

2-3. The lord stood in the wonderful posture of Pratyālīḍha for a hundred thousand years. The bow was well strung and kept near the head. The arrow was fixed. The fingers clenched at the bow firmly. The eyes were fixed.

4. Gaṇeśa was stationed on the thumb. During this time the three cities did not come within the target path of the trident-bearing lord.

5. Then from the firmament, the odd-eyed Śiva who was standing there holding the bow and the arrow heard an auspicious voice.

6. "O lord of the master of the universe, you will not kill the Tripuras as long as the lord Gaṇeśa is not adored".

7. On hearing these words, Śiva the destroyer of Andhaka called Bhadrakālī and worshipped the elephant-faced god Gaṇeśa.

8-9. When Gaṇeśa was worshipped, when he standing ahead was pleased, lord Śiva saw the three cities of the powerful Asuras, sons of Tāraka, joined together.

10. It is said that when the great lord Śiva, the lord of the Gods, the supreme Brahman, worshipped by all is there, it is not proper to say that he achieved success by another God's grace.

11. He is independent, the great Brahman, both possessed and devoid of attributes. He is invisible, the supreme soul and unsullied.

12. He is the soul of five divinities. He is worshipped by the five deities¹⁹⁷. He is the great lord. There is none else worthy of worship. He is the ultimate abode of all.

13. Or, O sage, the activities of Śiva, the lord of the Gods, the granter of boons are but proper inasmuch as they constitute his divine sports.

14. When the great God stood up after worshipping Śiva, the three cities joined together into one unit.

15. O sage, when the three cities came to a unified

197. The five gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Skanda and Indra (See ŚP. VS 14 48) are in essence identical with Śiva but they have also their distinct forms in which they remain subservient to him.

According to another version, the five deities are the son, Gaṇeśa, Durgā, Rudra and Viṣṇu. See note 174 P. 168.