

KRŚĀKA. A nāga born in the Kaśyapa dynasty. (Udyogaparva, Chapter 106, Verse 15).

KRŚĀNU. The sage who stood guard over Soma at the Yajña conducted by sage Kutsa. (Ṛgveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 16, Sūkta 112).

KRŚĀŚVA I. The Prajāpati called Kṛśāśva married Jayā and Suprabhā the daughters of Dakṣaprajāpati and to both were born fifty sons each. All the sons were really arrows called Sainhāra. Viśvāmītra, by the power of penance made these hundred sons (arrows) of Kṛśāśva his own. It was these arrows, which Viśvāmītra gave to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa, Cantos 21 and 26).

KRŚĀŚVA II. A king of the solar dynasty. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

KRŚĀŚVA III. A King who served Yama in his court. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 3, Verse 17).

Once he came down to earth in Indra's Vimāna to witness Arjuna, in the company of Uttara, the Virāṭa prince, fight during the lifting of cows. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 56).

KRṢEYU. A King born in the Puru dynasty. (See under PURUVAMŚA).

KRŚIVALA. An ancient sage who lived in Indra's court. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 7, Verse 13).

KRṢṆA (ŚRĪ KRṢṆA). Born in the Yādava dynasty as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the ninth of the ten incarnations of Mahāviṣṇu.

1) *Genealogy.* Descended from Viṣṇu thus :—Brahmā—Atri—Candra—Budha—Purūravas—Āyus—Nahuṣa—Yayāti—Yadu—Sahasrajit—Śatajit—Hehaya—Dharma—Kuntī—Bhadrasena—Dhanaka—Kṛtavīrya—Kārtavīryārjuna—Jayadhvaja—Tālajaṅgha—Vīthotra—Ananta—Durjaya—Yudhājit—Śini—Satyaka—Sātyaki (Yuyudhāna)—Jaya—Kuṇi—Anamitra—Prśni—Citraratha—Viḍūratha—Sūra—Śini-bhoja—Hṛdika—Śūrasena—Vasudeva—Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Ten sons called Vasudeva, Devabhāga, Devaśravas, Ānaka, Srñjaya, Kākānika, Śyāmaka, Vatsa, Kāvūka and Vasu were born to King Śūrasena by his wife Māriṣā. Of those ten sons Vasudeva married Devakī, the sister of Kaṁsa. He had also a second wife called Rohiṇī and she was the mother of Balabhadrarāma.

2) *Śrī Kṛṣṇa's former births.* Owing to a curse of Varuṇa, Kaśyapaprajāpati was born on earth as Vasudeva and his (Kaśyapa) wives Aditi and Surasā were born as Devakī and Rohiṇī. (See under Kaśyapa and Aditi). Like this Śrī Kṛṣṇa also had previous births. Once upon a time from the heart of Brahmā was born the Prajāpati called Dharma, who was very truthful and wedded to righteous living according to the injunctions of the Vedas. He wedded the ten daughters of Dakṣaprajāpati, and four sons called Hari, Kṛṣṇa Nara and Nārāyaṇa were born to him. Hari and Kṛṣṇa turned out to be great Yogins, and Nara and Nārāyaṇa ascetics. Naranārāyaṇas performed penance to please Brahmā for a thousand years at Badarik-āśrama in the valley of the Himālayas. Celestial women, whom Indra had deputed to break their penance, approached them and requested them to take them (celestial women) as their wives. Ascetic Nārāyaṇa who got angry at the celestial women's request was about to curse them when sage Nara intervened and pacified him. Then sage Nārāyaṇa told them thus :—"You must protect my Vrata (penance) in

this life. In that case, in the next birth I shall satisfy your desire. In the 28th Dvāparayuga I will be incarnating on earth on behalf of the Devas. Then you also may be born as princesses. I shall incarnate as Kṛṣṇa in the Yadu dynasty and marry all of you. (Bhāgavata, 4th Skandha).

Accordingly sage Nārāyaṇa was born as Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Yadu dynasty, and sage Nara was born as Arjuna to be his companion.

The curse of Bhṛgu the great sage also contributed to Mahāviṣṇu's incarnating himself as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once in a war which lasted for 100 years between the Devas and the Asuras most of the latter were killed. Then Śukra, preceptor of the Asuras went to Mount Kailāsa to secure exceptional weapons, and the Asuras took refuge under Kāvya-mātā, the mother of Śukra. Devendra sought Mahāviṣṇu's aid, and he cut off Kāvya-mātā's head with his Cakra (discus). Bhṛgu was enraged at this killing of a woman. He cursed that Mahāviṣṇu should be born as man. Owing to various reasons like the above Mahāviṣṇu happened to be born as man in the Yādava dynasty, as the son of Vasudeva. (Devī Bhāgavata, 5th Skandha).

3) *Vasudeva's wedding.* To Śūrasena, the Yādava King of Mathurāpurī was born a son called Vasudeva, and Devakī was born as the grand-daughter of Devaka, the brother of Ugrasena, another Yādava King. Devakī was the sister of Kaṁsa. Devakī was given in marriage to Vasudeva with a dowry of twelve bhāras (a particular weight) of gold and a chariot. Kaṁsa acted as charioteer in the wedding procession during which a celestial voice addressed Kaṁsa as follows :—'Asyāḥ tvām aṣṭamagarbho hantā' (Her eighth son will kill you). As soon as he heard the celestial voice Kaṁsa stood up in the chariot ablaze with rage. He caught hold of Devakī by her hair and raised his sword to cut her throat. All the conciliatory words of Vasudeva failed to pacify Kaṁsa. Then Vasudeva promised to hand over to Kaṁsa all the children born to Devakī immediately after their birth. Accordingly Kaṁsa left them alone.

4) *First-born son of Vasudeva.* The first-born child of Vasudeva was duly handed over to Kaṁsa. But, he returned the child to its parents as, according to the celestial voice the first-born child was not to be his enemy. Vasudeva and Devakī brought it up under the name Kirtimān. On one of those days Nārada visited Kaṁsa and told him about his previous life, the object of Kṛṣṇa's incarnation etc. Then it was that Kaṁsa realised how fatal to him was the existence of Vasudeva and Devakī, and he hurried up to them and killed the child by dashing its head against a rock. He also kept them chained in prison.

5) *Kaṁsa's excitement.* The information imparted by Nārada upset Kaṁsa much. He shut his father Ugrasena in prison and himself became King. He deputed Asuras like Pralamba, Cāṇūra, Tṛṇāvarta, Muṣṭika, Ariṣṭa, Keśī, Dhenuka, Agha, Vivida and Pūtanā to harass the Yādavas, the Andhakas and the Vṛṣṇis. After the death of Kirtimān, Devakī, in the prison, delivered five sons. (See under Kaṁsa. Para 2 for the previous history of the first six sons of Devakī). Kaṁsa killed all the five children also as soon as they were born.