

the cause of great enjoyment and protection remembered the seven celestial sages, Vasiṣṭha and others.

8. Immediately on being remembered, the seven sages³⁶ came there with faces beaming with delight and praising their good fate.

9. Bowing to Him with folded arms and bent shoulders they eulogised lord Śiva with extreme pleasure by means of words choked with devotional feelings.

The seven sages said:—

10. “O great God, lord of gods, O lord, O ocean of mercy, we have become very well blessed since we have been remembered by you now.

11. Why have we been remembered? We may kindly be commanded. O lord, have pity on us as on your own slaves. Obeisance be to you.

Brahmā said :—

12. On hearing the words of the sages, lord Śiva, the storehouse of sympathy spoke lovingly and laughingly with eyes beaming like full-blown lotus.

Lord Śiva said :—

13. O dear seven celestial sages, listen to my words. You are all my benefactors. You are clever and perfectly wise.

14. The great Goddess Pārvatī, the daughter of the mountain is performing a penance now in the mountain called Gaurīśikhara, with a steady mind.

15. O brahmins, she is desirous of attaining me as her husband. She is being served by her maids. She has discarded all other desires. She is determined in her resolve.

16. O excellent sages, you go there at my bidding. With love in mind, conduct the test of her resolve.

17. O virtuous ones of good rites, at my bidding,

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