

23-24. All holy centres and all sacrifices will be present for ever in the place where a man after having put ashes on his body stays permanently, no matter whether he is ruthless, base, sinful or commits morning sins, or is a fool or a fallen man.

25. Even a sinful person is worthy of being honoured by Devas and Asuras if he has Tripuṇḍra on his forehead. What then of a faithful man endowed with a pure soul?

26. All the holy centres and sacred rivers go ever to the place which a person who is endowed with Śiva Jñāna (knowledge of Śiva) and has put on ashes casually visits.

27. Why should I say more? The sensible person shall always apply the ash, shall always worship the phallic image and shall always repeat the six-syllabled mantra of Śiva.

28. Neither Brahmā, nor Viṣṇu, nor Rudra, nor sages, nor the devas can explain adequately the greatness of the application of the ashes.

29. Even if a person has eschewed the duties of the different Varṇas and Āśramas, even if a person has omitted the holy rites of the Varṇas, he shall be freed from the sin if he wears Tripuṇḍra once.

30. Those men who exclude a man wearing Tripuṇḍra and perform holy rites are not liberated from worldly bondage even after crores of births.

31. If a brahmin wears the Tripuṇḍra with the ash on his forehead he must be considered as having learnt everything from the preceptor and as having performed every sacred rite.

32. Those who begin to strike on seeing a person who has applied the ash are reborn of Cāṇḍāla parents. O holy one, this can be guessed by the wise.

33. With great devotion Brahmins and Kṣatriyas shall apply the holy ashes over such parts of the body as are prescribed by the rule repeating the mantra "Mā nastoke¹⁵⁶" etc.

34. A Vaiśya shall apply the ashes repeating the Tryambaka¹⁵⁷ mantra and a Śūdra with the five-syllabled

156. Ibid. 16.16.

157. Ibid. 3.60.