

you are desirous of hearing. Hence I shall ponder over the greatest of the Sacred lore intelligently and tell you.

7. O dear, listen to that divine panacea evolved out of all religious tenets, heightening true devotion and conducive to the pleasure of Śiva.

8. It is destructive of the great fear of the Python of Kāla (Death). O sage, it is the noble Śiva Purāṇa³ formerly narrated by Śiva Himself.

9. For the benefit of the people in the age of Kali, the sage Vyāsa⁴ has abridged it out of great respect for the sage Sanatkumāra⁵ on being instructed by him.

10. O sage, there is nothing other than Śiva Purāṇa for the purification of the mind especially of the people of the Kali age.⁶

11. It is only the intelligent and the highly fortunate man who has accumulated great merits in his previous birth who will be drawn towards it.

12. This Śivapurāṇa is the greatest and the noblest of the sacred lore. It is the form of Śiva and as such is to be served and realised in this world.

13. By reading this and listening to it the good man becomes very pious. By all means he instantly attains Śiva's region.

14. Hence every endeavour of men to read this is desirable. Loving care to listen to it yields all desired results.

15. By listening to this Purāṇa of Śiva a man becomes sinless. After enjoying all extensive worldly pleasures he will attain the region of Śiva.

3. For the nomenclature and authenticity of this Purāṇa see *Introduction*.

4. According to the Pauranic tradition, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, the son of Satyawatī, composed the eighteen purāṇas or superintended their compilation.—*Mat.* 53.70.

5. The purāṇas were first compiled by Brahmā (*Vā* I. 60-61), Sanatkumāra, a son of Brahmā (*ŚP* I. 4. 8-9; I. 5. 17) inherited them from his father and imparted them to Vyāsa who in turn abridged them in 18 compendiums.

6. The beginning of the Kali age has been discussed by Dr. Fleet (*JRAS*, 1911, PP. 479, 675, 686) and he has pointed out that it began on the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa died, which the chronology of the Mahābhārata places, as he shows, some twenty years after the great battle and that it was then that Yudhiṣṭhira abdicated and Parikṣit began to reign.—Pargiter : *Dynasties of the Kali Age*.—*Intro.* P. X.