

30. Viṣṇu and I, went to our regions, joyfully singing the ever auspicious glory of Śiva.

31. Lovingly honoured by Dakṣa, the great lord Śiva, the goal of the good, returned to Kailāsa along with his Gaṇas. He was greatly delighted.

32. After returning to his mountain, Śiva remembered His beloved Satī and mentioned her story to the most important of his Gaṇas.

33. Narrating her story, lord Śiva passed many days. He then evinced the lover's humour according to the conventions of the world.

34. O sage, the lord is never unjust. The supreme Brahman is the goal of the good. How can He be deluded ? What sorrow has He ? How can he have other aberrations ?

35. Even Viṣṇu and I do not know His real secret. What then about others, the sages, gods, human beings and even Yogins.

36. The greatness of Śiva is endless and inscrutable even to the learned sages. It is known to the devotees without difficulty, thanks to good devotion and his favour.

37. There is no emotion or aberration at all in Śiva the supreme Being. He points out to the people of the world by his different actions, their respective goals.

38. O sage, by reading or listening to this, intelligent persons in the world secure good goal hereafter and excellent happiness in this world.

39. After forsaking her body thus, Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa, was born as the daughter of Menā, the wife of Himavat. This is well known.

40. After performing penance again she wooed Śiva as her husband. Attaining white complexion she performed many wonderful, divine sports and gained half the body of Śiva.³⁴⁴

41. Thus I have described the fascinating story of Satī to you which confers worldly pleasures and salvation, which is divine and bestows all wishes.

42. This narrative is flawless, pure, sanctifying, confe-

³⁴⁴ Ardhanārīśvara is the half-male and half-female form of Śiva. This form, most popular in ancient sculpture, symbolises the union and concord of the spirit and its energy.