

NĪTHA. A king born in the Vṛṣṇi dynasty. (Vana Parva, Chapter 120, Verse 19).

NĪTIGOTRA. A king born in the Bhṛgu dynasty. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

NIVĀTAKAVACA(S). A sect of Daityas.

1) *Birth*. Daityas were the off-springs of Kaśyapaprajāpati by Diti. Two sons called Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu and a daughter called Simhikā were born to the Prajāpati of Diti. Simhikā was married by Vipracitti and to them were born Rāhu and others who became famous as the Saimhikeyas. Hiraṇyakaśipu had four famous sons called Anuhlāda, Hlāda, Prahlāda (the great devotee of Viṣṇu) and Samhlāda. (Some texts refer to them as Anuhrāda, Hrāda, Prahrāda and Samhrāda). Hlāda's son was called Hrāda, Samhlāda's sons were called Āyusmān, Śibi and Bāskala, and Prahlāda's son was called Virocana. Mahābali was Virocana's son and Bāna was the eldest of the hundred sons of Mahābali.

Four crores of asuras called Nivātakavacas were born in the family of Prahlāda. The army of the Asuras, which routed the Devas many a time, was formed by the Nivātakavacas and Kālakeyas. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 19).

2) *Fight against Rāvaṇa*. After securing boons from Brahmā Nivātakavacas lived in the city of Maṇimatī and they were a terror to the world. Rāvaṇa longed once to defeat them and so besieged their city with his army. The two sides fought fiercely for hundreds of years. At last Brahmā intervened and conciliated them. From that day onwards the Nivātakavacas became friends of Rāvaṇa. (Uttara Rāmāyaṇa).

3) *Annihilation*. The Nivātakavacas in company with the Kālakeyas attacked Devaloka. Indra, who could not withstand the attack, sent his charioteer Mātali to Arjuna and brought him down. Most of the Nivātakavacas and Kālakeyas were killed in the fight by Arjuna. (See under Kālakeya).

NIVĀTAKAVACAYUDDHAPARVA. A sub Parva in Vana Parva of Mahābhārata comprising of chapters 165 to 175.

NIVIT. A mantra or hymn. 'Uktha and Nivit are recited after the offerings in a yāga. (Rgveda, Maṇḍala 1, Anuvāka 14, Sūkta 86).

NIVĪTA. Brahmin's wearing upper cloth or the sacred thread on the left shoulder and under the right hand is called Upavīta; the same on the right shoulder and under the left hand is called prācīnāvīta and the same worn as a garland around the neck is called Nivīta.

NIVṚTI. A king of the Yayāti dynasty. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

NIYATĀYU. Son of Śrutāyu. He was killed by Arjuna in the great war. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 94, Verse 29).

NIYATI. A daughter called Lakṣmī and two sons called Dhātā and Vidhātā were born to maharṣi Bhṛgu of his wife Khyāti. Dhatā and Vidhātā married Āyati and Niyati, daughters of Meru. A son named Prāna was born to Vidhātā, and this Prāna became father of Mṛkaṇḍu and grandfather of Mārkaṇḍeya. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Part 1, Chapter 10).

Niyati after her death became a Devī, and she continues to worship Brahmā in his court. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 11, Verse 43).

NIYOGA. During the Vedic period there prevailed a

system or custom which permitted either the husband or the wife who had no child by his wife or her husband to procreate a child in another woman or beget children by another man. That custom, called Niyoga fell into disuse after the Vedic period. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 256).

NODHAS. A muni who lived in the Rgvedic period. He achieved all his desires by praising the Devas. (Rgveda)

NṚCAKṢUS. A king of the Yayāti dynasty. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

NṚGA. A king born in the dynasty of Vaivasvata Manu.

1) *Genealogy*. Descended from Viṣṇu thus: Brahmā — Marīci — Kaśyapa — Vivasvān — Vaivasvata Manu — Mahābāhu — Prasandhi — Kṣupa — Nṛga.

Nṛga was the younger brother of Ikṣvāku. From Nṛga was born Sumati, from him the king called Jyotis, from Jyotis Vasu and from Vasu Pratīka.

2) *Nṛga became chameleon*. Nṛga was an extremely righteous and generous King. Once, at Puṣkara he gifted away thousands of cows to brahmins. There was a brahmin called Parvata living near Puṣkara. He too was given a cow and it was after that the brahmin named Anārata came. By then there remained no cow to be gifted. Anārata came after Parvata had gone into the forest after leaving the cow at the pond (Puṣkara). Nṛga had forgotten the fact that the cow had already been gifted away to Parvata and finding it there owner-less he gave it to Anārata, who went away with the cow very much pleased. The King and his ministers also returned to the palace.

A very short time afterwards Parvata returned to the pond and felt very sorry to miss his cow. He searched for it here and there and at last found it at Anārata's house. Quarrel ensued between the two, Parvata alleging that Anārata had stolen his cow while the latter contended that it had been given to him by the King. Now, it was decided that the question should be submitted for arbitration to the King, and the contending parties went to the capital to see the King. At the palace they asked the gate-keepers to tell the King about their arrival. But, they did not tell the King, nor did he come.

Angered at this the brahmins cursed that Nṛga be converted into a chameleon and live as such for a thousand years. The King heard about the curse and ran up to the brahmins and requested for absolution from it. The brahmins then said that after one thousand years Mahāviṣṇu would incarnate as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that at his touch Nṛga, the chameleon would resume his former form as King. According to this curse Nṛga was born as a chameleon in a neglected well at Dvārakā. One day Sāmba and others who happened to go near the well tried their best to take the chameleon out of it, to no purpose. At last Kṛṣṇa with his attendants came and took it out of the well. At Kṛṣṇa's touch it resumed its form as King Nṛga, and related the story of his curse to the onlookers, who stood there wondering

3) *Other information*.

(i) After his death Nṛga lived in Yama's court worshipping him. (Sabhā Parva, Chapter 8, Verse 8).

(ii) Nṛga once conducted a yajña on the banks of the river Payoṣṇī in Varāhatīrthā at which Indra drank soma so much as to get intoxicated, and the brahmins