

Vājapeya<sup>11</sup> sacrifices do not merit even a sixteenth part of Śivapurāṇa.

40. O best of sages, a sinner is called a sinner till the moment he hears Śivapurāṇa with great devotion.

41. The holy rivers, Gaṅgā and others, the seven sacred cities<sup>12</sup> and Gayā can never be equal to Śivapurāṇa.

42. If one wishes for the greatest of goals (Liberation) one shall recite at least a stanza or even half of it from Śivapurāṇa.

43. He who constantly listens to Śivapurāṇa fully comprehending its meaning or simply reads it with devotion is undoubtedly a meritorious soul.

44. Lord Maheśāna (Śiva) is extremely pleased with the sensible man who listens to Śivapurāṇa when death is imminent. Lord Śiva accords him a seat in his own region.

45. He who adores this Śivapurāṇa with great devotion enjoys in the world all desired objects and attains Śivaloka.

46. Never slack in his devotion to the Śivapurāṇa he who keeps this work well wrapped in a silk cloth, will ever be happy.

47. The holy Śivapurāṇa, the sole possession of a devotee of Śiva, should assiduously be resorted to by a person who desires for happiness here and hereafter.

48. The holy Śivapurāṇa that accords the four aims of life (virtue, wealth, love and salvation) must be heard and read with great devotion always.

49. The Śivapurāṇa, the greatest harbinger of the perfect welfare among the Vedas, Itihāsas and other sacred texts must be thoroughly understood by those who seek salvation.

50. This Śivapurāṇa is the greatest resort of the knowers of Ātman (Spiritual Seekers) for ever; it is the noblest object

country, the ruler was bound either to submit or to fight. In this way the horse returned at the end of a year, the guardian obtaining or enforcing the submission of princes whom he brought in this train. After the successful return of the horse, the horse was sacrificed amidst great rejoicings. It is said that the horse was sometimes not immolated but kept bound during the ceremony.

11. Vājapeya is one of the seven forms of the Soma-sacrifice offered by kings or Brāhmins aspiring to the highest position, and preceding the Rājasūya and the Bṛhaspatisava.

12. The seven sacred cities of the Hindus are : Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī, Kāñcī Avantikā and Dvārikā.