

sages.¹⁶⁴ O lordly sages, this is what has been mentioned by those who know about the efficacy of the ashes.

112. Or these five parts are to be used for applying ashes as mentioned by those who know more about the efficacy of the ashes. They are :— forehead, two arms, chest and navel

113—114. Considering the place and time whatever possible shall be done by the devotee. If incapable of dusting the whole body with the holy ashes he shall have the Tripuṇḍra on the forehead alone, remembering lord Śiva, the three-eyed, the support of the three Guṇas and the progenitor of the three devas by repeating Namaḥ Śivāya (obeisance to Śiva).

115. He shall have Tripuṇḍra in the sides saying Iśābhyām Namaḥ (obeisance to Śiva and the goddess) and in the forearms by saying Bijābhyām Namaḥ (obeisance to the generating seeds).

116. He shall apply the ashes beneath by saying Namaḥ Piṭṛbhyām (obeisance to the manes) and above by saying Namaḥ Umeśābhyām (obeisance to Umā and Iśa), on the back and the back of the head by saying Namaḥ Bhīmāya (obeisance to Bhīma).

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

(*The greatness of Rudrākṣa*)

Sūta said :

1. O sage Śaunaka, highly intelligent, of the form of Śiva, noble-minded, please listen to the greatness of Rudrākṣa. I shall explain it briefly.

2. Rudrākṣa is a favourite bead of Śiva. It is highly sanctifying. It removes all sins by sight, contact and Japas.

3. O sage, formerly the greatness of Rudrākṣa was

¹⁶⁴. Seven sages, viz. Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha are represented by a group of seven stars called Ursa Major.