

55. The king Dama was unconquerable. O brahmin, he did not stress any act of piety other than furnishing temples of Śiva with lamps in plenty.

56. He called headmen of the villages in his kingdom and asked them to furnish all temples of Śiva with lamps.

57. He warned them that if they defaulted they would be punished. It is declared in the Vedas that Śiva is delighted at the gift of a lamp to his temples.

58. "Therefore, you headmen shall see that the temples of Śiva in your jurisdiction are properly illuminated with lamps. There is no question of hesitation in this matter.

59. "Undoubtedly I shall get the defaulter beheaded." Thus for fear of him every temple was duly illuminated.

60. With this act of piety alone, as long as he lived, the king Dama acquired ample prosperity. Finally he passed away.

61. The impression of lamps persisted in his mind. He caused many lamps to be lighted. Finally he became the lord of Alakā²²⁶ with gem-set lamps to his credit.

62. Thus even the smallest service rendered to Śiva bears rich fruit in time. Let all persons seeking happiness realise this and continue the worship of Śiva.

63-65. That son of Dikṣita never cared for any act of piety. It was to steal that he had entered the temple of Śiva. To serve his own end he had brightened the lamp there, thereby dispelling the shadow of darkness on the top of the liṅga. Then he became the virtuous king of Kalinga. O foremost of the sages where the wicked son of the Dikṣita, and where the guardian of a quarter? Although he had been simply a man, he became the guardian of a quarter.

66. Thus I have narrated the story of Guṇanidhi, the son of Yajñadatta. The story is pleasing to Śiva. Besides, it grants all desires of the listening devotees.

67. O dear one, I shall tell you how he became the close friend of Śiva. Listen attentively.

226. Alakā—It is the capital of Kubera, the chief of the Yakṣas and Guhyakas. It is also called Prabdhā, Vasudharā and Vasusthalī and is fabled to be situated on a peak of the Himālayas, inhabited also by Śiva.