

Brahmā and others; obeisance to Thee of the form of Viṣṇu and Brahmā; obeisance to Thee, the creator of Viṣṇu and Brahmā, obeisance to Thee O one favourably disposed to the devotees.

18. O one engaged in penance, O one the venue of penance; obeisance to Thee the bestower of fruits of penance; obeisance to Thee who lovest penance; obeisance to Thee of the form of Brahman and quiescent.

19. Obeisance to Thee who lay down the principles of dealings and worldly conventions; obeisance to the great Śiva full of attributes; obeisance to Thee the great soul.

20. O great lord, your divine sports are incomprehensible. They bestow happiness on saintly men. Your nature is subservient to the devotees and you are under their control. You are the performer of all activities.

21. O lord, you have come here because my fortune is in its ascendancy. You have been described as a bestower of favours to the distressed. You have put me under your patronage and protection.

22. Today my life has borne fruit, in fact everything connected with me has become fruitful since you have come here.

23. Knowing me to be your slave of great composure, O great lord, you can freely command me. With my mind not fascinated by other things I shall serve you with great pleasure.

*Brahmā said :—*

24. On hearing these words of the lord of mountains, lord Śiva slightly opened his eyes and cast a glance on the lord of mountains who was accompanied by his attendants.

25. On seeing the lord of mountains with his followers, the bull-bannered god Śiva, the lord of the universe permanently engaged in meditation and Yogic practice said smilingly.

*Lord Śiva said:—*

26. I have come to perform penance in secret on your top. Make arrangements so that none should be able to come near me.