

be given according to the caste of the person concerned. It is conducive to the satisfaction of the Devas and worldly enjoyments as well. Such a devotee shall always attain noble birth and enjoyments here and hereafter. If he performs the sacred rites with dedication to God, he shall attain salvation. He who reads or hears this chapter becomes righteous and endowed with knowledge.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(Different modes of worship of clay idols and their results)

The sages said:

1. O excellent one, please explain the rules of the worship of clay idols by following which all desired results will be achieved.

Sūta said:—

2. You have requested for a very good thing. It bestows all wealth always. It suppresses misery instantaneously. I shall explain it. Please listen.

3-4. It wards off premature and foul death. Even a timely death it prevents. O brahmins, it bestows womenfolk, sons, wealth, grains etc. The worship of idols made of clay etc. is conducive to the attainment of all cherished desires in the world. From it the devotee derives food and other edible things, cloth etc.

5. Both men and women are authorized in this. The clay should be brought from the beds of rivers, lakes or wells.

6. It should be washed well and pasted with scented powder and milk. The idol should be made with the hands on a raised platform.

7. All the limbs, joints etc. should be perfectly shaped with the respective weapons of the deity concerned. It should be seated on Padma Āsana (the lotus pose) and worshipped respectfully.

8. The five deities Gaṇeśa, Sun, Viṣṇu, Pārvatī and Śiva shall be usually worshipped in their images. But a