

arrangements for his safety in diverse ways and means as if he were her own son.

28. At that time, the Asura Hiraṇyākṣa desired to obtain a son at the pressure of his wife who was envious at the sight of many sons of her husband's elder brother.²⁸⁶ Accordingly he set out in the season of late winter.

29. He resorted to forest and performed penance for obtaining son. In order to see lord Śiva he performed a rigorous penance conquering the passions of anger etc. and remaining insensible to external sensation as does a log of wood.

30. The trident-bearing lord was pleased at his penance. O great brahmin he went there in order to grant him the boon. After reaching that spot, lord Śiva, the bull-bannered lord, spoke to the leading Daitya.

Lord Śiva said:—

31. "O lord of Daityas, do not curb your senses so much. Why have you taken up this sacred rite ? Speak out what you desire. I am Śiva, the granter of desires. I shall grant whatever you desire."

Sanatkumāra said:—

32. On hearing the pleasing words of lord Śiva, the Daitya Hiraṇyākṣa was delighted. He joined his palms in reverence and humbly bowed his head. Eulogising and bowing in various ways he spoke to lord Śiva.

Hiraṇyākṣa said:—

33. O moon-crested lord, I have no powerful son befitting the race of Daityas. It is for this purpose that I have resorted to penance. O lord of gods, give me a powerful son.

34. My brother has five sons of infinite valour, Prahlāda being the eldest. I don't have any son. My family is likely to be extinct. Who will inherit my kingdom after me?

²⁸⁶. It refers to Hiraṇyakaśipu, the elder brother of Hiraṇyākṣa. The former had five sons while the latter had none. See V. 34 below.