

17. O excellent sage, these and similar portending phenomena occurred : Ignorant persons thought the submersion of the whole universe was imminent.

18. Then Kaśyapa Prajāpati thought well and named the powerful demon Tāraka.

19. That heroic demon, with his manliness and valour manifesting quickly grew and developed with his steely frame like the lord of mountains.

20. Then the demon Tāraka, of great strength and exploit, endowed with a lofty mind, requested permission of his mother for performing penance.

21. The permission having been secured, that demon possessing great power of illusion and capable of deluding even experts in the magical art, thought of performing penance in order to conquer all the gods.

22. Strictly adhering to the directions of his elders and preceptors he went to the forest of Madhu and performed a severe penance duly, having Brahmā as his objective.

23. For a hundred years he performed penance with his hands lifted up, standing on only one leg and gazing at the sun. With his mind steady and firm he observed all sacred rites.

24. Then for a hundred years, the lord and king of Asuras, Tāraka performed the penance : stood steady touching the ground with the single big toe.

25. For hundred years he performed penance by drinking only water; another hundred years by sustaining himself on air alone, another hundred years standing in water and another hundred years standing on dry land.

26. A hundred years he performed the penance amidst fires, a hundred years in a topsy-turvy position and a hundred years supported on the ground by the palms of his hands.

27. O sage, a hundred years he remained with his head down and feet up clinging fast to the branch of a tree and inhaling the pure smoke of the sacrificial fire.

28. Thus with ardour, the king of the demons performed the severe penance duly unbearable even to those who heard about it.

29. O sage, in the process of such a penance, a huge