

and said—"O lord, what shall I do ? Please give me your directives quickly."

3. "Dear, here is Brahmā, the first deity of the universe. Worship him with your sharp-pointed quick-moving sword."

4. With one of his hands he caught hold of the tuft of Brahma's fifth head that was guilty of haughtily uttering a falsehood, and with the hands he furiously shook his sword in order to cut it off.

5. Your father trembled like a plantain tree in a whirlwind, with his ornaments scattered here and there, his cloth ruffled and loosened, the garland displaced, the upper cloth hanging loose and the glossy tuft dishevelled, and fell at the feet of Bhairava.

6. Meanwhile the sympathetic Acyuta desirous of saving Brahmā, shed tears over the lotus-like feet of our lord and said with palms joined in reverence just like a child lisping words of entreaty to its father.

Acyuta said :—

7. O Lord, it was you who gave him five heads⁴³ as a special symbol, long ago. Hence please forgive him his first guilt. Please favour him.

8. The lord thus requested by Acyuta relented and in the presence of all devas asked Bhairava to desist from punishing Brahmā.

9. Then the lord turned to the deceitful Brahmā who bent down his neck and said "O Brahmā, in order to extort honour from the people you assumed the role of the lord in a roguish manner.

10-11. Hence you shall not be honoured, nor shall you have your own temple or festival.

43. Brahmā's five heads : When the four faces of Brahmā became thwarted in their function because of Brahmā's erotic impulse, then out of his Tapas was produced a fifth head on the top and that head was covered with matted locks. In image No 382 of Brahmā in the Kushāna period at Mathura, the fifth head on the top is shown with moustaches, beard and long locks, a feature which is only found in the Kuśāna period from the first to the third century A. D. But later on, the fifth head was eliminated and a new theory (contradicted by ŚP. I. 8.8) was devised that Brahma's head was clipped by Rudra. The fact was that the fifth head corresponding to Ākāśa was taken to be invisible, being a symbol of his unmanifest form (Avyakta mūrti) and that only the four others became manifest.—V.S. Agrawal : *M.P. A Study*.