

superior to a hundred thousand persons who have the knowledge of Śiva. A person endowed with the power of trance is superior to a crore of meditating persons. Since the latter are superior to the former they shall be selected for worship. Even sensible persons cannot fully comprehend the excellence of benefit. An ordinary man cannot understand the greatness of the devotee of Śiva. The worship of the devotee of Śiva is on a par with the worship of Śiva and Śakti. He who worships any of these piously becomes Śiva and attains Śiva. He who reads this significant chapter, that agrees with the Vedic injunctions, becomes a brahmin endowed with the knowledge of Śiva and rejoices in the company of Śiva. O scholarly lords of sages, a person who knows special things must narrate them to the devotees of Śiva. By Śiva's grace he will be blessed.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(The nature of bondage and liberation and the Glorification of the phallic emblem of Śiva)

The sages said :—

1. O foremost among those who know everything, please explain the nature of bondage and liberation.

Sūta said :—

I shall explain bondage, liberation and the means of liberation. Please listen attentively.

2. A Jīva is said to be in bondage if he is tied up by the noose of eightfold primary essences, Prakṛti etc. When freed from them he is called liberated.

3. Perfect control and subjugation of Prakṛti and its offshoots is Salvation. A Jīva in bondage when freed from it is called a liberated soul.

4. The set of eight that binds is :—Prakṛti, Buddhi (cosmic intellect), Ahaṁkāra (cosmic ego) of the nature of attributes, and the five Tanmātrās (cosmic principles of Ether etc.)