

others. Please tell us decisively about this and also about the greatness of Bilva.

*Sūta said:—*

2. O sages, all of you please hear now attentively. With pleasure I shall explain everything. All of you who take up Śiva's sacred rites are really blessed.

3. A devotee of Śiva who is pure and clean, devoutly performing good rites and of fixed resolve shall partake of Śiva's Naivedya. He shall abandon all thoughts which are not worthy of being entertained.

4. Even at the sight of the Naivedya of Śiva, all sins disappear. When it is taken in, crores of merits flock in, in no moment.

5. A thousand sacrifices are of no avail. Hundred millions of sacrifices are useless. When Śiva's Naivedya is eaten one will attain identity with Śiva.

6. If in a family Śiva's Naivedya becomes popular with the members, that house becomes sacred and it can make others also sacred.

7. When Śiva's Naivedya is offered it shall be accepted with pleasure and humility. It shall be eaten eagerly while remembering Śiva.

8. If any one who is offered Śiva's Naivedya delays taking it immediately, thinking that it can be taken afterwards, he will incur sins.

9. If anyone has no inclination to take Śiva's Naivedya he becomes a sinner of sinners and is sure to fall into hell.

10. After initiation in Śaiva cult, the devotee shall partake of the offerings of eatables made to the phallic image whether conceived in the heart or made of moon-slab, silver, gold etc.

11. The Naivedya of all phallic icons is called a great favour and is auspicious. A devotee after initiation into Śaiva cult shall eat it.

12. Please listen to the decision with pleasure on partaking of Śiva's Naivedya by persons who take initiation in other cults but maintain their devotion to Śiva.

13-15. With regard to the following phallic images viz:—that which is obtained from Śalagrāma stone, Rasaliṅga,