Aśvins, being the lords of fertility are closely connected with love, courtship, marriage, virility and offspring. Their connection with Sūryā, their bride, is symbolic of their productivity.

Aśvins are the giver of husband as well as wife. They gave Cyavana a wife named Sukanyā. In the same way they helped Kali and Vimada also. Moreover, they gave a

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1. garbham te aśvinau devāvā dhattam puṣkarasarṣā.
   RV.X.184.2.

2. yuvo śriyam pari yogāvṛṇita suro duhita paritakmyayam.
   RV.VII.69.4.

See also: RV.I.34.5; 116.17; 117.13; 118.5; 119.5; IV.43.2.6; V.7.3.5; VII.68.3; VIII.8.10; 29.8; 63.5 etc.

3. ... patimakṛṇutam kāṇinām.
   RV.I.116.10.

See also: RV.I.117.13; 118.6; V.75.5; VII.68.6; 71.5.

4. ... kalim yahhirvittajānim duvasyathah.
   RV.I.112.15.

5. yahbiḥ patnīrvimadāya nyuhathuḥ...
   RV.I.112.19.
husband to Ghoṣā who was growing old in her father's house. Asvins received Śūryā upon their chariot when they had won her as their wife in a race run by Vivasvaṁ. For this reason, they are invoked to conduct the bride home. In the marriage of Śūryā, Asvins were the bride-grooms, Agni led them and Soma was the leader. But Winternitz and Bergaigne believe that Asvins were the 'best-men' or 'groomsmen' and Soma was

1 ghoṣāyai cit pitṛṣade duroṇe patim jūryantyā aśvinā-vadattam. RV.I.117.7.
2 ... aśvinā tvā pra vahatam rathena grhaṁ gaccha grhapatnī yathāso vaśinī tvam vidathamā vadāsi. RV.X.85.26.
3 śūryāyā aśvinā varā agnirāśīt purogavaḥ. RV.X.85.8.
and:
   somo vadhyurabhavadaśvināstaṁubha varā. RV.X.85.9.
4 "This particular hymn (X.85) describes the marriage of Śūryā, the Sun-daughter, with Soma at which the two Asvins were the groomsmen."
the groom. However, this view may be rejected on the basis that Aśvins are clearly said to be the grooms 'Varā' in the text and Soma, 'Vadhūyu' the leader.

Winternitz¹ and Bergaigne² argue that the hymns of Sūryasūkta are also used in the marriages of human beings, as we have also said above that Aśvins are invoked to conduct the bride home.

¹ The Sūryasūkta (X.85) may also be included in the Ṛgvedic ballad poetry.... This hymn consists of 47 verses, which are somewhat loosely connected. Most of these verses are from the Grhyasutras, the manuals of domestic ritual. Nearly all of the verses refer to the marriage ritual, and were used also at the marriage or ordinary mortals. Probably it is an ancient ballad describing the marriage of Sūryā partly in narrative stanzas, partly in addresses to the Aśvins and Sūryā, and partly by the insertion of the mantras recited at the various stages of the marriage ceremony.


² The hymn X.85 "not only contains a description of the mythical marriage of Sūryā, it makes this marriage a prototype of real marriages where bride-grooms's friends take the place of the Aśvins, who are nevertheless requested to lend their help to the ceremony, the real bride taking the place of Sūryā herself."

Asvins place the foetus in the wombs of all kinds of creatures and generate fire, water and trees. They are specially prayed so that their procreative power may not fail.

These twin gods of fertility are invoked for the safe delivery of the child in the tenth month. At the time of delivery Asvins are prayed for an easy and safe delivery of the child so that the child who had been sleeping in the mother’s womb for ten months should come out without endangering the mother’s life. They are asked to protect

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1 yuvam ha garbham jagatiṣu dhattho
   yuvam viśveṣu bhuvaneṣvantaḥ
   yuvam agnim ca vṛṣanāvapāśca
   vanaspatīrasvināvairayethām. RV.I.157.5.

2 aviṣṭam dhīṣvaśvinā na āsu prajāvad reto anhayam no astu
   a vam toke tanaye tūtujanāḥ suratnāso devavitim gamema. RV.VII.67.6.

3 hiranyayī araṇī yam nirmantaha asvinā
tam te garbham havāmahe daśame māsi sutave. RV.X.184.3.

4 daśā māsañchaśayānaḥ kumāro adhi mātari
   niraitu jīvo aksato jīvo jīvantyā adhi.
   RV.V.78.9.
the worshippers so that their impregnating semen should remain virile and also look after the happiness and prosperity of their sons and grandsons. Thus Aśvins are invoked to bless the worshippers with the wealth in the form of progeny, for the continuation of their clan. Moreover, they are also prayed for childbirth in connection with the legend of Saptavadhri.

Along with several other deities also Aśvins are invoked to bestow fertility on the bride. They give a child to the wife of an eunuch and even make the barren cow to yield milk.

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1. अ व ं तो के तानये तुतुजानाः सुरत्नासो देववितिम गमाने।
   RV.VII.67.6.
2. अस्त्रे रायिम नासत्या ब्रह्मांमापत्यासाचम स्तुत्यम राराथाम।
   RV.I.117.23.
3. RV.V.78.5.8.
4. गर्भम धेहि सिनिवालि गर्भम धेहि सरसवति
   गर्भम ते आस्विनाँ दे वाद्वह द्वत्तम पुष्करास्राजः।
   RV.X.184.2.
5. स्तुतम तच्छासुर्वा वाद्ह्रिमात्या हिरण्याहमस्विनाभुः
   वदात्तम।
   RV.I.116.3
6. याब्हिर्धेनुमास्वम पिनवाठो नारा।
   RV.I.112.3.

See also: RV.I.31.2; 112.16; 116.22; 117.20; 118.8; 119.6; 130.3; III.55.6; VI.62.7; VII.68.8; X.39.13; 40.8.
Asvins are responsible for the rain, as we shall see later on that they are also called the rain-gods. Asvins are connected with rain because the rain is very essential for the fertility of the vegetable world. Asvins helped Manu by giving him rain-water for cultivation.

Asvins' connection with honey and lotus is also very significant. They themselves are the drinkers of honey. Their chariot is the carrier of honey and is itself honey-hued. The bird-steeds which draw their chariot abound in honey and Asvins have a leather bag which is filled with

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1. nāsatyābhyaṁ barhiriva pra vṛūje
   stomaṁ iyarmabhriyeva vataḥ.
   RV.I.116.1.
2. daśasyantā manave pūrvyam divi yavam vṛkeṇa karṣatha.
   RV.VIII.22.6.

See also: RV.I.112.16.18; 117.21.
3. madhupatama
   RV.VII.22.17.
4. madhuvahanaḥ
   RV.
5. madhuvāraṇaḥ
   RV.V.77.3.
honey. Honey is the symbolic of fertility, of the procreation power of the nature. Therefore, the spring-time is a time for the renewal of life. Secondly, Asvins wear the lotus-garland. The lotus is the representative of the 'force' and 'energy' inherent in the water and humidity of soil, or may be regarded as the generative organ of those very waters.

Thus the fertility aspect of Asvins is well brought out by their connections with honey and lotus.

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1 ... dṛtisturīyo madhuno virapsate. RV.IV.45.1.
2 ... puṣkarasmājā ... KV.X.184.2