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An Introduction To Charak Samhitokta Rishi Jamdgni and Evaluation of His Contribution To Ayurveda

Prof. Dr. Subhash Waghe¹¹HOD – Dept. of Roga Nidana & Vikruti Vigyana SAM College of Ayurvedic Sciences, Raisen – 464 551 (MP)

Corresponding author: Dr. Subhash Waghe

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Abstract

Rishi Jamadgni belonged to illustrious Bhrigu lineage. His uncles Chywana and Shukracharya were very famous *rishis*. He was the son of famous *rishi* Richika. His mother's name was Satyavati who was the daughter of king Gadhi of Kanyakubja region. Jamadagni had famous son called Parshurama. Jamadagni studied hard and achieved erudition in his studies of the Vedas. Jamadagni studied Dhanurveda from his father, the Richik rishi. He received celestial bow *Sharanga* from his father Richika. Jamadgni married to princess 'Renuka' of Ikshwaku lineage. He developed enmity with Mahishmati king Sahastrarjun over forcibly possessing the celestial cow Kamdhenu. Sahastrarjun killed helpless sage Jamadagni. But he was revived by his paternal uncle Kavi Shukracharya with *Mrit Sanjivani Vidya*. On knowing the attack on the father, his furious son Parshurama, took revenge and killed all the Haihay lineage Kshatriyas including Kartaveerya Sahastrarjuna in the first attempt. Later the sons of Sahastrarjuna taking the opportunity of Parshurama being out in the forest, they again attacked rishi Jamadagni and beheaded him. Knowing this Parshurama eliminated all the Kshatriyas from the earth. Rishi Jamadagni was present in the conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountains of Himalayas held some 5000 years ago to discuss the impact of diseases on human health. Hence, it becomes necessary to explore the life of sage Jamadagni to know about his contribution to Ayurveda.

Keywords – *Bhrigu, Parshurama, Sahastrarjuna*

Introduction :

Maharishi Jamadagni was present in the conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountains of Himalayas, some 5000 years ago.^[1] He was the son of famous rishi Richika. His mother's name was Satyavati who was the daughter of king Gadhi of Kanyakubja region. Jamadagni had famous son called Parshurama. Jamadagni studied hard and achieved erudition in his studies of the Vedas. Jamadagni studied Dhanurveda from his father, the Richik rishi. He received celestial bow *Sharanga* from his father Richika. Jamadagni married to princess 'Renuka' of Ikshwaku lineage. He developed enmity with Mahishmati king Sahastrarjun over forcibly possessing the celestial cow Kamdhenu. Sahastrarjun killed helpless sage Jamadagni. On knowing this, his furious son Parshurama, took revenge and killed all the Kshatriyas. Rishi Jamadagni was present in the conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountains of Himalayas held some 5000 years ago to discuss the impact of diseases on human health.^[1]

Material And Method :

Literary method of research is followed in this article. All the available Ayurvedic and Indological literature is explored to find the maximum information about the sage Jamadagni.

Review Of Literature :

Birth of Rishi Jamadagni :

Satyavati was married to an old man called as Ruchika who was foremost among the race of Bhṛigu. Ruchika desired a son having the qualities of a Brahmin and so he gave Satyavati a sacrificial offering specially prepared *Charu*. He also gave Satyavati's mother another *charu* to make her

conceive a son with the character of a Kshatriya at her request. But, Satyavati's mother privately asked Satyavati to exchange her *charu* with her. This resulted in Satyavati's mother giving birth to Vishvamitra, a Kshatriya with qualities of Brahmin, and, Satyavati gave birth to Jamadagni, (father of Parashuram) a Brahmin with qualities of a warrior
[2] [3] [4]

Jamadagni As Rishi :

Growing up, Jamadagni studied hard and achieved erudition in his studies of the Vedas. Jamadagni studied Dhanurveda from his father, the Richik rishi. He is said to have acquired knowledge regarding the science of weapons without any formal instruction, with the guidance of his father. He received celestial bow *Sharanga* from his father Richika.^[5]

The *ushanasa Dhanurveda*, now lost, is about a conversation between Jamadagni and Ushanas (Kavya /Shukra) on the exercises of warfare. After achieving the status of a rishi, Jamadagni visited a number of holy sites.

Jamadagni's Relation With King Gadhi :

In the lineage of legendary King Bharata, there was a King Hasti who shaped the city of Hastenapur in Kanyakubja area. (modern day 'Kannauj' in UP]. King Hasti's son 'Juhu' married the granddaughter of Mandhata. From this union, they had a son named 'Sunaha'. (Ajaka- Balkashva). In the 3rd generation after Sunaha, king 'Kusha' was born. King 'Kusha' had a son called 'Kushik' who married to the daughter of Purukutsa (starting of 'Kaushik' lineage) Kushik had son called 'Gadhi' and daughter called 'Satyavati'. Maharishi Bhṛigu married his second son Richik to Satyavati, with dowry of thousand black horses.^[6]

Marriage And Progeny of Jamadgni :

Jamadgni reached the palace of King Prasenajit of the Solar dynasty (Ekshwaku lineage) He fell in love with his daughter, Princess Renuka, upon seeing her, and asked the king for her marriage. Subsequently, the two were married. From this union, they had five sons: 1. Rumaṇvān, 2. Suhotra, 3. Vasu, 4. Viśvāvasu, and 4. Rama who later came to be known as Parshurama^[7]

Parashuram was the youngest among all and is believed to be the incarnation of lord Vishnu. He was well versed in all the disciplines of science and archery. The two other brothers were 2] Shunushepa and 3] Shunupuchha.

Jamadgni's Test by Dharma :

Dharma took the form of Anger, and manifested at the Ashrama of Jamadagni. He observed that the rishi had just milked his cow, Kamdhenu, and kept her milk in a pot. As Anger, Dharma crept into the pot. Despite drinking it, Jamadagni remained calm. Noticing this, Dharma appeared as a Brahmin before the rishi, and blessed him with the boon that he would always be righteous.^[8]

Boon To Jamdagni By Surya :

According to the Mahabharata, Jamadagni once became annoyed with the sun god, Surya for causing too much heat that caused burning pain to his wife Renu. The warrior-sage shot several arrows into the sky with celestial Sharanga to terrify the lord Surya. Surya then appeared before the rishi as a Brahmin, and gave him two inventions that would help mankind deal with his heat - Sandal and an umbrella.^[9]

Jamadagni's Wrath on Wife Renu :

Once Renu the mother of Parashurama went to the river Ganga for taking Bath. There she saw

Gandharava King Chitraratha taking bath with the celestial nymhs (Apsaras). She got attracted to Chitraratha and played with him. Jamadgni with his intuition, came to know about the adultery committed by Renu. With extreme anger he asked his son to kill their mother, Renu. All other son disobeyed the father except the youngest Parashurama. On father's order, Parshurama killed mother and all his brother but he was having faith in the Tapobala (power of penance) of his father. Pleased with the obedience of Parshurama, Jamdagni, asked him to seek a boon (*Varadana*). Parashurama demanded that his mother and brother be revived and they should not remember what happened. Accordingly, Jamdagni with his power of penance (*Tapobala*) revived them.^{[10][11]}

Jamadgni And Sahastrabahu :

Once Haihayvanshi king Kartaveeraya Sahastrarjuna went to forest for hunting. There he found the Ashram of Jamdagni. Jamadgni welcomed the Sahastrabahu and fed all his soldiers. Sahastrabahu saw the Kamdhenu cow which was doing this trick for Jamadgni. King Sastrabahu forcibly took the cow to his kingdom.^{[11][12]}

The helpless rishi, who loved the cow, pursued Sahastrabahu as they traversed the forest. Infuriated by his defiance, the Sahastrabahu struck down Jamadagni, and took Kamadhenu to the king's capital city of Māhiṣmatī. After a long wait, Renuka started to search for her husband, finding him almost dead, surrounded by a pool of his own blood. Renuka fainted at the sight, and when she returned to consciousness, started wailing.^[12]

Revival of Rishi Jamadgni by Kavya Shukra

Ushna with Sanjivani Vidya :

When Parashurama and his disciple, Akṛtavraṇa, found her, she turned to him, and beat her chest twenty-one times. Parashurama resolved that he would travel the world twenty-one times, and annihilate all the Kshatriya kings he could find.

When Jamadagni was to be cremated, the Shukra, the grandfather of Jamdagni arrived on the scene, and restored the rishi's life with the *Mṛtasañjīvanī* vidya. ^[13]

Bringing Back Kamdehnu To Jamadgni :

Parashurama and Akṛtavraṇa travelled to Māhiṣmatī, intending to bring Kamadhenu back home. At the gates of the city, they met Sahastrabahu and his forces in battle, and slew them. They returned the divine cow to Jamadagni. The rishi instructed his son to perform a penance at Mahendragiri Mountain (Western Ghat Mountain Peak) in order to cleanse himself of his sins. ^[14]

Jamadgni Advised Atonement to Parashurama :

On learning the news of murder of Sahastrarjun at the hands of his son Parshurama, he scolded Parashurama and asked to take the atonement saying that killing the sovereign ruler is a greater sin than murder of a Bramhin. As per him the main quality of Bramhin is to pardon. This noble act of Bramhins pleases the lord Vishnu. Parshurama went to different places of worship (*Teerthas*) to take the atonement for killing the ruler. ^[15]

Jamdagni's End :

Sahastrabahu's son (Shurasena Particularly) was eager to take revenge of their father from Parshurama to level the score. They were searching for the right moment. Once Parshurama and his brothers went to forest.

Seeing this chance, sons of Sahastrabahu, attacked the Ashrama of the Jamadgni and beheaded him and took his head with them so that he could not be resurrected again. Renu the wife Jamadagni, put herself ablaze (Sati). Sage Bhrigu instigated Parashurama to take revenge. Anguished Parashurama, not only killed all the sons of Sahastrabahu with the inherited Sharanga (celestial bow of lord Shiva) but brought out massacre of Kshatriyas. ^{[16] [17] [18]}

Contribution To Ayurveda :

As per Charaka Samhita, Amalkayas Rasayana is credited to sage Jamadagni. ^[19] Sage Jamadagni was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. All the rishis present there learnt knowledge of Ayurveda from sage Bhardwaja. Hence, it can be concluded that sage Jamadagni also may have contributed in further development of Ayurveda.

Observations :

Jamdagni In Nutshell :

1	Father	Richik
2	Mother	Paulomi
3	Grand Father	Bhrigu
4	Father-in-law	Prasenjit
5	Place of Birth	Himalayan Ranges (North India)
6	Spouse	Renuka
7	Children	1. Rumaṇvān, 2. Suhotra, 3. Vasu, 4. Viśvāvasu, and 4. Parshurama
8	Residence	Bhagi - Balia district Uttar Pradesh
9	Uncles	Chyawana and Kavi Shukracharya
10	Lineage	Bhrigu Vanshi
11	Ayurvedic work	Amalkayas Rasayana

Discussion :

Sage Jamadgni was constantly engaged in observing the penance. He learnt archery from his father Richik and also got celestial bow called 'Sharanga' from him. Jamadgni married to Kshatriya princess 'Renuka' despite himself being Bramhana. This shows that sage Jamadgni was having independent thinking and use to take decision of his own. He invented umbrella and shoes to stay protected from extreme heat of sun. He had given great hospitality to Mahishmati king 'Sahastrarjuna'. He even scolded his son Parshurama for killing sovereign ruler king 'Sahastrarjuna' and asked him to take atonement. This shows his impartial righteous intellect to be on the side of right. He revived his wife Renuka and other sons on the request of Parshurama. This shows the great power of his penance. He made lord Sun to give umbrella and shoe to save his wife from intense heat. This shows is skillful power as archer. Sage Jamadgni was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases. This not only shows his interest in medical science but also the caring nature towards mankind.

Conclusion :

Sage Jamadgni was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. All the rishis present there learnt Ayurveda from sage Bhardwaja. Hence, it can be concluded that sage Jamadgni may also have contributed in further development of Ayurveda. This can be seen in one of the medicinal

preparations called 'Amalkayas Rasayana' used by sage Jamadgni as mentioned in Charaka Samhita.

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