parents, but is called a [Brahmin](#) in many Indian texts because of his learning. In the Tamil traditions, he is considered a form of the Hindu god [Shiva](#), one well versed in Sanskrit and a symbol of Tamil learning.^[27] His unknown origins have led to speculative proposals that the Vedic era Agastya may have been a migrant Aryan whose ideas influenced the south, and alternatively a native non-Aryan Dravidian whose ideas influenced the north.^{[28] [29] [30]}

According to inconsistent legends in the Puranic and the epics, the ascetic sage Agastya proposed to Lopamudra, a princess born in the kingdom of Vidharbha. Her parents were unwilling to bless the engagement, concerned that she will be unable to live the austere lifestyle of Agastya in the forest. However, the legends state that Lopamudra accepted him as her husband saying that Agastya has the wealth of ascetic living, her own youth will fade with seasons, and it is his virtue that makes him the right person. Therewith, Lopamudra became the wife of Agastya.^[31] In other versions, Lopamudra marries Agastya, but after the wedding, she demands Agastya to provide her with basic comforts before she would consummate the marriage, a demand that ends up forcing Agastya to return to society and earn wealth.^[32]

Agastya and Lopamudra have a son named *Drdhasyu*, sometimes called *Idhmavaha*. He is described in the Mahabharata as a boy who learns the Vedas listening to his parents while he is in the womb, and is born into the world reciting the hymns.^[1]

Agastya ashram

Agastya had a hermitage ([ashram](#)), but the ancient and medieval era Indian texts provide inconsistent stories and location for this ashram. Two legends place it in northwest Maharashtra, on the banks of river [Godavari](#), near [Nashik](#) in small towns named Agastyapuri and Akolha. Other putative sites mentioned in northern and eastern Indian sources is near [Kohlapur](#) (Western ghats at Maharashtra, Karnataka border), or near [Kannauj](#) (Utar Pradesh), or in Agastyamuni village near [Rudraprayag](#) (Utarakhand), or [Satpura Range](#) (Madhya Pradesh). In southern sources and the north Indian [Devi-Bhagavata Purana](#), his ashram is based in Tamil Nadu, variously placed in [Tirunelveli](#), Potiyal hills, or [Thanjavur](#).^{[33][34]}

Textual sources

Vedas

Agastya is mentioned in all the four Vedas of [Hinduism](#), and is a character in the [Brahmanas](#), [Aranyakas](#), [Upanishads](#), epics, and many [Puranas](#).^[17] He is the author of hymns 1.165 to 1.191 of the Rigveda (~1200 BCE).^{[5][35]} He ran a Vedic school (gurukul), as evidenced by hymn 1.179 of the Rigveda which credits its author to be his wife Lopamudra and his students.^[17] He was a respected sage in the Vedic era, as many other hymns of the Rigveda composed by other sages refer to Agastya. The hymns composed by Agastya are known for verbal play and similes, puzzles and puns, and striking imagery embedded within his spiritual message.^[36]

Agastya vedic verses

With thee, O Indra, are most bounteous riches that further every one who lives uprightly. Now may these Maruts show us loving-kindness, Gods who of old were ever prompt to help us. —1.169.5,

Transl: Ralph T.H. Griffith^[37] May we know refreshment, and a community having lively waters. — 1.165.15, 1.166.15, 1.167.11, etc. Transl: Stephanie Jamison, Joel Brereton^[38]

—Rigveda

His Vedic poetry is particularly notable for two themes.^[38] In one set of hymns, Agastya describes a conflict between two armies led by gods Indra and Maruts, which scholars such as [G. S. Ghurye](#) have interpreted as an allegory of a conflict between Arya (Indra) and Dasa (Rudra).^{[29][39]} Agastya successfully reconciles their conflict, makes an offering wherein he prays for understanding and loving-kindness between the two. Twenty one out of the twenty seven hymns he composed in Mandala 1 of the Rigveda have his signature ending, wherein he appeals, "may each community know refreshment (food) and lively waters".^[38] These ideas have led him to be considered as a protector of both the Arya and the Dasa.^[10] However, some scholars interpret the same hymns to be an allegory for any two conflicting ideologies or lifestyles, because Agastya never uses the words Arya or Dasa, and only uses the phrase ubhau varnav (literally, "both colors").^{[29][40][41]} The theme and idea of "mutual understanding" as a means

for lasting reconciliation, along with Agastya's name, reappears in section 1.2.2 of the Aitareya Aranyaka of Hinduism.^[42]

The second theme, famous in the Hinduism literature, is a discussion between his wife Lopamudra and him about the human tension between the monastic solitary pursuit of spirituality, versus the responsibility of a householder's life and raising a family. Agastya argues that there are many ways to happiness and liberation, while Lopamudra presents her arguments about the nature of life, time and the possibility of both. She successfully seduces Agastya, in the simile filled Rigvedic hymn 1.179.^{[38] [43]}

Agastya is mentioned in both the oldest and the youngest layers of the Rigveda (c. 1500–1200 BCE), such as in hymn 33 of mandala 7, which is older than mandala 1.^[44] He is also mentioned in other three Vedas and the [Vedanga](#) literature such as in verses 5.13–14 of the [Nirukta](#).^{[17] [44]} Agastya and his ideas are cited in numerous other Vedic texts, such as section 7.5.5 of Taittiriya Samhita, 10.11 of Kathaka Samhita, 2.1 of Maitrayani Samhita, 5.16 of Aitareya Brahmana, 2.7.11 of Taittiriya Brahmana, and 21.14 of Pancavimsati Brahmana.^[20]

Ramayana



12th century statue of Agastya from [Bihar](#).

Sage Agastya is mentioned in the Hindu epic [Ramayana](#) in several chapters with his hermitage described to be on the banks of river [Godavari](#).^[45]

In the Ramayana, Agastya and Lopamudra are described as living in [Dandaka](#) forest, on the southern slopes of Vindhya mountains. Rama praises Agastya as the one who can do what gods find impossible. He is described by Rama as the sage who asked Vindhya mountains to lower themselves so that Sun, Moon and living beings could easily pass over it. He is also described as the sage who used his [Dharma](#) powers to kill demons Vatapi and Ilwala after they had jointly misled and destroyed 9,000 men.^[46]

Agastya, according to the Ramayana, is a unique sage, who is short of height and heavy of weight, but by living in the south he balances the powers of [Shiva](#) and the weight of Kailasha and Mount Meru.

^[47] Agastya and his wife meet Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. He gives them a divine bow and arrow, describes the evil nature of Ravana and, according to William Buck, B. A. van Nooten and Shirley Triest, bids them goodbye with the advice, "Rama, demons do not love men, therefore men must love each other".^[20]^[48]

Mahabharata

The story of Agastya is mirrored in the second major Hindu epic [Mahabharata](#). However, instead of Rama, the story is told as a conversation between Vaisampayana and Lomasa in section 33 of Book 3, the [Vana Parva](#) (the Book of Forest).^[49]



Maharishi Agastya drinking the whole sea

He is described in the epic as a sage with enormous powers of ingestion and digestion.^[50] Agastya, once again, stops the Vindhya mountains from growing and lowers them and he kills the demons Vatapi and Ilvala much the same mythical way as in the Ramayana. The Vana Parva also describes the story of Lopamudra and Agastya getting engaged and married. It also contains the mythical story of a war between Indra and Vritra, where all the demons hide in the sea, gods requesting Agastya for help, who then goes and drinks up the ocean thereby revealing all the demons to the gods.^[49]

Puranas

The [Puranic](#) literature of Hinduism have numerous stories about Agastya, more elaborate, more fantastical and inconsistent than the mythologies found in Vedic and Epics literature of India.^[7] For example, chapter 61 of the [Matsya Purana](#), chapter 22 of [Padma Purana](#), and seven other Maha [Puranas](#) tell the entire biography of Agastya.^[20]^[44] Some list him as one of the Saptarishi (seven great [rishi](#)), while in others he is one of the eight or twelve extraordinary sages of the Hindu traditions.

^[51]The list of names or details are not consistent across the different Puranas, nor in different manuscript versions of the same Purana. He is variously listed along with Angiras, Atri, Bhrigu, Bhargava, Bharadvaja, Visvamitra, Vasistha, Kashyapa, Gotama, Jamadagni and others.^[52]

Agastya is reverentially mentioned in the Puranas of all major Hindu traditions: Shaivism, Shaktism and Vaishnavism. Many of the Puranas include lengthy and detailed accounts of the descendants of Agastya and other saptarishis.^[20]^[52]

Tamil texts

In Tamil traditions, Agastya is considered as the father of Tamil language and the compiler of the first Tamil grammar called Agathiyam or Akattiyam.^{[2] [3] [29]} Agastya has been a culture hero in Tamil traditions, and appears in numerous Tamil texts.^[53]

There are similarities and differences between the Northern and Southern (Tamil) traditions about Agastya. According to [Iravatham Mahadevan](#),^[29] both traditions state that Agastya migrated from north to south. The Tamil text Purananuru, dated to about the start of the common era, or possibly about 2nd century CE, in verse 201 mentions Agastya along with many people migrating south.^{[29] [54]}

In the northern legends, Agastya's role in spreading Vedic tradition and Sanskrit is emphasized,^[55] while in southern traditions his role in spreading irrigation, agriculture and inventing the Tamil language is emphasized.^[29] In the north, his ancestry is unknown with mythical legends limiting themselves to saying that Agastya was born from a mud pitcher. In southern traditions, his descent from a pitcher is a common reference, but two alternate southern legends place him as the Caṅkam (Sangam) polity and forty ninth generation [Velir](#) clan leader who moved from mount Kailasha to south India, and alternatively as a descendent from the Yadavas who migrated south.^[29]



Reverence at an Agastya shrine with garlands of fruits and flowers.

The northern traditional stories, states Mahadevan, are "nothing more than a collection of incredible fables and myths", while the southern versions "ring much truer and appear to be a down to earth account of a historical event".^[29] Others disagree. According to K.N. Sivaraja Pillai, for example, there is nothing in the early [Sangam literature](#) or any Tamil texts prior to about the mid 1st millennium CE that mentions Agastya.^{[56] [57]} The earliest mention of the role of Agastya in Tamil language, according to Richard Weiss, can be traced to the Iraiyanar Akapporul by 8th century Nakkirar. However, in medieval era stories of the Tamil tradition, Agastya pioneered the first sangam period that lasted 4,440 years, and took part in the second sangam period that lasted another 3,700 years.^[58]

The Tirumantiram describes Agastya as an ascetic sage, who came from the north and settled in the southern Potigai mountains because Shiva asked him to. He is described as the one who perfected and loved both Sanskrit and Tamil languages, amassing knowledge in both, thus becoming a symbol of integration, harmony and learning, instead of being opposed to either.^[59]

Siddhar

Agastya, in Tamil Hindu traditions, is considered as the first and foremost [Siddhar](#) (Tamil: cittar, Sanskrit: siddha). A siddhar is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root sidh which means "to accomplish or succeed". As the first Siddhar, Agastya is deemed as the first master, accomplished, the sage who perfected his knowledge of the natural and spiritual worlds. This Tamil concept has parallels to Tibetan mahasiddhas, Sri Lankan Buddhist, and [Nath](#) Hindu yogi traditions of north India.^[60]

Agastya, along with Tirumular, is considered a siddhar in both philosophical and practical domains, unlike most other siddhar who are revered for their special domain of knowledge. Agastya is also unique for the reverence he has received in historic texts all over the Indian subcontinent.^[60] He is considered the guru of many other [Siddhas](#). He is sometimes affectionately called Kurumuni, meaning short (kuru) saint (muni).

According to Venkatraman, the Siddhar-related literature about Agastya is late medieval to early modern era. In particular, all medicine and health-related Tamil text, that include Agastya as the Siddhar, have been composed in and after the 15th-century. According to Hartmut Scharfe, the oldest medicine siddhar Tamil text mentioning Agastya were composed no earlier than the 16th century.^[6]

Buddhist texts

Several Buddhist texts mention Agastya. Just like early Buddhist texts such as Kalapa, Katantra and Candra-vyakarana adapting Panini, and Asvaghosa adopting the more ancient Sanskrit poetic methodology as he praises the [Buddha](#), Agastya appears in 1st millennium CE Buddhist texts. In Tamil texts, for example, Akattiyar (another name for Agastya) is described as the sage who learnt Tamil and Sanskrit grammar and poetics from Avalokitan (another name for Buddha-to-be [Avalokiteśvara](#)).^{[61] [62]}



The left Indonesian statue shows Agastya with Shiva's trident, as a divine sage of [Shaivism](#). Agastya iconography is common in southeast Asian temples.^{[63] [64]}

According to Anne E. Monius, the Manimekalai and Viracoliyam are two of many South Indian texts that co-opt Agastya and make him a student of the Buddha-to-be.^[61]

Agastya elsewhere appears in other historic Buddhist mythologies, such as the Jataka tales. For example, the Buddhist text Jataka-mala by Aryasura, about the Buddha's previous lives, includes Agastya as the seventh chapter.^[65] The Agastya-Jataka story is carved as a relief in the [Borobudur](#), the world's largest early medieval era [Mahayana](#) Buddhist temple.^[66]

Javanese and southeast Asian texts

Agastya is one of the most important figures in a number of medieval era Southeast Asian inscriptions, temple reliefs and arts. He was particularly popular in Java Indonesia, till Islamic wars of conquest overwhelmed the islands of Indonesia. He is also found in Cambodia, Vietnam and other regions. The earliest mentions of Agastya is traceable to about the mid 1st millennium CE, but the 11th-century Javanese language text Agastya-parva is a remarkable combination of philosophy, mythology and genealogy attributed to sage Agastya.^{[14][67]}

The Agastya-parva includes Sanskrit verse (shlokas) embedded within the Javanese language. The text is structured as a conversation between a Guru (teacher, Agastya) and a Sisya (student, Agastya's son Drdhasyu).^[68] The style is a mixture of didactic, philosophical and theological treatise, covering diverse range of topics much like Hindu Puranas. The chapters of the Javanese text include the Indian theory of cyclic existence, rebirth and [samsara](#), creation of the world by the churning of the ocean (samudra manthan), theories of the [Samkhya](#) and the [Vedanta](#) school of [Hindu philosophy](#), major sections on god [Shiva](#) and [Shaivism](#), some discussion of [Tantra](#), a manual like summary of ceremonies associated with the rites of passage and others.^[68]

While the similarities between the Agastya-parva text and classical Indian ideas are obvious, according to [Jan Gonda](#), the Indian counterpart of this text in Sanskrit or Tamil languages have not been found in Indonesia or in India.^[69] Similarly other Agastya-related Indonesian texts, dated to be from the 10th to 12th centuries, discuss ideas from multiple sub-schools of Shaivism such as theistic Shaivasiddhanta and monistic Agamic Pashupata, and these texts declare these theologies to be of equal merit and value.^[69]



Agastya on south side of the 9th-century Javanese [Sambisari](#) temple unearthed from volcanic mud.

Agastya is common in medieval era Shiva temples of southeast Asia, such as the stone temples in Java ([candi](#)). Along with the iconography of Shiva, Uma, Nandi and Ganesha who face particular cardinal directions, these temples include sculpture, image or relief of Agastya carved into the southern face.

^[70] The Shiva shrine in the largest Hindu temple complex in southeast Asia, [Prambanan](#), features four cellae in its interior. This central shrine within Prambanan group of temples dedicates its southern cella to Agastya.^[71]

The Dinoyo inscription, dated to 760 CE, is primarily dedicated to Agastya. The inscription states that his older wooden image was remade in stone, thereby suggesting that the reverence for Agastya iconography in southeast Asia was prevalent in an older period.^[72]^[73] In [Cambodia](#), the 9th-century king Indravarman, who is remembered for sponsoring and the building of a large number of historic temples and related artworks, is declared in the texts of this period to be a descendant of sage Agastya.^[74]^[75]

Agastya Samhita

The Agastya Samhita, sometimes called the Sankara Samhita is a section embedded in [Skanda Purana](#).^[7] It was probably composed in late medieval era, but before the 12th-century.^[76] It exists in many versions, and is structured as a dialogue between [Skanda](#) and Agastya. Scholars such as [Moriz Winternitz](#) state that the authenticity of the surviving version of this document is doubtful because Shaiva celebrities such as Skanda and Agastya teach [Vaishnavism](#) ideas and the bhakti (devotional worship) of [Rama](#), mixed in with a tourist guide about Shiva temples in [Varanasi](#) and other parts of India.^[77]^[78]

Agastimata

Agastya is attributed to be the author of Agastimata, a pre-10th century treatise about gems and diamonds, with chapters on the origins, qualities, testing and making jewelry from them.^[76]^[79]^[80] Several other Sanskrit texts on gems and [lapidary](#) are also credited to Agastya in the Indian traditions.^[81]

Others

Other mentions of Agastya include:

- [Bṛhaddevatā](#) in section 5.134.^[20]
- The [Lalita sahasranama](#) of [Shaktism](#) tradition of Hinduism, which describes the 1000 names of the goddess [Lalita](#) is a part of the [Brahmanda Purana](#). It is presented as a teaching from Hayagriya (an avatar of [Visnu](#)) to Agastya.^[82]
- Agastya is credited as the creator of the [Āditya Hridayam](#) (literally, "heart of the sun"), a hymn to [Sūrya](#) he told Rama to recite, so that he may win against Ravana. Scholars such as John Nuir questioned this hymn since the need for a such a hymn by Rama implies doubts about his divine nature.^[83]

- Lakshmi Stotram and Saraswati Stotram.^[84]
- The Tamil text Pattuppattu states Agastya to be master of ical (music, song).^[85]

Legacy Temples

Agastya statues or reliefs feature in numerous early medieval temples of north India, south India and southeast Asia. The Dasavatara temple in [Deogarh](#) (Uttar Pradesh, near Madhya Pradesh border) features a 6th-century [Gupta Empire](#) era Agastya carving.^[86] In [Karnataka](#) similarly, he is reverentially shown in several 7th-century temples such as the Mallikarjuna temple in Mahakuta and the Parvati temple in Sandur. He is a part of many Chalukya era Shaivism temples in the Indian subcontinent peninsula.^{[86] [87] [88]}

The artistic iconography of South Asian and Southeast Asian temples show common themes such as he holding a pitcher, but also differences. For example, Agastya is featured inside or outside of the temple walls and sometimes as guardian at the entrance (dvarapala), with or without a potbelly, with or without a receding hairline, with or without a dagger and sword.^[86] Rock cut temples and caves, such as the 8th century Pandya rock temples group, show Agastya.^[86]

Velir

Maharishi Agastya's legacy is associated with the Chengannur Temple in [Kerala](#) in South India, considered to be first built by Agasthya, where he sat in meditation. Here Siva-Parvati's idols are worshiped in the same temple. One half of the temple is dedicated to Lord Siva and the other half behind Siva is dedicated to goddess Parvathy. It is believed that They are available to Their devotees for worship, as husband and wife here. Interestingly it is believed that even today the idol of Parvathy has menstrual flow, though not regular. But if the priest observes blood (claimed to be tested true menstrual blood) in the 'odayaada' during 'nirmalya pooja', Parvathy's idol is removed and kept in a sanctum opposite to the temple within the premises and after a festival 'tripoottaraatu' (7 days) Her idol is placed back into the temple. The festival is celebrated only if Her menses occurs. The story of the Velir from [Dwaraka](#) under the leadership of Maharishi Agastya is narrated by Naccinarkkiniyar in his commentary on [Tolkappiyam](#) (payiram ; Porul|.34).

River names

According to the Tambraparni Mahatmyam, an ancient account of the [Thamirabarani River](#) of [Tirunelveli](#) from its rise to its mouth, a string of red lotus flowers from sage Agastya at [Agastya Mala](#), [Pothigai hills](#), transformed itself into a damsel at the sight of Lord [Siva](#), forming the river at the source and giving it its divine name.^[89] The shrine to Agastya at the Pothigai hill source of the river is mentioned in both [Ilango Adigal](#)'s [Silappatikaram](#) and [Chithalai Chathanar](#)'s [Manimekhalai](#) epics, where [Sugriva](#) advises his army of monkeys to worship the sage at the mountain, on their way to finding [Sita](#).^[90]

Similarly, the Sanskrit plays [Anargharāghava](#) and [Rajasekhara](#)'s Bālarāmāyaṇa of the ninth century refer to a shrine of Agastya on or near [Adam's Peak](#), the tallest mountain in Sri Lanka (ancient [Tamraparni](#)), from whence the river Gona Nadi/Kala Oya flows into the Gulf of Mannar's [Puttalam Lagoon](#).^[91]

Martial arts

Maharishi Agastya is regarded as the founder and patron saint of [silambam](#) and [varmam](#) -an ancient science of healing using varmam points for varied diseases and [southern kalaripayat](#).^[92] [Shiva](#)'s son [Murugan](#) is said to have taught the art to Sage Agastya who then wrote treatises on it and passed it on to other [siddhar](#).^{[93][94]}

See also

- [Siddhars](#)
- [Thirumoolar](#)
- [Bogar](#)
- [Avaiyar](#)
- [Abithana Chintamani](#) - Encyclopedia of Tamil Literature

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External links



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- [Folklore and Astronomy: Agastya a sage and a star](#)
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In Hinduism, Agastya also transliterated as **Agathiar, Agasthiar, Agastyar** and in other ways) is a legendary Vedic sage or rishi. He is in some ways regarded as the patron saint of much of the south India. Some say that it was the sage Agastya who first brought and popularized the Vedic religion to south India. Agastya and his clan are also credited to have "**authored**" **many mantras of the Rig Veda**, the earliest and most revered Hindu scripture, in the sense of first having the mantras revealed in his mind by the Supreme Spirit Brahman. In some reckonings, Agastya is also said to be one of the greatest Seven Sages or Saptarshis. The word is also written as Agasti.

He is considered the guru of many other Siddhars. He is also called Kurumuni, meaning short (kuru) saint (muni). His contributions were to the field of Medicine (Siddha) and Astrology - especially Nadi Jodhidam. He is said to have lived for over 5000 years, and that one of his medicinal preparations, Boopathi Kuligai, is so powerful that it can even bring the dead back to life.

In the hierarchy of siddhas or perfected human beings, or Initiates of the White Brotherhood as they are called in the West, who have guided the destinies of nations on our planet Earth for the past 12,000 years of recorded history, the ageless legendary siddha Sri Agastiya Maha Muni stands out as **the senior-most guru who initiated a galaxy of eminent gurus and siddhas down the ages**, and who had established and nurtured the ancient Dravidian civilization lasting several millennia. He is also acknowledged, in occult circles, as the head of a representative group of rishis entrusted with the guiding of the destiny of India and other nations called the Sapta Rishis as disclosed in certain ola leaf manuscripts called rishi vakyams and also in theosophical writings. Sri Agastiyar is also considered the author of several Rig Vedic hymns in Sanskrit connected with the Aryan civilization of the North.

Sri Agastlyar the Archetype of all Gurus

Maha Avatar Kriya Babaji of the Himalayas, the lineal Guru of Paramahansa Yogananda, Yukteswar and Lahiri Mahasaya, who is well nigh 1,800 years old today, still retains a young physical body of a 16 year old youth, as a result of his divinising the cells of his physical body, after receiving initiation from two of the greatest siddhas of all time.

Siddha Boganathar instructed him in the higher Kriya yoga techniques, for six months at Kataragama in Sri Lanka in the year 214 AD and sent him thereafter to his own Guru Siddha Agastiyar at Couttalam in India, where Babaji had the final initiation in Kriya yoga, after he had practised severe austerities for 48 days to invoke the grace of Agastiyar, who finally appeared before him in his physical body emerging from the adjoining forest; and showered his full

blessings on him.

These facts were disclosed by Babaji himself in 1952 to two of his disciples V. T. Neelakantan, a Theosophist of the early days, and Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah, when he materialized in physical form from his abode in the Himalayas in the shrine room of V.T. Neelakantan at Suramma1 Lane, in Egmore, Madras. In.turn Babaji is known to have initiated among others the famous Hindu reformer Adi Sankaracharya into the mysteries of Kriya yoga about the year 800 AD.

Among the several Siddhas initiated directly by Sri Agastiyar were, according to certain sources, (1) Tirumoolar, the author of Tirumanthiram described as one of the greatest texts of yoga and mystic truth ever written, who lived for over 3,000 years in the pre-Christian era, and (2) Tiruvalluvar the author of the world famed classic scripture the Tirukkural, who lived 2,000 years ago.

It was the immortal Sri Agastiyar who originally taught and transmitted to several of his disciples over the ages the Kriya yoga techniques of divinising the cells of the body and:

- 1.** rendering the physical body deathless for centuries, (as in the case of the 18 Siddhas and Kriya Babaji), or
- 2.** enabling the physical body to disappear completely and resurrect in a glow of light into a subtler vibrational field, (as in the case of Adi Sankaracharya and the four great Saiva saints namely the Nayanmars and Kabir of medieval times and Ramalinga Swamigal as recently as 1874), or
- 3.** enabling the physical body to be placed in a tomb in jeeva samadhi at will, in a state of suspended animation, where the blood circulation and the breathing have stopped but a luminous pranic energy keeps the body-cells alive, with the possibility of the siddha dematerializing the body in the tomb and materializing it outside in a completely different locality and living out an extended span of life for several years (as in the case of three well-known siddhas of modern times, namely Sri Raghavendra Swami about whom a popular film had been made recently, Sri Kulandaj Ananda Swami whose last jeeva samadhi is in Madurai city and Sri Muthukrishna Swami whose jeeva samadhi is in Vallioor).

Meditation is the art to create light. That's why the ultimate realization is called enlightenment one becomes full of light, one becomes light.

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Sri Agasthiyar (also transliterated as Agathiar, Agasthiar, Agastyar, Agasti, Agastiar) is a legendary Rishi (sage). It is believed that sage Agasthiyar was instrumental in spreading the Vedic religion in southern India. Agastya is also recognized as one of Seven Great Sages (Saptarishis). Sage Agastya also contributed immensely to the four Vedas. These mantras were revealed to Sage Agasthiyar by Brahman (Supreme Being) itself.

Agasthiyar is also the leader of all Siddhas. He is also called Kurumuni, meaning short (kuru) stature. His contributions are mainly in the fields of Medicine (Siddha) and Astrology - especially Nadi Jyotish (Jos(i)yam or Jothisyam). He is said to have lived for over 5000 years, and that one of his medicinal preparations, Boopathi Kuligai, is so powerful that it can even bring the dead back to life. Two of his students and disciples were Therayar and Tholkappiar. He is also considered to be the guru of many Siddhars.

The Lalitha sahasranama, which describes the 1000 names of the mother Goddess (Known commonly as Gowri, Parvati or Durga), was first revealed to the world when Hayagriva, an Avatar of Vishnu, came to Agasthiyar. Agasthiyar is said to have composed the Aditya Hridayam, a hymn on Sun God and taught the same to Rama just before the war between Rama and Ravana.



ஸ்ரீ அகத்தியர் ரிஷியின் ஆசியுடன்

பல்லாயிரகணக்கான பழமையான மொழிகளில் நிலைத்து நிற்கும் மொழிகளில் தமிழும் ஒன்று. அதனை சிறப்பிக்கும் வகையில், இல்லத்திலும் தமிழர்களுடனும் தமிழிலே பேசுவோம்.

தமிழ் தொன்மையான மொழி !
தமிழ் சிறந்த மொழி !
தமிழ் சுவையான மொழி !
தமிழ் நம் உயிர் மொழி !
தமிழை வாழ வைப்போம் !

தமிழில் பேசினால் இழிவல்ல !
தமிழை கற்போம் !
தமிழில் பேசுவோம் !
தமிழை போற்றுவோம் !
தமிழை வாழ வைப்போம் !

He is also believed to be the author of Agastya Samhita. The word is also written as Agasti and A-ga means a mountain, and Asti means thrower. Agastya is also the Indian astronomical name of Canopus, is said to be the 'cleanser of waters', since its rising coincides with the calming of the Indian Ocean.

He was son of Pulasthya, son of Brahma. Siddhar were spiritual adepts who possessed the ashta, the eight supernatural powers. Sage Agathiyar is considered the guru of all Siddhars, and the Siddha medicine system is believed to have been handed over to him by Lord Muruga, son of the Hindu Shiva and Goddess Parvathi. Siddhars are the followers of Lord Shiva.

Agathiyar is the first Siddhar. His disciples and other siddhars contributed thousands of texts on literatures, including medicine and form the propounders of the system in this world. He is considered the Father of Tamil literature and compiled the first Tamil grammar called Agathiyam. It is believed he lived in the 6th or 7th century B.C and specialized in language, alchemy, medicine and spirituality (and gnanam). There are 96 books in the name of Agathiyar.

However, some Tamil researchers say that Agastya mentioned in Vedas and Agathiyar mentioned in the texts could be two different characters. In Tamil language the term 'Agam' means inside and 'iy' means belong. One who belongs inside (soul) is the Tamil meaning for Agathiyar.

Article on Sage Agathiyar – SAGE AGASTHYA – FOREMOST OF THE SIDDHAS by Dr. Mandayam Kumar of the Siddha Medical Research Institute, Bangalore:

ON THE SIDDHARS

‘Agathiyar Muni is considered to be the embodiment of one of the nine celestial intellectuals who came to this earth for enlightening human beings.’

‘Siddhars are those who have attained perfection in yogic practices to ultimately reach the stage of immortality. Through higher-level yogic practices they attain a state of ultra luminosity that results in invisibility; thus they remain impervious to ordinary vision. Such siddhars work incessantly for the propagation of knowledge and the evolution of souls.’



Dr Mandayam Kumar says, it was possible to find out details about sage Agathiyar during the course of literary research on the Siddha medical sciences in a Tamil manuscript written on palm leaves about 3,000 years ago. The text is titled 'Prapancha Kaandam' and runs into several volumes mentions by the Dr.

It is attributed to Lord Muruga. It was narrated by sage Agathiyar while recorded by sage Pulasthiya. The original Tamil manuscript is in the care of Pandit S. Jayanari of Vellore says the Dr. The Dr provides information extracted from this work.

'The Prapancha Kaandam commences with explanations about the origin of the earth and the entire solar system. The earth is believed to be a fragment of the sun blown into space as a big ball of fire billions of years ago. This big fire globe, after spinning round and round at a very high speed for innumerable length of time, began to cool on its surface'.



During the course of its voyage from the sun through different gaseous highly energetic particles the earth being attracted and repelled by different forces of the solar system, acquired the energetic potencies of all the planets.

Later it gained a constant movement rotating on its own axis having its axis tilted towards the sun. It is stated that the earth took its origin 200 billion years ago.' The world was not habitable having only land and water for half this period.

'Gradually vegetation began to appear as the earliest form of life on earth. Subsequently aquatic living creatures followed by insects, reptiles, birds and mammals came upon; with the last being humans.

Each species had its own genetic origin and human beings are considered to be the order of original creation. It is stated that planet earth is the only place where survival and existence of life in the entire solar system. As life began to evolve on earth, time began to be counted.

The entire period was divided into yugas. The present Kali Yuga is stated to have started from 3100 BC and may correspond to 14th March 3100 BC.'

The **Dr. Mandayam Kumar** reveals for the first time the parental heritage of the sage. Sage Agathiyar was said to have been born about 4573 years prior to the commencement of Kali Yuga at a place in Gujarat, in the early hours of Tuesday, 14th of February 7673 BC.

Belonging to the early Aryan race, his father Bhargava was well learned while his mother Indumathi was from Punjab. They were both devotees of the Pasupatha order of the sage Rishabha Muni.

Agathiyar then had his early education in Gujarat. As his thirst for knowledge in particular on philosophy, yoga, medicine, and astronomy was immense he traveled all over Kashmir, Tibet, China, Nepal and Kailas in Manchuria. Mount Kailas was deemed to be in Manchuria those days.

He became a disciple of sage Nandi and Dhanvantri. He then traveled towards the south to Cambodia and Malaya. In Cambodia he established the very first of his many educational institutions for the propagation of philosophy and science.





Agathiyar returned to Kumari Kandam where he met Lord Murugan in the form of sage Kandan or Supramaniar at Trikona Malai, present day Trincomalee. At this station called Kadari Kama or Kadhigama, Lord Murugan imparted spiritual knowledge to Agathiyar.

In his meditation he could see into the future; see impending calamities and he moved to the North Pole considering it to be a safe place. This period of time in the Arctic was said to coincide with the end of the Dwapara Yuga placed around 10,000 BC.

Just as he had seen of an impending calamity and had decided to move to the North Pole, a tremendous explosion in the planet Mars sent a piece of debris towards Earth. The impact caused a great deluge on the earth. Significant portions of Kumari Kandam were submerged into the Indian Ocean. Continental drift resulted in the present arrangement of this region.

On returning to Mancuria after the great flood Kailas was no more but the Himalayan mountain range had emerged in North India. Amidst all these changes says the Dr, sage Agathiyar went seeking for a place that would be safe from future calamities.

He located a mountain range in South India. This is the present day Coimbatore. This spot is said to be the safest place and free from any future catastrophes. Here he met Lord Siva and Uma in the form of Dhashina Murthi and Shenbaga Devi. The meeting took place between Dhashina Murthi, Shenbaga Devi, Lord Murugan and Agathiyar was Mahadeva Giri. This meeting also signifies the commencement of Kali Yuga.

Other sages then stated coming to Mahadeva Giri. Lord Dhashina Murthi revived the knowledge of the Vedas and instructed these sages to propagate this knowledge at the appropriate manner and time for the benefit of humanity. This imparting of this knowledge was said to have taken place on the 21st day of the Tamil month of Kartigai, during the eleventh year, Eswara Samvatsara, of Kali Yuga. Agathiyar gave much importance to this day. All his dating was reckoned from this day.

The sages recorded their knowledge on palm leaves after extensive discussions held in Alagan Kulam and presented them to Dhashina Murthi for his perusal. This included the 64 kinds of learning, 18 Puranas, 96 Tatvas, and 48 branches of scientific knowledge. The entire literature in Tamil came to be called Sidha Veda. It was then translated into the four existing languages of that period viz Sanskrit, Greek, Hebrew and Chinese.

Sage Agathiyar on the instruction of Lord Murugan originated the Tamil language. Sage Bhogar from China, Thaeraiyar from Malaya, Yugimuni from Kerala, Pulipani from Kantha Malai, Pulathiyar and Kapiyan too served Agathiyar. A conference of sidhas called Sidhar



Sabai was held during the 53rd year, Sidharti Samvatsara, of Kali Yuga at Courtalam.

An institution known as Sidhar Gnana Koodam was inaugurated by Lord Murugan and was headed by Agathiyar. Pulathiyan and Kapiyan headed the literary section while Pulipani in research. Thaeraiyar who was into surgery headed a medical research centre established at Thorana Malai. Yugimuni who was into herbal medicines headed an Ayurvedic hospital at Paradesi Kundai. Sage Bhogar who was in charge of all scientific researches established an alchemy research centre at Thiruparankundram. Pambatti Sidhar was heading a team researching venom at Marudamalai.

After having established these institutions Agathiyar again started on an extensive mission of propagating the wealth of knowledge gained by these sidhars in Tibet, Manchuria, Egypt, Palestine, Rome, America, Africa, Malaya and Arab world.

After satisfactorily completing their mission of propagating the said teachings the sages went into 'Samadhi' merging themselves into the cosmos. Kandan went into Samadhi in Thorana Malai, Bhogar in Palani, Thaeraiyar, Pulipanai and Yugimuni in Kantha Malai, and Agathiyar himself choosed to come back to Courtalam. He chosed a spot called Dhashina Meru in the Pothigai Hills. This spot is also the abode of Lord Siva as Dhashina Murthi.

[..... See more about Agastya](#)

Agasthya is the name of a vedic seer who played an important role in the spread of vedic religion south of the *Vindhayas*, a mountain range located in central India. According to the Puranas, he was born in a pitcher from the semen of *Mitra* and *Varuna* (vedic gods). When they saw Urvashi, the celestial nymph, they lost control and their semen fell into a pitcher. From it were born two great rishis, *Vashista* and *Agasthya*. Since he was born from a pitcher he was given the name *Agasthya*, pitcher born. One Rigvedic hymn dedicated to Mitra mentions the name of Agasthi, another name of Agasthya.

Agasthya is credited with the composition of some Rigvedic hymns and also many miracles. He is also considered as the father of Tamil literature. His knowledge and wisdom was greater than the combined knowledge and wisdom of

all the sages in the world. According to legends, he married Lopamudra, whom he created himself combining all the beautiful aspects of the being of the forest, and lived with her in a hermitage south of the Vindhya mountains. When all the sages went to attend the wedding of Lord Siva in the Himalayas, Agasthya stayed in the south and kept the equilibrium between the north and the south.

According to the Puranas, once the Vindhya mountains grew so high that they obstructed the light of the sun and were on the verge of entering the heavens. The gods grew worried at this development and approached Agasthya for help. Agasthya went and stood before the mountains. The mountains prostrated in reverence to him. Agasthya blessed the mountains and asked them to remain prostrated forever. The mountains obeyed his command and remained prostrated from then on, thus saving the world and the heavens. This incident earned him the epithet *Vindhyakuta* or the subduer of the *Vindhya*s. According to some historians, his encounter with the mountains is an allegorical reference to his crossing the mountains and traveling south which is considered an important event in the history of Hinduism as it led to the integration of many southern traditions into vedic religion and its eventual flowering into the present form.

On another occasion he helped the gods who were fighting with the demons. During the fight, as part of a strategy, the demons went and hid themselves in an ocean. The gods went to Agasthya for help. Agasthya drank the waters of the ocean and exposed the hiding demons. This incident earned him the epithet *Samudrachuluka*.

Sage Agasthya is mentioned in the epic Ramayana with great respect. According to the epic, the region of Dandaka

forest in south central India was known in those days as the region of Agasthya. According to a story in the epic narrated by Sage Visvamitra to Lord Rama, there used to live in the Dandaka forest a Yaksha (ethereal being) named Sunda and his wife Tataka. Mareecha was their son. Once Sunda incurred the curse of Sage Agasthya and died. Angered by his sudden death, both Tataka and Mareecha attacked Agasthya, who cursed them to become corpse eating monsters. Because of the curse they became a menace in the region and began harassing the rishis during their sacrificial ceremonies. It fell upon Rama and his brother Lashmana to kill these demented Yashkas and free the region from their atrocities.

In another story Agasthya put an end to the wicked deeds of two demon brothers, Vatapi and Ilvala. Vatapi received a boon from gods which gave him a special ability to regroup himself by bringing together the disjointed parts of his body when they were severed and become normal again. Both brothers took advantage of this supernatural power of Vatapi and hatched a plan to kill rishis. As per the plan, Ilava would approach the rishis with feigned reverence and invite them for meals. It was a tradition in ancient India among the rishis not to refuse any invitation given to them or reject any food that was served to them by the host. Ilava used to cook food by cutting Vatapi into several pieces and serve the meat to the unsuspecting rishis. When the rishis completed their meals, he would give a signal to Vatapi to come out of their bodies tearing their bowels. Vatapi would come out of their bowels killing the rishis and reunite himself into one piece. After killing several rishis in this fashion, they tried to play the same trick on Agasthya. But Agasthya knew their intent. So when Vatapi entered his body in the form of food, the sage simply digested him. When Vatapi failed to come out,

Ilava became angry and attacked the sage, who reduced him to ashes with a mere thought. After this incident no demon dared to harm the sage.

Agasthya is frequently mentioned in the Ramayana with due respect. When Lord Rama was in exile living in the forests according to the wishes of his father, he went to see Agasthya in his ashram. Agasthya received him with love and affection. At the end of his stay, Lord Rama received three gifts from him, a bow made by Visvakarma for Vishnu, an inexhaustible quiver and a sword. Being a knower of three times, the sage told him to use these weapons effectively in slaying the demons. He also advised Rama to spend the rest of his exile at Panchavati a place where Ravana abducted Sita and from where Rama began his epic journey to Lanka to rescue her.

Historians believe that Agasthya might be one of the early Vedic seers who traveled to south and introduced the vedic religion there. According to Tamil tradition Agasthya was instrumental in the creation of Tamil language and literature. He is believed to be still dwelling on the mountain Agasthyamalai. Agasthya is also identified with the star Canopus which is the brightest star in the south Indian sky. He is worshipped as a deity in some temples of south India.

Sage Agastya and the Vindhya Mountains

The mischievous Sage Narada was travelling around the world, when he saw the Vindhya mountain. The Vindhya was a beautiful mountain right in the centre of India. However when Sage Narada saw the beautiful Vindhya, he thought a sudden prank. He went to the mountain and bowed before it, 'Beautiful, great Mountain. You would have been the greatest mountain in the world...I have never seen the sunrise so beautiful as I can see from you....You support all the types of lives of earth, and you also support the rishis, who stay in your caves to meditate...' Narada pretended to be unhappy and let out a sigh.

Vindhya felt proud of itself and rose majestically. However the Vindhyas understood that the Sage was feeling unhappy. It told the Sage, 'Thank you for your kind words, sir! But you said that 'I would have been the greatest mountain in the world'. Am I not the greatest mountain in the world?' Vindhya asked feeling a little self conscious.

Sage Narada hid a smile and pretended to be unhappy, 'I want to say yes, sir! But that...that would...would not be true...' Narada finished quickly.

Vindhya got angry and asked the sage, 'Why? Is there a better mountain in the world? Better than me?' It thundered.

Sage Narada knew that if he gave the answer to that question, the mountain may get angry with him and crush him. He said softly, 'Great mountain, You are very close to the sun. Why don't you ask him his path for the day. You will know the answer to the question yourself.'

Mission accomplished, the Sage vanished from there.

The Vindhyas, now with a burning desire to know who was better than him. It turned to the blazing sun, 'Surya! Surya!' It bellowed loudly as the Sun God emerged before it.

On seeing the Sun God, Vindhya did not even greet him. It continued hurriedly, 'Surya, what is your path, you take on the way home. Surya was puzzled at the strange question. He did not know the mischief of the Sage Narada. He said, 'I travel from the east and travel the west and go around Mount Meru in the evening and set in the West...Why do you...'

'Meru? Where is Mount Meru?' Vindhya asked the Sun God angrily. Surya hastily stepped back and said looking alarmed. 'Meru is one of the mountains where Lord Brahma himself resides! Beside Mount Meru is so tall, that I have no other choice. Me and all the planets in the solar system have to circle the Mount Meru.

Vindhya said angrily, rocks flying from the mountain, 'And you have never gone around me...Am I not that important...'

The Sun God hastily interrupted the angry mountain, 'No Vindhya it is not like that...Meru is very tall and further this has been the practice followed since the time the planets were formed...

The Mountain was quiet but looked ready to burst. The Sun God not willing to stay there for any more time, vanished from there.

Vindhya did not even notice that the Sun God had left. The mountain thought angrily. *Meru! Silly Mountain...The sun goes around it because it is taller than me...Taller...I will show these Gods what being tall is...I will become even more taller than that blasted Meru...*

Thinking thus the Vindhya's began to grow. The mountain grew taller and taller. Soon the mountain grew so tall, that there was an imbalance in the earth. Because of the height of the mountain, the mountain obstructed the view of the sun from the earth. This caused a lot of problems to the Gods and the humans.

Indra, the king of the Devas, went to Sage Agasthya, who was the Guru of the Vindhya mountains. He bowed to Sage Agasthya and told him of the problem, 'Great Sage! Vindhya is creating a problem for all the people on earth. Please Lord, Vindhya considers you as his Guru..Do something and make the Vindhya go back to its original size and make sure Vindhya does not grow any more.

Agasthya thought that over and smiled. He nodded to Indra. 'I will take care of this. Do not worry!' Hearing this, Indra went back to his heavenly home, a happy man. He had no doubt that Agasthya would take care of the problem.

That day Sage Agasthya went home to his wife Lopamudra and children Bringhi and Achutha. 'Pack your belongings', He told them after he had explained the problem. 'We will be leaving and going to another place.'

Sage Agasthya's family immediately understood what he had in mind and set about packing for their travel. The next day they were walking to the south of India, when the huge Mountain - Vindhya blocked their way. The mountain had grown so big that Sage Agasthya and his family could not find any place to cross it.

'Vindhya, ' Sage Agasthya called out, as the mountain appeared before him.

'Greetings Sir!' Vindhya said appearing before the sage. 'I am so happy that you have come here. You are my teacher sir! I am...'

Sage Agastiyar interrupted as if he was in a great hurry, 'Vindhya, we can discuss all that later, when we both have time. I am in a hurry now...'

Vindhya apologised to the Sage, 'Sorry sir! Please continue with your journey...'

Sage Agastiyar looked at Vindhya with twinkling eyes, 'That is precisely what my problem is Vindhya. I want to cross the mountain to get to the other side. You have now grown so huge that I cannot even go to the other side. Can you please bow down and make way for me...'

Vindhya, did not suspect anything and immediately bowed, 'Great Sage! Please go over to the other side and complete your work...'

Sage Agastiyar and his family immediately crossed over. Then Sage Agastiyar hesitatingly looked at Vindhya, who was still bowed. Vindhya asked the sage, 'Sir you seem to be unhappy, what is the matter?'

'It is...!' Sage Agastiyar said as if thinking of something, 'It is just that I may want to come back in a hurry. It would be very helpful to me if you remain in this form, till I come back Vindhya...!' Sage Agastiyar said softly, 'I mean if it is ok with you...'

Vindhya nodded his head, still not suspecting anything. 'I will stay this way till you come back sir!'

Sage Agastiyar thanked the mountain and he and his family started walking south.

His mission accomplished, Sage Agastiyar with his family settled in the south and never moved north again. True to the word, Vindhya remained in a bowing position, even today awaits the return of the sage.

As Vindhya stopped growing, the imbalance of the earth stopped and the Devas and the humans thanked the sage and his family...

Agastya & Sri Rama!

Posted on August 11, 2016 by [GnanaBoomi](#) • [1 Comment](#)



The Grace of Siddha series can be read [here](#).

The answers of Agastya Muni to the generic questions posted by devotees can be found [here](#).

The readers are requested to send their spiritual experiences related to the Siddhas to GnanaBoomi at Gmail dot com. Though the experiences are unique and personal to them, it can shower some light or guidance to those who read them. Thanks!



During the time of Ramayana, Sri Agastya has appeared before Lord Rama and guided him on crucial moments. In Yuddha Kanta, he gave the famous Aditya Hrudhayam sloka and helped Rama win the battle against Ravana. This sloka has helped many others to this date. The reason is, Agastya has mercifully thought about the good ones in the Kali Yuga and to make them win evil. In that sloka, only an expert scholar who is a master of Sanskrit can say how many subtle, yet powerful Beejakshara's are included. Even for that scholar, Agastya's grace is required to know them.

There is a pressing question by many, that why Sri Krishna indulged in Rasa Leela. Some rationalists and people with vested interest to malign Sanatana Dharma ridicule and

picture it in bad light. As Agastya Himself said, there will be many a subtle meaning in every word He says. Sri Agastya has clearly explained about the Rasa Leela of Shri Krishna.

Rasa Leela is the act that Krishna performed with the Gopika ladies in the water and in the land to make them happy. The normal eyes can perceive those ladies as youthful and beautiful, everything around the physical plane only. But a realized soul knows that it is a 'left over' part of Ramavatara that is getting fulfilled in Krishnavatara.

During Tretho Yuga, when Sri Rama went in to the forest to fulfill His Father's bid, many Rishi Munis long for His darshan, touch His feet and to embrace Him. As they were in severe penance, they could not even move out of their Ashrams. Sri Rama could not fulfill everyone's desire as such. He met only a few great Rishis, such as Agastya, Bharadhwaja, Sabari etc. In between, the Kishkintha, Yuddha Kanta took priority and hence Rama could not meet hundreds of Rishis. The truthful, simple yet powerful desires of these Rishis gradually got converted to Vasanas and they got hold of Rama!

Agastya appeared before Sri Rama and initiated the Aditya Hridhaya Slokha, when Sri Rama was dis-heartened as Lakshmana lay unconscious. Then He mentioned, "Sri Rama, get the blessings of these Rishi Munis who accompanied me. During your exile, these Rishi-Munis wanted to embrace your holy body, to have your darshan. Some of them could not do this due to the severe penance they had undertaken. I have brought those who have completed their penance. They wish to do Alingana (embrace). Please fulfill their wishes."

Sri Rama agreed and Agastya asked, "Sri Rama, there are several hundreds of Rishis who still are yearning for this blessing. They were expecting so eagerly that you will visit them during your exile but it didn't happen. Do you think you will be able to fulfill their desires in this Ramavatara?"

Sri Rama knew that it wasn't humanly possible at this avatar alone. He prayed to Agastya Muni to show Him a way out of this, for He being the Maryadha Purushotham who did not want to hurt the sentiments of even a single creature, never to such noble souls. (Ramavatara does not portray any super natural abilities of Sri Maha Vishnu, for this avatar was that of a human form).

Agastya mentioned, "Sri Rama! These souls know very well that you are the avatar of Sri Maha Vishnu Himself. When you take the next avatar in Dwapara Yuga as Shri Krishna,

these rishi-munis will take birth as Gopika ladies, to fulfill their wish to embrace you, to attain a super-natural blissful state. This is a Avatara-secret.”

Hence, the Rasa Leela is another spiritual dimension of the rishi-munis with their purvasrama vasanas, touch and embrace the Purnavatara Murthy Shri Krishna, they get to experience both the divinity aspects of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna at the same time, reaching a very highly elevated spiritual state.

(Purvasrama = Purva + Ashrama => previous birth)

(Vasanas = loosely translated to thoughts but Vasanas per say has deeper complexity)

If we think about the incidents that happened with the grace of Shri Agastya, we could understand one thing. To know it's absolute subtlety, we need His grace. As said before, for the one whose thoughts are pure and noble, His subtleties will be clarified, will be known.

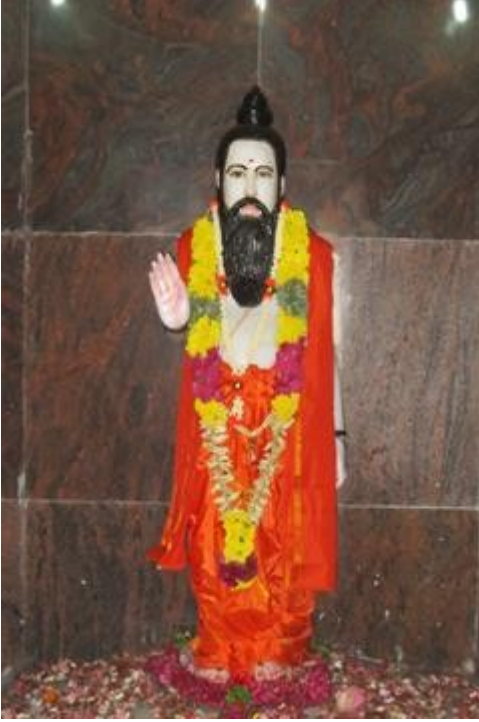
SAGE AGASTYA

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Introduction



Rishis or sages have been accorded a very high status and viewed as supreme in India from time immemorial. They are even placed above celestial beings. We learn the art of living by following their tenets closely. Sages are the embodiments of not only learning but also of self-control, sacrifice, supreme understanding, childlike innocence, universal love and goodwill for the entire world- animals and birds, trees and creepers, lakes, streams and rivers, hills and dales, rocks and hills included. The highest seers could see beyond the ordinary ken of mortals, but yet they were embodiments of simplicity, contentment and equanimity. That is why the Upanishads describe a rishi as the highest among the Vipras-rushirvipranam" (Mahanarayanopanishad 12.1).

We understand how important a vipra is from the definition - one born as a Brahman becoming a dvija by sacred ceremonies namely upanayan that gives him the status of a Brahmacharin worthy of the study of the Veda, acquiring profundity by the study and understanding of the Veda along with its six limbs i.e.shadangas, namely shiksha, vyakarana, chhandas, nirukta, kalpa and jyotisha and the highest study that leads on to moksha dharma which is Pravidya - the final stage which makes one a vipra, it can be seen why a rishi is the highest among the vipras.

जन्मना ब्राह्मणो प्रोक्तः संस्कारैर्द्विज उच्यते ।

विद्यते याति विप्रत्वं त्रिभिः श्रोत्रिय उच्यते ॥

Thus it can be observed that one satisfying the three conditions and reaching the stage of vipra automatically is a Shrotriya. A Shrotriya is one who is well versed in the Veda. Even among the vipras of whom the highest is the Shrotriya, the rishi is the noblest, the one enlightened by the Veda and ennobled by Tapas or penance.

Rishis are held in high esteem even in the earliest Vedic hymns. The concept of the Seven Rishis is introduced in the Rigveda where they are perceived as our fathers.

अस्माकं पितरः आसन् सप्तर्षयः ॥ (Rigveda 4.42.8)

They are classified as sacrificial priests i.e. hotri, potri, neshtri, agnidhri, prashastri, adhvaryu, brahma respectively invoker, purifier, leader, kindler, director, ministering priest and praying priest.

तवाग्ने तव होत्रं तव पोत्रं नेष्ट्रं त्वं अग्नदूतयतः ।

तव प्रशास्त्रं त्वमध्वरीयसि ब्रह्माचासि गृहपतिश्च नो दमे ॥ (Rigveda 2.1.2)

and this is continued thereafter

सप्त जिह्वा सप्त ऋषयः धामा पिरयाणि । (Taitthriya Samhita 1.5.3)

Birth of Agastya

Sage Agastya was born by the virtue of Lord Maha Vishnu. Various Indian epics provide elaborate information on Sage Agastya which traces his life history. Agastya was a seer of Rig Veda. He has 26 hymns dedicated to him. He persuaded Lord Indra to bless the land with rains without resorting to any kind of Pashuhinsa (animal slaughter).

This legend is linked to King Nimi, the son of Ikshhwaku, a famous king of the Solar Dynasty. After Nimi was enthroned as the king he wanted to perform a yajna. Hence, he approached the royal priest Sage Vasishtha for performing the yajna. Unfortunately, Vasishtha was already appointed by Devendra for conducting a yajna in the heaven, at the same time. Vasishtha, although, agreed to perform the duty of a ritwik only once he returned from Devendra's yajna.

The king got disappointed and returned to his palace. He then decided to get the yajna performed by Sage Shathanand, the son of Sage Gautama, before the return of Sage Vasishtha. When Vasishtha returned from his yajna, he came to meet Nimi at his palace. During this time a short, yet serious, misunderstanding occurred as Nimi was asleep that time and Vasishtha had to wait for sometime as the king was ignorant of his arrival. In a series of eventful episodes, irate Vasishtha thought the king to be extremely conceited and cursed him to die that very moment. However, Nimi was also a very great tapasvi and in return he also cursed Vasishtha that he should also die that very moment. After this raging event, Nimi died immediately while Vasishtha, who was immortal and pure, left his body and turned into divine light and entered Brahmaloaka. Upon meeting Lord Brahma, the two had extensive deliberations on the issue. Brahma, however, convinced Vasishtha that since he is the sutradhara he needs to fulfill certain duties on the earth. Thus, with the help of Mithra-Varuna, Vasishtha attained a new body and came back on earth and resumed working.

Lord Brahma's order was thus carried out. Through Mithra and Varuna, two Maharishis were born. First came Maharishi Agastya. Then came Vasishtha who knew the secrets of the Vedas. As Vasishtha was born after Agastya, Vasishtha came to be considered as younger to Agastya.

Agastya was born with the thorough knowledge of Vedas and other holy texts. He was also extremely skilled in the use of weapons. His disciple was Sage Agnivesha. Agnivesha was the preceptor of Dronacharya.

There is another famous story surrounding the birth of Sage Agastya. According to it, Agastya is the son of Urvashi and brother of Sage Vasishta. It is also mentioned that he was born from the earthen pot. (Brihaddevata 5.134)

Birth of Lopamudra

Who is going to be a suitable bride for me? How can the family line continue? Agastya began to be haunted by these thoughts. He continued to think for a long time but he failed to come to a conclusion. Suddenly an idea flashed in his mind. Using the power of his tapas, he created a fine juicy fruit. He knew that the king of Vidarbha was performing tapas for begetting children. He gave that fruit to the king. The king was very happy and he received the fruit happily and took it to the palace and gave it to his queen. The queen ate the fruit with great devotion. The fruit was the product of Agastya's years of tapas. The queen became pregnant and at the end of nine months she gave birth to a princess. The king invited priests and got the namakarana ceremony (christening, naming ceremony) done. The priests were very much attracted by the beauty of the child. The child was named Lopamudra. Lopamudra grew up and became a girl of exquisite beauty and she attracted the attention of everyone around her. She grew up to be a very well behaved girl. She was soft spoken, kind and she had all the good qualities expected of a princess. When she reached the age of marriage, the king began to look for a suitable bridegroom for her. Many princes of neighboring countries felt that they were no match to Lopamudra and they did not venture to offer to marry her. The king got worried.

Agastya marries Lopamudra

With his divine insight Agastya came to know that Lopamudra was the most suitable bride for him and he was sure, she could become a very good grihini. He went to the king of Vidarbha. The king received the sage performing all traditional rites and asked him the reason for his visit. Sage Agastya said, "O great king, with the sole object of continuing the line of my family, I would like to marry Lopamudra. I request you to give her in marriage to me." The royal couple became terribly disappointed. They could not imagine giving their daughter in marriage to a sage who lived in a forest. Lopamudra came to know the cause of her parents' worry. She went to them and asked them to give her in marriage to Agastya. Now the parents had no choice. Finally she became Agastya's wife.

After the marriage Agastya asked Lopamudra to give up all her royal glory and dress up as the wife of a sage. Therefore Lopamudra had to abandon all her royal finery and put on a dress made up of plant fiber. She went to Gangadwara and the sage engaged himself in severe tapas. Lopamudra proved herself to be an ideal wife. She would help her husband in his routine and look after him with great love and care. Agastya felt proud of his wife. In course of time she became a tapasvini herself. One day Lopamudra went near Agastya and said, "Please bless me with a child" Agastya was happy to listen to his wife's request. He said, "O blessed one, I am happy with the way you have been conducting yourself. Do you desire to have one thousand children, or one hundred having the strength of one thousand? Or would you prefer ten having the strength of one hundred or just one who has the strength of ten?"

"It is no use having one thousand wicked children; instead it is better to have one son who is good and lovable. Therefore bless me with a son who is equal to you in wisdom, goodness and scholarship."

Agastya was very happy. He blessed her. A few months later Lopamudra became pregnant. Once again Agastya went to the forest for performing tapas. At the end of nine months Lopamudra gave birth to a baby boy. The child shone brilliantly and he was named Dridhadasyu. Even at birth, the child appeared to have mastered the Vedas. At an early age Dridhadasyu was capable of doing hard labor such as bringing huge bundles of fuel from the forest. As a result, later the boy became famous as 'Idhmavaha'. In this way Sage Agastya fulfilled his duty towards his pithrus and helped them go to heaven. The place where Agastya lived came to be called Agastyashram, a holy place even today.

Agastya searches the seabed and the end of Kaleyas

A band of daityas(demons) called Kaleyas used to live in the sea bed and they would come out of it at night, enter ashrams of holy men destroy everything they find there and run back and hide under the sea. Every morning one could see a number of tapasvis lying dead in their destroyed ashrams. No one could even guess the cause of these terrible killings. A number of great sages were put to suffering on account of the Kaleyas. They did not even spare the ashrams of sages such as Vasishtha, Bharadwaja, Chyavan and many others.

Hundreds of Brahmins were killed in their ashrams. In a few years Brahmins as a group gradually became rare. These demons destroyed the ashram of the Pandavas as well. As a result of all these, all good acts such as performing poojas, yajnas and yagas came to a stand-still. The devas were very much worried. They did not know what to do. They went to Vaikunta and told Lord Vishnu the sad tale of the earth and asked him the cause of this unnecessary destruction. Lord Vishnu attributed the grave damage to a gang of demons by name Kaleyas living under the sea. Vishnu further added, "They (Kaleyas) come out at night and destroy the ashrams of sages and kill Brahmins, when they finish their evil deeds they disappear into the bottom of the sea. If you have to destroy them you have to drain that sea and then kill them. There is only one who can do that job and that is Maharishi Agastya. He can drink the entire volume of water of that sea in one gulp. No one else can do this work. Therefore go to him and request him to do the task for the good of the world. When the sea is drained it is easy to kill the rakshasas."

With the permission of Lord Brahma, all the devas went to the ashram of Sage Agastya to seek his help. There all the devas together pleaded to the sage to save them from the havoc created by the Kaleyas. The devas explained to Agastya how, as per the instructions of Lord Vishnu, the only way through which the world could be saved was by draining the sea. Again, this was a mammoth task which only a tapasvi of Sage Agastya's stature could only accomplish. Thus Sage Agastya agreed upon helping them and with his unusual powers he drank the whole sea-water in a gulp. As soon as the seabed became dry and empty, all the danavas (Kaleyas), who were ready with their weapons, started attacking the devas. After a prolonged fierce battle between the devas and the demons, the former gained victory over the latter. However, after the battle got over the devas went to Sage Agastya to thank him and also to request him to refill the dried out sea-bed with water. In return, Agastya apologized to them saying the sea water which he gulped down had already been digested and now cannot be retrieved at any cost. The disappointed devas then sought Lord Vishnu's help who asked them to wait till King Bhagiratha would arrive on the earth as a progeny in the family of Sagar. The legend of Emperor Sagar has been mentioned vividly in many Hindu scriptures. As per the legend, Emperor Sagar had sixty thousand sons. Sage Kapila had cursed all of them and thus they were reduced to ashes. In order to bring salvation to the souls of the sixty thousand sons, Sagar's grandson Bhagiratha performed severe penance and tapas and brought River Ganga on earth. River Ganga flowed over the ashes of sixty thousand sons of Emperor Sagar and led them to heaven. Simultaneously, Ganges also filled the long dried sea bed.

Agni Deva born as Agastya

According to certain Puranas we come to know that Agnideva was born as Agastya. Devas and danavas were always enemies. They would be fighting each other constantly. On one such occasion Devendra ordered Agni Deva and Vayu deva to fight against the demons and destroy them. Accordingly the two had a terrible battle with the demons and killed most of them. Those who remained ran for their lives and hid themselves under an ocean. Agni Deva and Vayu Deva thought that those demons hiding in the ocean would be ineffective and they would not come out and trouble the devas. Therefore they returned to heaven. When Devendra came to know what the two had done he called them and commanded them to go back and destroy the demons forthwith. On that occasion Agni Deva and Vayu Deva said, "O Devendra, there are millions of living things in the ocean. They do not harm anyone. If we get into the ocean to search for the demons, most of these living beings would die. It is not good to do so." Devendra was not in a mood to listen. He became angrier. He thought that those wicked demons should be destroyed somehow and if some living beings got killed in the process it was inconsequential and there was no question of injustice. He angrily shouted at the two, "Agni and Vayu, you did not do what I had requested you to do. You have not done your duty and now you have begun teaching me what is right and what is wrong. Go and be born as humans on the earth and you can have long discussions on rights and wrongs of things. Get out of my sight." This way he heaped a curse on Agni Deva and Vayu Deva. He continued and said to Agni Deva. "When you are born on earth you have to drink the water of the ocean and dry it." Accordingly Agni and Vayu were born on earth as Agastya and Vasishtha respectively. Agni who was born as Agastya had to drain the water of the ocean in which the demons called Kaleyas were hiding so that they could be killed by devas. Great men are born to serve and save the world from disasters and their greatness is unfathomable.

Agastya's wife flows as River Kaveri

Sage Agastya's wife Lopamudra was born for enhancing the welfare of the world. For that very purpose she wanted to turn into River Kaveri and flow down the plains. Agastya consented to it. It is an interesting episode. Whatever be the veracity of the story, it is a great good fortune for mankind. Brahmagiri is a tall hill in the Brahmagiri range of mountains. There was a king by name Kavera living on the slopes of the hill. He wanted to do some good to the world and for that purpose he began to perform severe tapas. Lord Shiva was pleased with his tapas, came and stood before him and blessed him saying, "Your great desire will be fulfilled by your daughter." In course of time Kavera had a daughter and she was named Kaveri. She grew up to be a righteous and loveable young woman. Kavera revealed to his daughter his heart's desire of doing something good to the world. She liked the idea and she was also inspired by such a desire. As willed by God, she married Sage Agastya. After the marriage, Sage Agastya began to live in a small ashram on the slope of Brahmagiri along with his wife Kaveri. He spent time in performing tapas and other religious rituals. Kaveri was burning with the desire to help people somehow. She revealed her desire to her husband. Agastya consoled her saying that for every good thing to happen one had to wait for an opportune time. In the meantime there was a very brave demon king by name Shoora Padma ruling over the southern part of India. He was angry with Devendra. He was also angry with humans because they worshipped Devendra and the other devas. With the help of his extraordinary power he prevented the earth from receiving rain. All the rivers and lakes dried up. Humans, animals, birds and other creatures had neither food to eat nor water to drink. There was suffering and pain all over the earth. When Kaveri saw the suffering of the people she thought of helping people. The time is ripe for doing something good, she thought. One early morning Sage Agastya had to go to the river for bath. Kaveri was not well. She could not accompany her husband to the river. Agastya was worried because he did not desire to leave Kaveri alone in the ashram. Finally he found a solution. With the power of his penance and tapas he changed Kaveri into water and filled it in his kamandal- the holy water pot, kept it on a stone and got into the river to have a bath. The devas were also expecting something good to the world from Kaveri. When Agastya got into the river keeping his water pot on a

stone, Devendra requested Lord Ganesha to mix the water in the holy water pot with the water of the river.

With a view to doing good to the world Lord Ganesha, took the form of a crow and made the holy water pot roll on the stone. Kaveri who was confined to the water pot, now came out and began to flow all over the land. People, who were suffering from lack of water, became happy to get the sweet and crystal clear water of the Kaveri. Kaveri became a huge river and began to flow in leaps and bounds, forming whirl pools here and there. When sage Agastya came up after finishing his sandhyavandana, he saw the holy pot on the ground with all its water spilt and the water was flowing all over the land. He was very much upset. He began to search for Kaveri, but he could not get her. Lord Ganesha and the devas saw the distraught Agastya and they were sorry for his plight. They came to him and said, "O great sage, Kaveri and his daughter Kaveri wanted to help the people of the world and the time has come for it. Now she is flowing as a river. When you changed her into water and kept her in your holy pot, she thought that her father's desire was fulfilled and in a way our plan helped her realize her dream. Hereafter Kaveri will flow constantly and supply the people of the south with water and food forever. She will become a redeemer of the sins of all." Sage Agastya stood spell bound for some time. When he looked at the majestically flowing Kaveri, she seemed to tell him, Kindly excuse me, I began to flow as a river without your permission." He began to think, "Yes, Kaveri is flowing as a river and she is helping and protecting thousands of people on either side of her course. In fact, she is sanctifying mother earth. As I help the world in my own way, she is doing the same in her special way. May God bless her." So saying Sage Agastya blessed Kaveri and bade good bye to the devas. Like the Ganga mata in the north, Kaveri is flowing in the south, doing good to people. Today the river is considered to be very holy.

Agastya's role in the marriage of Shiva and Parvati

The Himalayan Mountain range is the king of all mountain ranges. His wife was Mane. Parvati was their daughter. Parvathi performed severe tapas and pleased Lord Shiva. She wanted to marry him. Their marriage was to be celebrated on the Himalayan mountain range and all the devas, Maharishis, Yakshas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas, the best among all had arrived to witness the divine event. As the weight of the guests concentrated on one side, it became too heavy and the mountain range tilted and began to shake. As a result of it, the entire world began to tremble. Mountains cracked and came crashing down. Seas were in high tide. People were nervous and scared thinking there was going to be deluge. They rushed to Shiva, prayed to him and begged him to save the world. Then Shiva address all the guests gathered there saying, "Dear all, you have come to witness our marriage. As all of you are standing on the northern side, the excessive weight has made the mountain tilt. If the balance is to be restored we have to place an equal weight on the southern side. Then the earth will stand in balance and there will be peace in the world. This balancing act can be done only by Sage Agastya. If he goes and stand on the southern side balance will be restored in the world. Then Shiva spoke to Sage Agastya who had also gone there to witness the marriage, "O Sage Agastya, kindly go south and restore the balance of the earth." When the sage heard the words of Lord Shiva he was disappointed. Like others present there he was there to take part in the celestial event. Now that he was asked to go south he was denied of the chance of witnessing the marriage ceremony. Shiva who understood the plight of the sage said, "O great sage, you have to go south just to do good to the world. So please do as I ask you to do. You desire to see our marriage, don't you? Whenever you want to see us just call me. Parvati and I will appear before you as bride and bridegroom. I will also grant you divine eyes to witness our marriage from the place where you are. Now you may start." Sage Agastya was very happy indeed. He went and stood on the southern end and the tilted earth regained its poise. Agastya could see the divine marriage from the point where he was standing. The marriage ceremony went off without any further hurdle. Everyone felt happy. This way Sage Agastya performed

Lord Shiva's command for the good of the world. He was blessed by Lord Shiva. Words fail to describe the good fortune that befell Sage Agastya because he was blessed by Lord Shiva himself.

Rama initiated to Aditya Hridaya

Sage Agastya's ashram was located in the midst of Dandakaranya where he used to stay with his wife Lopamudra. The place oozed most pious and spiritual vibes owing to the prolonged penance and tapas performed by the couple. While on exile, Lord Rama along with his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana visited the sage. As mentioned in scriptures, Agastya played a very good host to them and Lopamudra also gifted Sita divine ornaments. Most importantly, while teaching Lord Rama the nuances of dharma, Agastya presented Lord Rama the Vaishava Dhanus with divine arrows. Rama along with his brother also built an ashram on the bank of River Godavari as instructed by the sage.

Sage Agastya also helped Lord Rama in gaining victory over Ravana to a certain extent. As per the legend of Ramayana, Ravana had ten heads which were indestructible as no sooner did Rama cut one, than a new one sprang on his head and this was endless. Upon seeing Rama's difficulty in defeating Ravana, Sage Agastya initiated Rama with the sacred hymn 'Aditya Hridaya'. Finally, with the blessings of Sun God, Lord Rama defeated Ravana and became one of the most prosperous king of the Treta Yuga. As suggested by Sage Agastya, Rama also performed Aswamedha yaga for the wellbeing of his kingdom and subjects.

Krauncha cursed

While Agastya was travelling south after subduing the Vindhya Mountain, a demon by name Krauncha stopped him enroute. The demon was blessed with the magical power to curse heavy rainfall. However, when he tried to harm the environment, Agastya sprinkled water from his pot on the demon and cursed him to turn into a mountain. Realizing the significant powers of Agastya, the demon surrendered after which the sage consoled him assuring that when Lord Subrahmanya would arrive there he would struck an arrow and instantly release the demon from the curse.

The ever full Holy Pot of Agastya

When demon Shoorapadma invaded heaven and forced all the devas out of their abode, Devendra went to Shiyuti and started meditating on Lord Shiva. All of a sudden the prevailing rainfall came to a halt and before the famine would dry out all the rivers, Sage Agastya filled his pot with the water of the Kaveri. As per the legend Lord Ganesha assumed the body of a crow and overturned the holy pot. Initially Agastya got extremely infuriated but later when he got the darshan of Lord Ganesha the two entered into a long discourse and finally Ganesha assured him that his holy pot will always remain filled.

Urvashi, Jayantha and Narada cursed

Once Devendra invited Sage Agastya at his palace and also arranged a dance program in his honor. While performing the dance, Urvashi lost her rhythm as she fell in love with Jayantha, the son of Davendra. Meanwhile, Narada also fumbled while playing his veena. This made Agastya extremely furious and he cursed all three of them, following which -

- o Jayantha turned into a flower bud,
- o Urvashi reborn as Madhuri, an common woman in the world, and

- o Narada permanently lost his veena, Mahati and the mortals on earth started using it.

Agastya relieves Dushyantha

Once upon a time, the wicked prince of Pataliputra, Dushyantha was accused of killing many children in the kingdom and was excommunicated from his own land. While wandering in the forest, the prince came across a young boy and killed him by drowning him in the water. The boy killed was the son of Ugrarava and upon knowing the death of his son he became extremely infuriated and he killed Dushyantha by drowning him in water.

Dushyantha later turned into an evil spirit and being unable to bear this curse he went to Sage Agastya and begged him to relieve him from it. The sage called his disciple Sutheekshna and asked him to visit the Gandhamandana Mountain, take a bath in the holy River Agnithirtha and also bring some water back along with him. As soon as Sutheekshna sprinkled the holy water on the evil spirit of Dushyantha, he got released from his curse, regained his original form and also found his place in heaven.

Agastya redeems Vidarbha

Once Agastya went deep into a huge forest. It was lonely and frightening. As he was walking along he saw a few gandharvas and some divine women singing and dancing. One of the gandharvas went to a lake pulled out a corpse of a man and began to cut it and eat the flesh raw without any hesitation. When he saw Sage Agastya he got frightened and surrendered. Agastya asked why he was eating human flesh. The gandharva began to narrate his story.

"In Threta yuga there was a king by name Vidarbha. I was his son. My name was Shwetha. I ruled the land for a long time and then came here and began to perform tapas. After my mortal body fell, I went to heaven. I became hungry and even in heaven my hunger continued to become intense. I went to a Brahmin and asked him for the reason. He told me that as king I did not give alms to anyone. Therefore I was tormented with hunger even in heaven. Just to satisfy my hunger, I come here every day and eat human flesh as directed by that Brahmin. He told me that one day Sage Agastya would come here and if I gave him a gold bracelet as a gift my sin would be redeemed. Now that you are here, I am blessed." So saying he gave a gold bracelet to Agastya and got blessed. Then he went to heaven.

Kubera and his companion cursed

While in exile, the Pandavas stayed in a forest near the Himalayas. During this time, Arjuna without informing his brothers went to Mount Meru and started meditating on Lord Shiva. Few years went passed and the four Pandavas became worried about their brother. After consulting many eminent persons, finally Sages Vrishparva and Arishtishena were able to help them and the brothers arrived at Alkapuri, the then capital of the God of Wealth Kubera. Bhimasena, in a fit of anger, started attacking the whole of the Alkapuri kingdom and also killed the army of Kubera. In the battle, Kubera's best friend Mahiman also got killed.

Later, when the eldest of the Pandavas, Yudhishtira went to seek forgiveness of Kubera for the atrocities done by his younger brother Bhima, Kubera narrated to him the entire story which formed the basis of everything that happened. As mentioned by Kubera, once he and Mahiman went to Kushavathi to listen to divine music. At the same time, Sage Agastya was meditating on the bank of River Kalindi. Mahiman spat on Sage Agastya and this made the sage extremely angry. Since Kubera watched the whole episode and remained mum on the evil deed of his friend Mahiman, the sage cursed Kubera saying his whole kingdom would once be destroyed by a human and in the battle his friend

Mahiman would also get killed. Thus as soon as Bhimasena destroyed Alkapuri, Kubera got redeemed from the curse. The legend reflects on the power of Sage Agastya's curse that didn't even spare the God of Wealth, Kubera.

Devendra's confrontation with Agastya

Once, Agastya along with a number of other sages started off a yagya. However, the sages failed in successfully completing this fire sacrifice and this made Lord Indra extremely furious and he stopped rainfall on earth. A severe famine struck the earth, all crops failed and people started dying out of food and hunger. During this time Sage Agastya sheltered thousands of hungry people at his abode. People from three lokas got surprised at this kind gesture of Agastya as he continued to feed everyone sumptuously. Agastya also declared that if Indra failed to provide enough rain on earth, he would take over the responsibility of Indra for the welfare of the mankind. Meanwhile, Indra began feeling extremely insecure on this act of Agastya and broke his resolution in order to save his position as the Lord of Rain.

Works of Agastya

Agastya is known as the originator of the Tamil literature and he is till date highly revered by the people of Tamil Nadu. He is also being worshiped in a number of shrines in Tamil Nadu.

Agastya went down to Southern India in the later part of his life and also built various Shivalingas and temples here, especially in Karnataka. Thus, the south is revered as the divine direction of Agastya. Writers like Villiputturan also believe that it was Agastya who introduced the Tamil language to the world. Apparently, he also wrote texts on Tamil music and play, most importantly being his text on Tamil grammar. The oldest book on Tamil grammar is recorded as Tolkapyam, written by Tolkapyar who was one of the twelve core disciples of Sage Agastya. Kamba Ramayana has also made a number of references to the sage. Sage Agastya was an expert in Vedic mantra shastra and tantra shastra; he is considered as one of the prime drishtar of the Veda mantras as a number of them were revealed to him. Sri Lalita Sahastranama is one of the best collections of Agastya, which is used as a reference by many scholars and religious practitioners even today.