

CHAPTER TWELVE

*(Consideration of the essential and the non-essential
in the worship)*

Nārada said :—

1. O dear father Brahmā, with your mind fixed on Śiva, you are blessed indeed. Please explain this again still more precisely.

Brahmā said :—

2. I, the lotus-born, once called together all the sages and all the Gods and addressed them lovingly with these good words.

3. If you have faith in permanent happiness, if you desire the achievement of the same, all of you shall come along with me to the shores of the milk-ocean.²⁰⁰

4. On hearing these words they accompanied me to the place where lord Viṣṇu, the benefactor of everyone, was stationed.

5. O sage, on reaching the place, the Gods bowed down with palms joined in reverence and prayed to the lord of the universe Janārdana, lord of the Gods.

6. On seeing Brahmā and other deities standing there, Viṣṇu remembered the lotus-like feet of Śiva and spoke these noble words.

Viṣṇu said :—

7. “Why have you all, Brahmā and others and the celestial sages come ? What is the matter now ? Please tell me lovingly.”

Brahmā said :—

8. On being asked thus by Viṣṇu as well as by me, the dieties bowed to Him with devotion and said.

200. According to the Paurāṇic concept, the turbulent and foamy sea known as the southern China Sea which surrounds Śākadvīpa (identified with Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Southern China) on three sides was called ‘the sea of milk’ or Kṣīra Samudra : cp. SM. Ali : Geography of the Purāṇas.