

41. O great sage, only Agni did not become happy. Śiva, the great lord, gave a separate hint to him.

42. Then the distressed fire, O sage, eulogised Śiva with palms joined in reverence and piteously spoke these words.

*Agni said:—*

43-44. O lord of gods, I am a stupid and deluded servant of yours. Forgive me my fault. Please remove my burning sensation. O lord, you are the benefactor and sympathetic to the distressed.

*Brahmā said:—*

45. On hearing the words of Agni, Śiva the great lord spoke delightedly to Agni. He is favourably disposed to His devotees.

*Śiva said:—*

46. An improper action has been committed by you in swallowing my semen. Hence your sin has become formidable at my bidding and the burning sensation has not been cured.

47. Now that you have sought refuge in me you are sure to be happy. I am pleased with you. All your misery will be dissolved.

48. Deposit carefully that semen in the womb of some good woman. You will become happy and particularly relieved of the burning sensation.

*Brahmā said:—*

49. On hearing these words of Śiva, Agni replied to Śiva, the benefactor of the devotees with pleasure and bowing down with palms joined in reverence.

50. "O lord Śiva, this splendour of yours is inaccessible and unbearable. There is no woman in the three worlds except Pārvatī to hold it in her womb."

51. O excellent sage, when fire said like this, you, urged by Śiva, said thus in order to help Agni.

*Nārada said:—*

52. "O Agni, listen to my words that will dispel your