

The great lord said:—

44. “If you are badly in need of food, if hunger torments you, eat up immediately the flesh of your own hands and feet.”

Sanatkumāra said:—

45. On being commanded thus by Śiva, the being ate up the flesh from his limbs. He was then left only with his head.

46. On seeing that being of terrible activities, left only with his head, the delighted Sadāśiva spoke smilingly.

Śiva said:—

47. “O great Gaṇa, you are blessed since you carried out my behest to the very letter. O excellent one, I am pleased with this action of yours.

48. You shall hereafter be known by the title Kīrtimukha. You shall be my door-keeper. You shall be one of my great Gaṇas, very heroic and terrible to all wicked persons.

49. You are my favourite. In the course of my worship, you too shall be worshipped always by my devotees. Those who do not worship you cannot be pleasing to me.”

Sanatkumāra said:—

• 50. With this excellent blessing from Śiva, he became delighted. From that time onwards Kīrtimukha²²⁶ was stationed at the entrance of the lord of the gods.

51. This Gaṇa shall be specially worshipped in the course of the adoration of Śiva. Those who do not worship him at the outset will find their worship in vain.

²²⁶. Kīrtimukha, the great Gaṇa of Śiva, represented in sculpture by a trunkless head, is installed beside the door in front of Śiva's image.