

after offering prayers spoke to Him again : “I may be excused. I may be excused.”

12. “O lord, tell me the mode of atonement for my sin. Even killing is justifiable. May my sin be removed thereby.”

13. Thus addressed by me, Śiva, the lord of all, who is favourable, delightedly told me as I stood bowing to Him.

Śiva said :—

14. In this very form (of a bull) whereon I sit, you shall perform penance with pleasure in your heart and desire for propitiating me.

15. You will acquire the glory of being called “The head of Rudra” in the world. You will be the accomplisher of rites for brahmins of great repute.

16. Discharge of semen is the act of human beings and as you have done the same, you will be born as a man and be roaming over the earth.

17-18. When you wander over the earth in this form, people will be asking, “What is there on the head of Brahmā?” and you shall reply “Śiva”. Any body who has committed the sin of outraging the modesty of another man’s wife will be free from that sin if he eagerly hears your story.

19. Whenever people thus repeat your wicked action your sin will gradually subside and you will become pure.

20. O Brahmā, this is the atonement I lay down for you, being laughed at by the people and ridiculed by them.

21. The semen drops that fell in the middle of the altar-ground from you when you were excited by lust and seen by me will not be retained by any one.

22. Four drops of your semen fell on the ground. Hence so many terrible clouds causing dissolution shall rise up in the sky.

23. In the meantime, (when Śiva said so) in front of the devas and the sages, so many clouds emanated from the semen drops.

24. O dear one, four types of great clouds that caused destruction are the Samvartaka, the Āvarta, the Puṣkara and the Droṇa.²⁷³

²⁷³. Samvartaka, Āvarta Puṣkara and Droṇa are the names of clouds that emerge at the advent of dissolution of the universe.