

44. Approaching Śiva she mentally bowed to Him, with a pallid face and stricken with grief.

45. On seeing her distressed, Śiva enquired of her health and asked—"O, have you finished your test" ?

46. On hearing Śiva's words she bent her head as a mark of respect but did not say anything. Agitated with grief she stood aghast.

47. On meditating for a while, Śiva, the great Yogin, adept in diverse divine sports, could understand everything about Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa.

48-49. He remembered the promise that He Himself had made on being requested by Viṣṇu when He was angry with the latter. Śiva who keeps the bounds of righteousness intact was distressed. The lord, the propounder, the activator and the protector of righteousness, thought within himself.

50. "If I were to maintain my love towards Satī at the level as before, my promise will be broken—even if I follow the conventions of the world".

*Brahmā said :—*

51. Thus pondering within himself in diverse ways He mentally discarded Satī but did not break his promise as the protector of Vedic Virtue.

52. Then after forsaking Satī mentally, the lord returned to His abode. He did not at all reveal the promise.

53. While they were on their way, an unembodied speech rose in the sky telling Him within the hearing of everyone particularly of Satī, Dakṣa's daughter.

*The celestial voice said :—*

54. O great Lord, you are blessed indeed. There is no other great Yogin or great lord in the three worlds, on a par with you. No one else can maintain that promise.

*Brahmā said :—*

55. On hearing the celestial voice, the goddess, utterly