

to the book identified directly with Śiva, humbly and piously joining his palms in reverence.

57. (The Prayer) “Thou art the visible Maheśvara Śrīmat Śivapurāṇa. Thou hast been accepted by me for listening purpose. Be thou pleased with me.

58. This wish of mine must be fulfilled by Thee. May this narration of the story be concluded without obstacles.

59. I am immersed in the middle of the ocean of worldly existence. Please lift me up from it, miserable wretch that I am, with my limbs caught in by the crocodiles of Karman (Action) : O Śaṅkara, I am Thy slave.”

60. The householder shall thus pray to Śivapurāṇa identified directly with Śiva, in words evoking pity. Then he shall begin the worship of the discourser.

61. He shall adore the discourser too in the same manner as in the rite of the worship of Śiva and propitiate him with flowers, cloths, ornaments, incense lamps etc.

62. In the presence of the discourser he shall take vow and observe all restraints with a pure mind and the same shall be maintained till the conclusion to the extent of his capacity.

63. “O Thou, the foremost of discourses, identified with Vyāsa, well-versed in the sacred literature of Śiva, please remove my ignorance through the light of this story.”

64. He shall invite five brahmins (if he can) or at least a brahmin for repeating Śiva Pañcārṇa mantra.²⁴

65. Thus O sage, I have told you the rules of listening to the story with devotion as well as those of governing the pious recipients. What else do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Description of Do's and Don'ts to those who take up listening to the Śivapurāṇa as a rite and that of the worship of the discourser).

24. Pañcārṇa mantra: “Namaḥ Śivāya.” This mantra, consisting of five letters in Devanāgarī script, is dedicated to Śiva.