

- 9) *Āśleṣā*:— He who gives an ox made of silver as alms on this day, will become fearless.
- 10) *Maghā*:— He who gives gingelly as alms on this day will become prosperous with cows.
- 11) *Pūrvaṣṭhalgunī*:— If ghee-rice is given to Brahmins taking fast on this day, the giver would become happy and prosperous.
- 12) *Uttaraphalgunī*:— He who gives rice of Nivara variety mixed with milk and ghee on this day will be honoured in heaven.
- 13) *Hastā*:— If one gives four horses and an elephant as alms, on this day, one will attain the world of bliss.
- 14) *Citrā*:— He who gives oxen and perfumery as alms on this day, will enter the parks in which celestial maids play.
- 15) *Svātī*:— He who gives any sort of wealth as alms on this day will become renowned in the worlds.
- 16) *Viśākhā*:— He who gives as alms on this day, oxen, milch-cow, grain-box, cart, paddy and diamond will attain heaven.
- 17) *Anurādhā*:— He who gives cloth, rice and blanket on this day will be honoured in heaven for a hundred yugas.
- 18) *Jyēṣṭhā*:— If Brahmins are given yams and greens on this day one could realize one's wishes.
- 19) *Mūlā*:— The manes will be contented, if Brahmins are given roots and nuts on this day.
- 20) *Pūrvāṣāḍhā*:— If Brahmins who are expounders of Vedas are given as alms pots of curd, after observing fast, the givers will take birth again in families with many cows.
- 21) *Uttarāṣāḍhā*:— He who gives milk and ghee to wise men will be honoured in heaven.
- 22) *Śravaṇa*:— Those who give cloth and rug on this day will enter a white conveyance and reach heaven.
- 23) *Śraviṣṭhā*:— Those who give cattle, cart and cloth on this day will enter heaven.
- 24) *Śatabhiṣak*:— Those who give sandalwood and aloe wood on this day, will go to the world of devas (gods).
- 25) *Pūrvaprosṭhapada*:— He who gives coins on this day will reach the world of bliss.
- 26) *Uttaraprosṭhapada*:— Those who give mutton on this day will be pleasing the manes.
- 27) *Revatī*:— He who gives cows which could give potfuls of milk, could reach any world. (M.B. Anu-śāsaṇa Parva, Chapter 64).

NAKULA.

1) *Birth*. The fourth of the Pāṇḍavas. Mādrī, the second of the two wives of Pāṇḍu meditated on the twin gods Aśvinīdevas, and recited one of the Mantras given to Kuntī by the hermit Durvāsas and the two sons Nakula and Sahadeva were born to her from those gods. It is mentioned in Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 67, Stanza 111 that Nakula and Sahadeva were immensely handsome.

2) *Story of Nakula till the Bhārata battle*. Naming and such other rituals after birth were performed for Nakula also as in the case of the other Pāṇḍava children, by the hermits who lived in Śataśṛṅga. The ceremony of investiture with the Brahmā string was conducted by Kaśyapa the priest of Vasudeva. The royal hermit Śuka taught Nakula archery and swordplay, in his boyhood. When Pāṇḍu died, Mādrī jumped into the

funeral pyre and died leaving her two sons with Kuntī. After this the hermits of Śataśṛṅga took Kuntī and her five sons to Bhīṣma at Hastināpura.

At Hastināpura, Nakula learned archery under the great teacher Droṇa. According to the instruction of the teacher, Arjuna had to fight with him (teacher) on the completion of the teaching and during that fight Nakula and Sahadeva were the guards of Arjuna's chariot-wheels. As Nakula was such an expert in wielding the weapons, he got the name 'Atirathī'. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 138, Stanza 30). When the lac-palace was completed at Vāraṇāvata, the Pāṇḍavas shifted to that mansion by the instruction of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. When the lac-palace was set fire to, the Pāṇḍavas escaped by way of an underground passage and reached the banks of the Gaṅgā. There Nakula and Sahadeva fell down weary and exhausted. Bhīma carried them on his shoulders. After Baka had been killed, they proceeded to Pāñcālapura, where at the Svayaṃvara (marriage) Pāñcālī became the wife of the Pāṇḍavas. They returned to Hastināpura. A son named Śatānika was born to Nakula by Pāñcālī. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 95, Stanza 75).

After that Nakula married Kareṇumatī, the daughter of the King of Cedi. A son named Niramitra was born to the couple. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 95, Stanza 70).

Nakula was then sent to the kingdoms of the west for regional conquest, by Dharmaputra. The wealth of the kingdoms he had conquered, was carried on ten thousand camels to the capital Hastināpura. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 32). After the Rājasūya (imperial consecration) of Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula went to Gāndhāra to escort Subala and his sons. After the defeat of Yudhiṣṭhira in the game of dice, the Pāṇḍavas went to live in the forest. At that time Nakula put soil all over his body and sat on the ground because of his profound grief. In the forest, once Jaṭāsura carried away Nakula. (See under Jaṭāsura). Nakula killed Kṣemaṅkara, Mahāmaha and Suratha in the forest. At Dvaitavana (a forest) Nakula went to a lake to fetch water and was killed by Dharmadeva who appeared in the form of a crane. At the request of Dharmaputra, who came afterwards, all the Pāṇḍavas including Nakula were brought to life again, by Dharma.

During the pseudonymity of the Pāṇḍavas at the city of Virāṭa, Nakula assumed the name Granthika. When the period of pseudonymity expired, Nakula fought with the Trigartas on behalf of the King Virāṭa. On the return of the Pāṇḍavas after the expiry of their forest-life and pseudonymity, when Duryodhana announced that he would give not even a single dot of land to them, Nakula was very eager to decide the matter by a battle. He proposed that the King Dru-pada should be made the chief captain of the army.

3) *Nakula in the Bhārata-battle*. The following is the part played by Nakula in the battle of Kurukṣetra.

(i) There was a combat between Nakula and Duśśā-sana on the first day of the battle. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 45, Stanza 23).

(ii) Nakula fought with Śalya and was wounded. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 83).

(iii) He fought with Śakuṇi. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 105, Stanza 11).