

**NARAVĀHANA.** A Kṣatriya King who had obtained remission of the sin of Brahmahatyā (slaughter of Brahmin) by taking the fast of Vaiśākhavrata.

This man who was a Kṣatriya of Pāncāla once happened to kill a Brahmin with an arrow. To get remission of this sin, he discarded his Sacred thread, mark on the forehead and forelock and had been wandering here and there when he met a Brahmin named Muniśarmā. Naravāhana told him his story. This Brāhmaṇa who was a lover of God advised him regarding the importance of the Vaiśākha fast. By taking this fast the King obtained remission of sin. (Padma Purāṇa, Chapter 88).

**NARAVĀHANADATTA.** A famous Vidyādhara. Udayana the King of Vatsa had been spending his time in play and pleasure with his wives Padmavati and Vāsavadattā, when once Nārada appeared before them. The king greeted the hermit and showed hospitality. The King and the queens were childless. Nārada told them: "Hear, oh King. Your wife Vāsavadattā is the incarnation of Ratidevi blessed by Śiva. The son born to her would become the emperor of the Vidyādhara. Not long after this Vāsavadattā conceived and gave birth to a radiant son. He was named Naravāhana-datta. At this time Kaliṅgasenā, who had been transformed into a woman by the curse of Indra, gave birth to an extra-ordinarily beautiful girl. (For detailed story see under Kaliṅgasenā). That child was named Madamañcukā. Even in infancy she was surrounded by a halo of unearthly beauty. Hearing of this child, Vāsavadattā brought Kaliṅgasenā and the infant to the palace. To the wonder of everybody, the infants looked at each other and they were not satisfied how soever long they looked at each other. The king and his wives understood this perfectly well and at the proper time their marriage was conducted.

Naravāhanadatta was anointed as the Heir-apparent. Once he was playing in the garden in the spring season, with his ministers Gomukha and others, when the most beautiful Ratnaprabhā came there. (See under Ratnaprabhā).

Once Naravāhanadatta went for hunting with his minister Gomukha and retinue. Somehow or other he was separated from Gomukha and army in the deep forest. Then he heard a divine song and sound of a heavenly lyre. He went in the direction from which the music came and reached a Śaivite temple. Getting in, he saw an excessively beautiful damsel standing in the midst of her attendants and companions singing and playing on a lute, in praise of Śiva. At this time a grown-up Vidyādhara woman came down from the sky and getting near the damsel, gave her to Naravāhanadatta. The name of the Vidyādhara damsel was Alaṅkāravati. (For other details see under Alaṅkāravati).

As Naravāhanadatta was spending his days, enjoying the pleasing company of his wife Alaṅkāravati, once he went for hunting, with his army. Being very tired they went in search of water, and entered a thick forest. There they saw a lake full of golden lotus flowers and four men plucking flowers. Naravāhanadatta approached them. They said that they had been plucking flowers to worship Viṣṇu. Naravāhana followed them to the presence of Viṣṇu. Mahāviṣṇu was greatly pleased at Naravāhanadatta who was standing with folded hands

singing praises of Viṣṇu in intense devotion and blessed him to become the emperor of the Vidyādhara. (Kathāsaritsāgara).

**NĀRĀYAṆA.** One of the two Ṛṣis famous as Naranārāyaṇas.

1) *Birth.* Dharma, son of Brahmā was Nārāyaṇa's father. Dharma married ten daughters of Dakṣa, and four sons, i.e. Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Nara and Nārāyaṇa were born to him of them. Of the four, Nara and Nārāyaṇa were inseparable sannyāsins. In the holy Badarikāśrama on the slopes of the Himālayas they did tapas to please Brahmā for a thousand years.

2) *Nārāyaṇa's tapas.* The whole world was, so to say, burnt by the intense tapas of Naranārāyaṇas. Indra was alarmed. Believing that their tapas was for the attainment of Indrahood and fearing his own displacement Indra went to Badarikāśrama mounted on Airāvata to break their tapas, and told them thus: "Oh ascetics, who shine like the rising sun, I am pleased with your tapas. You may choose any boon you like."

The Naranārāyaṇas did not even recognise the thunder-like voice of Indra; nor did they answer him. This increased Indra's alarm, and he decided to disturb them with Māyā, productive of fear, desire etc. and thus break their tapas. Indra began threatening them with cruel animals created by him like wild cat, leopard tiger, lion, elephant etc. and also with aberrations created in nature like storm, rain, wild fire etc. But, none of the above affected or moved them in the least. After all, why should they be moved? You would threaten only those who are subject to desires, love of comfort, any particular object in life or likes and dislikes. Since Naranārāyaṇas had none of the above, Indra's attempts to threaten them failed. Thus disappointed he returned to Svargaloka and after thinking for a long time he called Kāmadeva to him and spoke as follows:— "You should go, along with Rati and the spring, to Badarikāśrama. Also take with you any number of apsarā women you want. You will find Naranārāyaṇas at the āśrama performing tapas and will weaken them from their resolution by using your arrows (erotic shafts) and tempt them into erotic life. I am also deputing apsarā women like Rambhā to help you."

Kāmadeva accordingly started for Badarikāśrama accompanied by all the apsarā women. When they reached the place spring season had set in there.

Varieties of beetles flew about from flower to flower humming. Trees like the mango and Palāśa were thick with flowers. Creepers (Comparable to young women) entwined and embraced trees (lovers), the former carrying puṣpas (flowers, in the case of young women, coming of age). A fragrant breeze swept the whole region. In this erotic background Kāma and Rati, with their five arrows and accompanied by celestial women came to the āśrama, and there they began singing and dancing. The erotic flow enchanted the soul of Naranārāyaṇas. Nārāyaṇa awoke from his tapas and whispered something in the ears of Nara. By now Kāmadeva had entered the presence of Naranārāyaṇas accompanied by the reputed beauties of Svargaloka like Menakā, Rambhā, Tilottamā, Sukeśinī, Manoramā, Maheśvari, Puṣpagandhā, Pramadvārā, Ghṛtācī, Candraprabhā, Somaprabhā, Vidyummalā, Ambujākṣī and Kāñcanamālā. These beauties were accompanied by 10080 of their beautiful attendants. Naranārāyaṇas