

mass of light shot up from his head and spread all round. It caused great havoc.

30. All the worlds of the gods were well nigh consumed by it alone. O sage, all the celestial sages were hard hit and distressed.

31-32. Indra, the lord of gods, was extremely terrified. He thought "Some one is performing a penance. Surely he will usurp my position. This master mind shall in a trice destroy the whole cosmos". All those who entertained similar doubts could not decide what to do.

33. Then all those gods and sages consulted one another and in their great fright they came to my world and approached me in a piteous plight.

34. Bowing to and eulogising me with palms joined in reverence, all of them explained everything to me distressed in mind that they were.

35. Coming to a definite conclusion with adequate thought as to the reason for the same, I went where the demon was performing penance in order to grant him the boon.

36. O sage, I told him thus— "Tell me what boon you want. A severe penance has been performed by you. There is nothing which cannot be granted to you".

37. On hearing these words of mine, Tāraka, the great demon, bowed and eulogised me and requested for a terrible boon.

*Tāraka said :—*

38. "O Pitāmaha, if you are glad and ready to grant me the boon what is it that cannot be achieved by me? Hence I request you for this boon. Please listen.

39. O lord of gods, if you are pleased and if a boon is to be given to me, be kind enough to grant me two boons.

40. O great lord, there should certainly be no man equal to me in strength in this entire universe created by you.

41. If a son born of Śiva becomes the commander-in-chief of an army and discharges weapons against me, let my death occur then".

42. O excellent sage, thus requested by that demon, I granted him two boons and hastened back to my abode.