

**NANDINĪ II.** A holy place. In this place there is a well esteemed by the gods. It is mentioned in Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 84, Stanza 15, that those who bathe in this holy well will obtain the fruits of Naramedhayajña (human sacrifice).

**NANDISENA.** One of the four attendants given to Subrahmanya by Brahmā. Lohitākṣa, Ghaṅṭākarna and Kumudamālī were the other three attendants. (M.B. Śalya Parva, Chapter 45, Stanza 24).

**NANDISVARA.** See under Nandikeśa.

**NANDIVARDHANA I.** The name of the conch of Sātyaki. (M.B. Śalya Parva, Chapter 61, Dākṣiṇātya-pāṭha).

**NANDIVARDHANA II.** A King of the solar dynasty. He was the son of Virada and the father of Suketu. (Bhāgavata, Skandha 9).

**NANDIVEGA.** A Kṣatriya family of ancient India. A famous King named Śama was born in this family. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 74, Stanza 17).

**NAPTĀ.** An eternal god concerned with offerings to the Manes. (M.B. Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 91, Stanza 37).

**NAPUṂSAKA. (EUNUCH).** Mention is made in Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapter 48, that the semen introduced into the womb of the woman by the man at the time of coition, will get mixed with the blood in the womb, and that the issue will be male, female or eunuch according to the proportion of the mixture. In the mixture of semen and blood, if blood exceeds semen the issue will be female and if semen exceeds, it will be male child and if both are equal the child will be a eunuch.

**NARA I.** A hermit of divine power.

1) *Birth.* Brahmā created Dharmadeva from his breast. Truthful and righteous Dharma married ten daughters of Dakṣa. Several sons were born to Dharma of his ten wives. But foremost among them were Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Hari and Kṛṣṇa became great yogins and Nara and Nārāyaṇa became great hermits of penance. The Nara-Nārāyaṇas lived in the holy Asylum of Badarikāśrama in the vicinity of the Himālayas for a thousand years performing penance to Brahmā. (Devī Bhāgavata, Skandha 4).

2) *Giving birth to Urvāśī.* See under Urvā ī, Para 1.

3) *Keeper of Amṛta (Ambrosia).* The Devas (gods) and the asuras (demons) together churned the sea of milk and obtained Ambrosia (the celestial nectar of immortality). Mahāviṣṇu took the guise of a fascinating woman and obtained the Amṛta by stealth from the asuras and gave it to the devas. The asuras waged a terrible war with the devas. At that time, at the request of the devas, Nara and Nārāyaṇa took sides with the devas, and fought against the asuras as a consequence of which the asuras were defeated. In Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 19, Stanza 31, it is stated that from that day onwards Indra entrusted the keeping of the celestial Nectar with the hermit named Nara.

4) *Dambhodbhava brought under control.* See under Dambhodbhava).

5) *Conflict with Śiva.* Because he was not invited to the sacrifice by Dakṣa, Śiva got angry and sent his trident against Dakṣa's sacrifice. The trident completely destroyed the sacrifice and flew through the air here and there. Then it reached Badaryāśrama and hit the breast of Nārāyaṇa who was sitting engaged in penance. By

the force of the utterance of the sound 'Hum', made by Nārāyaṇa, the trident was ejected from his breast. Finding no accommodation there it flew back to Śiva, who getting angry at this rebut approached Nara-Nārāyaṇas with the intention of exterminating them. Nara took a grass from the ground and discharged it at Śiva. Instantly the grass became an axe. It flew round Śiva to attack him. Śiva broke the axe. From that day onwards Śiva got the name 'Khaṇḍaparaśu' (one who broke the axe). In this story it is said that the trident which had returned from the breast of Nārāyaṇa heated the hair of Śiva to such an extent that they were dried as dry grass. So Śiva came to be called 'Muñjakeśa' (with hair having the colour of dry grass). (M.B. Sānti Parva, Chapter 343).

6) *Fight with Prahlāda.* Once Cyavana the son of Bhṛgu went to Nākuleśvara tīrtha (Bath) to take his bath in the river Narmadā. As soon as he got into the water the serpent called Kekaralohita caught hold of him. Cyavana meditated on Viṣṇu. So the poison of the serpent did not affect him. The huge serpent dragged Cyavana to Pātāla (the Nether world). But as his poison did not affect the hermit the serpent left the prey and went away. The Nāga damsels welcomed him and showed hospitality. Being greeted by the Nāga damsels he travelled through Pātāla and reached the great city of Dānavas. The asura chiefs greeted him with respect. Prahlāda met Cyavana, and received him with pleasure. The hermit said to Prahlāda. "I came to bathe in the Mahātīrtha and worship Nākuleśvara. When I got into the river a serpent caught hold of me and brought me to Pātāla, and made it possible for me to meet you." Hearing these words of Cyavana the King of the asuras said : "Oh good Lord ! which are the holy baths in the earth, the sky and the Pātāla? Would you be pleased to tell us?" Cyavana replied : "Oh ! powerful and mighty King ! The holy baths are Naimiṣa on the earth, Puṣkara on the sky and Cakra tīrtha in Pātāla ; these are the most important ones."

The King of the Daityas decided to go to Naimiṣa and said :—"We must go and bathe in the Naimiṣa tīrtha. We could visit and worship Viṣṇu with eyes as beautiful as lotus." Obeying the words of the King, preparations were made instantly and the asuras started from Rasātala for Naimiṣa.

The mighty host of Daityas and Dānavas reached Naimiṣa and bathed in the tīrtha. After that Prahlāda went to the forest for hunting. As he was walking thus he saw the river Sarasvatī. Near the river there was a Pine tree with very big branches, all of which were covered with arrows, the head of one at the tail of another. Prahlāda saw near the tree two hermits, with matted hair, clad in the hide of black antelope, performing penance. Near them were two perfectly made divine bows named Śārṅga and Ajagava and two quivers which would never become empty. Prahlāda questioned them without knowing that they were Nara and Nārāyaṇa. The questioning ended in a contest. The hermit Nara stood up and taking the bow Ajagava began sending showers of arrows at Prahlāda. Prahlāda checked every one of them. The hermit made his fight more severe. Prahlāda also withstood it. At last pushing Nara back Nārāyaṇa came to the front. The fight between Prahlāda and Nārāyaṇa was fierce. In the end Prahlāda fell down, his breast being pierced by the arrow of Nārāyaṇa.