

please narrate to us, O dear, the great anecdotes of Śiva.

8. O sinless one, drinking the nectar of knowledge poured out from your lotus-mouth we are never satiated. Hence we would like to inquire of you something more.

9. O omniscient one, by the favour of Vyāsa you have realised contentment. There is nothing not known to you whether of the past, present or future.

10. In return for your excellent devotion you have gained the great favour of your preceptor Vyāsa. You have understood everything. You have made your life highly noble and purposeful.

11. Now, O wise one, please explain the excellent form of Śiva. Please narrate the divine anecdote of Śiva and Pārvatī without omitting anything.

12. Maheśvara is Aṅuṇa (free from attributes). How does He take up the Saṅuṇa from in the world ? We do not know the true nature of Śiva, despite our great deliberation.

13. Before the origin of creation how does lord Śiva maintain His form ? In the midst of creation how does He maintain His sport ?

14. How does lord Maheśvara stand at the moment of dissolution ? How is Śaṅkara who blesses the world with happiness propitiated ?

15. What benefit does the great Lord confer when He is pleased with His own devotees and others ? Please tell us.

16. We have heard that the lord becomes pleased instantaneously. The merciful lord is unable to bear the stress and strain that His devotee undergoes.

17. The three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa are born of Śiva. Among them Maheśa when he has all the substrata of elements is Śiva himself as distinct from Maheśa¹⁷⁵.

18. Please explain His manifestation and tell us

¹⁷⁵. According to this statement Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa are the three forms of Śiva. In the Kūrma Purāṇa, (II. 37. 70-71) there occurs a slightly modified version : Agni (Tamas), Brahmā (Rajas) and Viṣṇu (Sattva) are the three forms of Rudra while another form, full and attributeless is Śiva himself.