

The Asuras said:—

30. O lord of gods, if you are pleased, if boons are to be given to us, please grant us indestructibility at the hands of everyone, every living being.

31. O lord of the universe, make us steady. Protect us from enemies. Let not old age, sickness and death befall us at any time.

32. We wish to become free from old age and death. In the three worlds we shall subject all others to death.

33. Of what avail are riches, vast earth, excellent cities, other sorts of vast enjoyments or big positions and power ?

34. If one is to be swallowed by death in five days, O Brahmā, everything else belonging to him is futile. This is our decisive thought.

Sanatkumāra said:—

35. On hearing the words of those ascetic Asuras, Brahmā replied to them after remembering Śiva, his lord.

Brahmā said:—

36. O Asuras, there cannot be invariable indestructibility. Please desist from asking for it. Seek some other boon whatever you wish.

37. O Asuras, a creature is born, dies and will be born surely. But no one will be free from old age or death in this world.

38. Except Śiva the destroyer of Death, and Viṣṇu all else are mortals. These two are the supervisors of virtue and evil and have manifest and unmanifest forms.

39. If penance is performed for the harassment of the world, it shall be understood as gone. It is only a well-performed penance that can be fruitful.

40. Ponder over this keenly, O faultless ones, desist from seeking immortality. Immortality is impossible for the gods and the Asuras. It is inaccessible. It cannot be warded off.

41. Hence choose a boon whereby you shall do something equal to your own strength.¹⁷⁵