

19. After saying thus and offering fruits and flowers to the lord of mountains, the sages made him believe that the alliance was a settled fact.

20. The great chaste lady Arundhatī tempted Menā further with Śiva's good qualities.

21. According to the worldly convention they smeared the moustache of the mountain with powdered turmeric and saffron as an auspicious custom.

22. After fixing the auspicious Lagna for the marriage and congratulating and complimenting one another the sages came to Śiva's abode on the fourth day.

23. After reaching the place, Vasiṣṭha and other sages bowed to Śiva and eulogised Him with different hymns. They then spoke to lord Śiva.

*The sages said:—*

24. O lord Śiva, lord of the gods, O great lord Śiva, please listen lovingly to the narration of what we, your attendants, have done.

25. O great lord, the lord of mountains and Menā have been urged with different kinds of statements and examples from mythological legends. Undoubtedly he is enlightened.

26. Pārvatī has been betrothed to you by the lord of mountains. It is not otherwise. Now please start for the marriage with your attendants and the gods.

27. O great god, O lord, go to the abode of Himācala and marry Pārvatī in accordance with the customs for the sake of a son.

*Brahmā said:—*

28. On hearing their words, lord Śiva who was delighted and who loved to follow worldly conventions laughed and said:—

*Lord Śiva said:—*

29. O fortunate one, a marriage ceremony has never been witnessed nor even heard of by me before. The details of the same shall be mentioned by you all, specifically.