principles of Śiva on hearing which the various sins of the people are destroyed.

3. Neither the principles of Śiva nor His supreme wonderful forms have been understood by me or by Viṣṇu or by any one else.

4. At the time of Great Dissolution when all the mobile and immobile objects of the world are dissolved everything gets enveloped in darkness, without the sun, planets and stars.

5. There is no moon. The day and the night are not demarcated. There is no fire, no wind, no earth and no water. There is no unmanifest primordial being. The whole firmament is one complete void, devoid of all Tejas elements.

6. There is no Dharma or Adharma, no sound, no touch. Smell and colour are not manifest. There is no taste. The face of the quarters is not demarcated.

7. Thus when there is pitch darkness that cannot be pierced with a needle and what is mentioned in the Vedas as "The Existent and the Brahman" is alone present.

8. When the present visible world is not in existence, the Sat Brahman alone is present which Yogins observe perpetually in the inner Soul, the inner Firmament.

9. It is incomprehensible to the mind. It cannot at all be expressed by words. It has neither name nor colour. It is neither thick nor thin.

10. It is neither short nor long. It is neither light nor heavy. There is neither increase nor decrease in it.

11. The Veda says that it envelops whatever is in a surprising way. It is the splendour, the truth, the knowledge, the eternal and the great Bliss.

12. It is immeasurable, propless, changeless, formless, attributeless, perceptible to the Yogins, all-pervasive and the sole cause of the universe.

13. It is free from alternatives. It has no beginning. It is free from illusion and its harassment. It has no second. It has neither beginning nor end. It has no development. It is in the form of pure knowledge.

14. People have doubts about giving it a name. That Being, then after sometime, it is said, wished for a second.

15. The Being, having no form of its own, wished to