

The root of knowledge too is devotion.

74. The root of devotion is good action and the worship of one's own favourite deity. The root of that is the good preceptor. A good preceptor is secured only through association with good people.

75. If one associates with good people, one will come across a preceptor. From the preceptor mantras and the modes of worship can be learned. Bhakti (devotion) is generated by worship and it gives birth to knowledge.

76. Knowledge leads to perfect knowledge and realisation of the supreme Brahman. When there is perfect knowledge, differentiations cease altogether.

77. When differentiation ceases, the misery of mutually clashing opposites vanishes. He who is free from the tangle of opposites and the miseries attendant on them assumes the form of Śiva.

78. O celestial sages, when the mutually clashing opposites do not afflict, a person endowed with true knowledge has neither happiness nor misery. Rules of do's and don'ts do not bind him.

79. Such a person who has not entered a household life is rare to meet with. If there is such a one he will quell all sins by his mere sight.

80. Even the holy centres praise such a person of knowledge. Devas and all sages consider him the supreme Brahman, Śiva Himself.

81. The holy centres or the deities in the form of clay or rock idols are not equal to him. They take time in sanctifying persons. But a man of true knowledge purifies through his sheer vision.

82. As long as he continues the life of a householder he shall perform the worship of the idols of the most excellent of the five deities with pleasure.

83. Or it is enough if Śiva alone is worshipped. The root is the most important. When the root is watered, O gods, the branches are well-cared for.

84. O excellent sages, if the branches are taken care of, it does not necessarily mean that the root is cared for. When the deities are propitiated, the same analogy holds good.