

CHAPTER THREE

(The deliberation on the achievable and the means of achievement)

Vyāsa said :—

1. On hearing the words of Sūta, the great sages said, “Please narrate the wonderful Purāṇa that fully treats of the essence of Vedānta”.

2. Very delighted at the request of the sages Sūta meditated on Śiva and spoke to them.

Sūta said :—

3. Contemplating on Śiva free from ailments may ye all hear this Śivapurāṇa, the foremost among Purāṇas, that amplifies the essence of the Vedas.

4-5. Where the trio, Bhakti (Piety) Jñāna (Wisdom) and Vairāgya (non-attachment) has been proclaimed and the object which is knowable only through Vedānta, has been particularly described.

Sūta said :—

6-8. May ye all hear the Purāṇa that imbibes the essence of the Vedas. Formerly, when many Kalpas (Aeons) elapsed and this Kalpa started with the process of creation, a great dispute arose among the sages of six clans who held divergent views as to which is great and which is not. They approached Brahmā the Creator, to ask him about the imperishable.

9—12. All of them with palms joined in reverence addressed him with words couched in humility—“Thou art the creator of the entire universe, the cause of all causes. Who is that Being older than all Principles, the greatest of the great?

Brahmā said :—

“That from whom words recede, not approaching him even with the mind ; that from whom this entire universe beginning with Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Indra, along with all elements and all sense-organs, is evolved at first ; he is the lord Mahādeva the omniscient, the lord of the universe. He can be realised by supreme devotion and not by other means.