

in the nether-worlds, the powerful ruler of the Asuras brought Śeṣa and others to the Earth.

48. Making gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Serpents, Rākṣasas and human beings, the denizens of his capital, he ruled over the three worlds.

49. After making the gods thus subservient to himself, Jalandhara protected them all virtuously, like his own sons.

50. When he was ruling the kingdom virtuously, none in his realm was sick or miserable or lean and emaciated or indigent.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(The conversation between Nārada and Jalandhara)

Sanatkumāra said:—

1. When the great Asura was ruling over the Earth virtuously, the gods were reduced to be mere slaves, O great sage.

2. The distressed gods mentally sought refuge in Śiva the benefactor, lord of gods and of everyone.

3. They eulogised the great lord, the bestower of everything and favourably disposed to his devotees, by means of pleasant words.

4. The great lord, the bestower of all desires to his devotees called Nārada and commissioned him with a desire to carry out the task of the gods.

5. Then the celestial sage, the wise devotee of Śiva, the goal of the good, went to the gods in the city of the Asuras at the bidding of Śiva.

6. On seeing the sage Nārada coming, the distressed gods, Indra and others, stood up.

7. After bowing to the sage, Indra and other gods, their anxiety apparently manifest in their faces, offered a seat to Nārada.

8. After bowing to Nārada the great sage who sat comfortably, the distressed gods, Indra and others spoke to him again.