

time of performing Śrāddha and feeding the brahmins, all his Pitṛs (manes) attain the great region of Śiva.

46. The devotee who observes fast on the Caturdaśī day and reads that Saṁhitā under the Bilva tree is directly identified with Śiva and is worshipped by the gods.

47. The other Saṁhitās are no doubt the bestowers of the benefit of fulfilling all cherished desires. These two Saṁhitās are particularly excellent as they are full of divine sports and divine knowledge.

48. Such is the Śivapurāṇa, extolled on a par with the Vedas, created by Lord Śiva Himself at first and commensurate with the supreme Brahman.

49—51. Originally the Śivapurāṇa was of very enormous size consisting of twelve sacred Saṁhitās :—(1) Vidyēśvara (2) Rudra, (3) Vaināyaka, (4) Aumika, (5) Mātṛī (6) Rudraikādaśa, (7) Kailāsa, (8) Śatarudraka, (9) Sahasrakotīrudra, (10) Koṭīrudra, (11) Vāyaviya and (12) Dharmasaṁjña. O brahmins, I shall mention the number of verses in those Saṁhitās. Please listen with due attention.

52. The first Saṁhitā of Vidyēśvara, consisted of ten thousand verses. The Raudra, Vaināyaka Aumika and Mātṛ Saṁhitās consisted of eight thousand verses each.

53. O brahmins, the Rudraikādaśa saṁhitā consisted of thirteen thousand verses; the Kailāsa saṁhitā of six thousand verses and the Śatarudra of three thousand verses.

54. The Koṭīrudra saṁhitā consisted of nine thousand verses ; the Sahasrakotī-Rudra saṁhitā of eleven thousand verses.

55. The Vāyaviya saṁhitā consisted of 4000 verses and the Dharma saṁhitā of twelve thousand verses. Thus the whole Śivapurāṇa contained a hundred thousand verses.

56. That has been condensed by Vyāsa to twenty-four thousand verses; that is to about a fourth of the original Purāṇa and he retained seven saṁhitās.

57. The Purāṇic lore at the time of the first creation as conceived by Śiva contained a thousand million (hundred crores) verses.