

*Brahmā said :—*

O Lord, be pleased. O flourishing one, I consider this sparing of my head itself a great blessing and a boon. Obeisance to Thee, the lord, the kinsman, the originator of the universe, the forbearing, the forgiver of defects, the benevolent one, wielding the mountain as his bow.

*Īśvara said :—*

12. O child, the whole universe will be ruined if it loses the fear of a king. Hence you mete out punishment to the guilty and bear the burden of administering this universe.

13-14. I shall grant you another boon which is very difficult to get. In all domestic and public sacrifices you will be the presiding deity. Even though a sacrifice is complete with all the ancillary rites and offerings of monetary gifts, it will be fruitless without you. Then the lord turned to the deceitful Ketaka flower guilty of perjury and said :—

15. “O you Ketaka flower, you are roguish and deceitful. Go away from here. Hereafter I have no desire to include you in my worship.”

16. When the lord said thus, all the devas shunned the very presence of the flower.

*Ketaka said :—*

17. Obeisance to Thee, O Lord, Your bidding will mean that my very birth is fruitless. May the lord be pleased to make it fruitful by forgiving my sin.

18. Thy remembrance is reputed to quell all sins perpetrated consciously or unconsciously. Now that I have seen Thee, how can the sin of uttering falsehood sully me?

19-21. Thus entreated in the middle of the council the lord said—“It is not proper for me to wear you. I am the lord and my words must stay true. My attendants and followers shall wear thee. Hence thy birth shall be fruitful. Of course in the canopies over my idol you can be used for decoration.” The lord thus blessed the three—the flower Ketaka, Brahmā and Viṣṇu. He shone in the assembly duly eulogised by the Devas.