

Vasiṣṭha said :—

60. He who is the supreme brilliance, He who is the greatest austerity, He who is the worthiest of worship—let that Śiva be meditated upon.

61. Worship Him who is the most excellent of all Beings, the sole first cause of all the worlds and the principal cause of virtue, wealth, love and salvation.

62. O lady, worship lord Śiva, the lord of all Devas with the following mantra. By that, certainly you will achieve everything.

63. “Om Namaḥ Śaṁkarāya Om” “Om obeisance to Śiva Om.” With this mantra the penance is pervaded. The whole penance begins with silence. I shall explain it. Listen.

64. The ceremonial bath shall be taken silently. The worship of Śiva shall be performed silently. The food taken in shall solely consist of water in the first and second Śaṣṭhā-kālas (a period $\frac{1}{3}$ of the day=4 hrs.)

65. On the third Śaṣṭhakāla you shall observe complete fast [without even taking water]. This shall continue till the conclusion of the penance. The rites shall be performed at the end of each Śaṣṭhakāla.

66. This is called the penance of silence. It yields all the benefits of celibate life. O lady, it confers all cherished desires. True, it is certainly true.

67. Thinking thus in your mind, O lady, you meditate on Śiva. If He is pleased He will confer on you all you wish, ere long.

68. Vasiṣṭha then sat and explained to Sandhyā the rites of the penance. The sage then vanished from the scene.

CHAPTER SIX

(The Hymn sung by Sandhyā. Sandhyā acquires the boon from Śiva.)

Brahmā said :—

1. O best of my sons, O intelligent one, listen to the description of the great penance of Sandhyā on hearing which sins are quelled instantly.