

of the Asuras quickly for accomplishing the task of the Asuras.”

46. After thinking thus, lord Viṣṇu set himself to the task of interfering with the sacred rites of the Asuras.

47. As long as the worship of Śiva is continued and as long as the pure activities are strictly adhered to, there is no question of their ruin at all.

48. Hence such means shall be followed as will make Vedic Dharma disappear thence. Undoubtedly the Asuras will foresake their worship of the phallic emblem of Śiva.

49. Deciding thus, Viṣṇu started ridiculing the Vedas for putting up obstacles in the virtuous activities of the Asuras.

50. At the bidding of Śiva, Viṣṇu who was commanded to protect the three worlds, and who renders help to the gods spoke to them.

*Viṣṇu said:—*

51. O gods, you go to your own abodes. Undoubtedly I shall carry on the task of the gods to the extent of my intellect.

52. Strenuously I shall make them averse to Śiva. Coming to know that they are devoid of devotion to him he will reduce them to ashes.

*Sanatkumāra said:—*

53. O sage, accepting his behest with bent head, the gods and Brahmā felt satisfied and with faith in their hearts returned to their abodes.

54. Thereafter Viṣṇu performed deeds conducive to the welfare of the gods. Listen to those excellent deeds destructive of all sins.