

ŚIVA MAHĀPURĀṆA

Part Two Rudrasaṃhitā

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Part I

Srṣṭi-khaṇḍa

Chapter 1

The inquiry of the sages

*viśvodbhavasthitilayādiṣu hetumekaṃ gaurīpartividitatattvamanantakīrtim
māyāśrayamvigatamāyamaciṃtyarūpambodhasvarūpamamalaṃ hi śivannamāmi*

1. I bow to Śiva the consort of Gaurī, the sole cause of the origin, sustenance, dissolution of the universe, who has understood the reality, who is of endless renown, who is the support of Māyā but is free from its influence, whose form is incomprehensible, who is unsullied and who is perfect knowledge itself.

*vande śivantamprakṛteranādimpraśāntamekampuruṣottamaṃ hi
svamāyayā kṛtsnamidaṃ hi sṛṣṭvā nabhovadantarbahirāsthito yaḥ*

2. I salute Śiva who is prior to Prakṛti, who is calm and tranquil, the only excellent Puruṣa, who has created this visible universe and who stays both within and without like ether.

*vandetarasthaṃ nijagūḍharūpaṃ śivaṃsvatassraṣṭumidaṃvicaṣṭe
jaganti nityamparito bhramaṃti yatsannidhau cumbakalohavattam*

3. I salute Śiva, of unmanifest form, who having extended himself by way of creation stands in the middle of it while the worlds move around him like iron filings round the magnet.

Vyāsa said:

4. I describe this after bowing to Śambhu, the father of the universe, Śivā the mother of the universe and Gaṇādhīśa their son.

5. Once Śaunaka and other sages living in Naimiṣa forest asked Sūta with full devotion.

The sages said:

6. The good and auspicious story of *Vidyēśvarasaṃhitā* has been heard by us. This first delightful compendium, “On the achievable and the means of achievement” is lovingly disposed to the devotees.
 7. Sūta, O blessed Sūta, live long. Be happy. You will please narrate to us, O dear, the great anecdotes of Śiva.
 8. O sinless one, drinking the nectar of knowledge poured out from your lotus-mouth we are never satiated. Hence we would like to inquire of you something more.
 9. O omniscient one, by the favour of Vyāsa you have realised contentment. There is nothing not known to you whether of the past, present or future.
 10. In return for your excellent devotion you have gained the great favour of your preceptor Vyāsa. You have understood everything. You have made your life highly noble and purposeful.
 11. Now, O wise one, please explain the excellent form of Śiva. Please narrate the divine anecdote of Śiva and Pārvatī without omitting anything.
 12. Maheśvara is *aguṇa* (free from attributes). How does He take up the *saguṇa* form in the world? We do not know the true nature of Śiva, despite our great deliberation.
 13. Before the origin of creation how does lord Śiva maintain His form? In the midst of creation how does He maintain His sport?
 14. How does lord Maheśvara stand at the moment of dissolution? How is Śaṅkara who blesses the world with happiness propitiated?
 15. What benefit does the great Lord confer when He is pleased with His own devotees and others? Please tell us.
 16. We have heard that the lord becomes pleased instantaneously. The merciful lord is unable to bear the stress and strain that His devotee undergoes.
 17. The three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa are born of Śiva. Among them Maheśa when he has all the substrata of elements is Śiva himself as distinct from Maheśa¹.
 18. Please explain His manifestation and tell us about His various activities. Please tell us about the birth of Umā and her marriage too, O lord.
 19. Their domestic life and their divine sports shall also be narrated to us. O sinless one, please tell us all about it and anything else that shall be told.
- Vyāsa said:
20. Being thus requested Sūta was delighted. Remembering the lotus-like feet of Śiva he replied to the sages.

¹ According to this statement Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa are the three forms of Śiva. In the *Kūrma Purāṇa* (2.37.70-71) there occurs a slightly modified version: Agni (*tamas*), Brahmā (*rajas*) and Viṣṇu (*sattva*) are the three forms of Rudra while another form, full and attributeless is Śiva himself.

Sūta said:

21. O lordly sages, what you have asked for is very nice. You are all blessed inasmuch as your minds are drawn towards Sadāśiva's anecdotes.
22. Like the holy waters of the Gaṅgā the inquiry into the anecdotes of Sadāśiva sanctifies the three persons: the narrator, the inquirer and the hearer.
23. O *brāhmaṇas*, except for the slayer of animals, who can be averse to hear the narrative of the attributes of Śiva, that highly delights three types of people always?
24. When it is being recited by persons who have no attachment or desire, it is verily an antidote for all ailments of worldly existence, for it is highly delightful to the ear and the heart while at the same time it bestows all objects.
25. O *brāhmaṇas*, I shall explain Śiva's sports in the light of your enquiry as far as my intelligence enables me to do so. Please listen respectfully.
26. Induced by lord Viṣṇu, a manifestation of Śiva, Nārada had also put the same question to his father Brahmā as you are asking me now.
27. On hearing the words of his son, Brahmā, a devotee of Śiva, was delighted in his mind. Out of love he sang the glory of Śiva heightening the pleasure of the excellent sage (Nārada).

Vyāsa said:

28. The learned *brāhmaṇas*, on hearing the words of Sūta became eager to know more of that conversation and so asked him.

The sages said:

29. O Sūta, O blessed Sūta, of great intellect and foremost among the devotees of Śiva, on hearing your most delightful words our minds have become very eager to know more.
- 30-31. Dear one, please tell us lovingly when this highly pleasant conversation between Brahmā and Nārada took place, wherein Śiva's glory was sung and the divine sport of Lord Śiva, destructive of worldly existence, had been discussed. What were the questions and how were they answered, please explain.
32. On hearing these words of the sages of noble mind Sūta was pleased much and narrated everything pertaining to the conversation referred to.

Chapter 2

Indra sends Kāmadeva to disturb the penance of Nārada

Sūta said:

1. O *brāhmaṇas*, once Nārada the excellent sage, son of Brahmā was inclined to perform penance controlling himself very much.
2. There is a very beautiful cave in the Himālaya mountain near which the celestial river flows rapidly.
3. There was a great hermitage of divine splendour which was resplendent in many ways. Nārada endowed with divine vision went there to perform the penance.
4. On seeing the hermitage (very convenient for penance) the leading sage performed the penance for a long time, seated firmly and steadily, keeping silent, controlling the breath and retaining the purity of the intellect.
5. O *brāhmaṇas*, the sage performed meditation and contemplation wherein the realisation “I am Brahman” is generated leading to the direct perception of Brahman.
6. When the great sage Nārada was thus performing penance, the mind of Indra became excessively agitated and he trembled.
7. Thinking “This sage is yearning for my kingdom” Indra wanted to spoil it.
8. Indra, the leader of *devas*, remembered Kāmadeva (Cupid) who arrived there immediately, accompanied by his Queen (Rati) and spring (his friend).
9. The king of *devas*, endowed with crooked intelligence to achieve his interests, saw that Kāma had arrived and addressed him thus.

Indra said:

10. O friend, of great prowess, always doing what is beneficent to me, please hear lovingly what I am going to say. Render me your help.

11. Strongly supported by you I have destroyed the pride of many ascetics O friend, the stability of my kingdom is always due to your blessing.
12. Nārada, the sage, is performing a penance in the Himalaya mountain directing his mind towards the Lord of the universe with great mental control and firm resolve.
13. I now fear lest he should beg of Brahmā my kingdom. You must go there now itself and hinder his penance.
14. Being thus commanded by Indra, Kāmadeva, accompanied by his wife (Rati) and Madhu, his friend, went haughtily to that place. He then prepared his own means of attack.
15. He employed all his arts there immediately. Spring too haughtily spread his prowess of diverse nature.
16. O great sages, the mind of the sage (Nārada) did not waver. Only the arrogance of these fellows suffered a setback and that too by the favour of Maheśa.
17. Please listen to the reason thereof, O Śaunaka and other sages! By the controlling power of the lord, Kāma could not exercise any influence.
18. It was in this very place that Śiva, the indefatigable enemy of Kāma, had formerly performed a great penance. It was here that Kāma was reduced to ashes—Kāma who used to spoil the penances of sages.
19. Rati wanted the resuscitation of Kāma and requested the *devas*. They appealed to lord Śiva, the benefactor of the whole world who said thus:
20. O Gods, after some time Kāma will come to life again. But none of his tricks will succeed here.
21. Whatever space all round this spot is visible to persons here, will be out of the influence of Kāma for ever, O *devas*.
22. It was due to this statement of Śiva that Kāma's viles did not prevail upon Nārada. From Śiva's abode he went to Indra.
23. Kāma then narrated everything about the sage and commended his power. At Indra's bidding Kāma returned to his own place.
24. Deluded by Śiva's Māyā (power of illusion) Indra was unaware of the true facts and was greatly surprised and he admired Nārada.
25. Śiva's Māyā is incomprehensible to all. The whole universe is deluded by it. Only the true devotees of dedicated souls escape.
26. Backed by Śiva's blessings Nārada stayed in the hermitage for a long time. Then realising that his penance was complete, the sage concluded the same.
27. Thinking that he had conquered Kāma he was puffed with pride. He was devoid of true knowledge and deluded by Śiva's Māyā.

28. O great sages, blessed and very blessed is Śiva's Māyā. Even Viṣṇu, Brahmā and others do not know the turn it takes.

29. In that state of delusion and puffed up arrogance, the great sage Nārada went to Kailāsa to expatiate on his own achievement.

30. Bowing down to Rudra, the sage arrogantly spoke of his exploits with the conviction that he was equal to the noble-souled lord, the conqueror of Kāma, *i.e.*, Śiva.

31. On hearing it, Śiva who is favourably disposed to His devotees, advised Nārada who was ignorant of the real cause, whose mind had strayed and who had been deluded by His (Śiva's) Māyā.

Rudra said:

32. "Dear Nārada, O wise sage, you are blessed. But please listen to me. Never speak like this anywhere else, especially in the presence of Viṣṇu.

33. Even when you are asked you should not mention your achievements as you have done just now. These should be guarded as close secrets and should never be expressed.

34. I bid you specifically like this because you are a great favourite of mine. Since you are a devotee of Viṣṇu you are my follower as all his devotees are."

Sūta said:

35. Lord Rudra, the cause of creation, advised him in many ways like this. But Nārada who was still under the influence of Śiva's Māyā did not take up this wholesome advice.

36. The future course of actions shall be considered inevitable by sensible persons. The will of Śiva cannot be warded off by anyone.

37. Then the great sage went to Brahmā's world. After saluting Brahmā he told him about his conquest of Kāma as a result of his penance.

38. On hearing that, Brahmā remembered the lotuslike feet of Śiva and knew thereby the true cause. He then forbade his son.

39. Although foremost among the wise, Nārada did not take up the advice of Brahmā as he had been deluded by Śiva's Māyā. The sprout of arrogance had been so fixed in his mind.

40. Everything will take place in the world in the manner Śiva wills. It is true that the entire universe is dependent on His will.

41. Nārada hastened to Viṣṇuloka in the same state of senseless arrogance, to boast of his exploits in the presence of Viṣṇu.

42. When Viṣṇu saw Nārada approaching, he could guess the purpose of his visit. He stood up and received him cordially. He walked forward and embraced him lovingly.

43. He made Nārada sit comfortably. After remembering the lotus-like feet of Śiva, He frankly uttered these words intended to quell the arrogance of Nārada.

Viṣṇu said:

44. “O dear Nārada, foremost among sages, you are blessed. I am sanctified by your visit. May I know where you come from and why you have come?”

45. On hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the sage Nārada felt elated. He narrated his story in the same haughty manner.

46. On hearing the arrogant words of the sage, Viṣṇu remembered the lotus-like feet of Śiva again and understood the true cause.

47. Viṣṇu, a leading devotee of Śiva, with his soul dedicated to Śiva, bowed his head and eulogised Parameśvara, the lord of the holy mountain, with his palms joined in reverence.

Viṣṇu said:

48. “O Lord, O Lord Mahādeva, Parameśvara, be pleased. O Śiva thou art blessed. Thy Māyā enchants everyone.”

49. Having thus chanted the prayer to Śiva, the supreme Ātman, he closed his eyes and meditated on His lotus-like feet and stopped.

50. On coming to know what Śiva was about to do, through Śiva’s bidding, he addressed the great sage pleasantly.

Viṣṇu said:

51. O foremost among sages, you are blessed. You are the storehouse of austerities and large-hearted. O sage, lust and delusion rise only in the heart of that man who is devoid of the three types of devotion.

52. Base passions that bring in their wake all sorts of miseries crop up in him instantly. But you are vowed to perpetual celibacy. You are ever endowed with knowledge and devoted to non-attachment.

53-55. Unaffected by passion and highly intelligent by nature how can you be swayed by lust?”

On hearing words like these, the great sage laughed within himself but spoke to Viṣṇu humbly.

Nārada said:

“O lord, what can Kāma do to me if you remain favourable to me?”

Saying so, the sage who had paid a casual visit bowed to Viṣṇu and left.

Chapter 3

Nārada attends the Svayaṃvara of a virgin and is discomfited

The sages said:

1-2. Sūta, O blessed Sūta, the disciple of Vyāsa, our obeisance to thee. It is due to thy grace that this wonderful story has been narrated to us, O dear one. Now tell us in detail what Viṣṇu did after Nārada had left the place? And where did Nārada go?

Vyāsa said:

3. On hearing these words of the sages, Sūta the wise and excellent scholar of *Purāṇas* remembered Śiva, the cause of different kinds of creation and replied.

Sūta said:

4. When Nārada went away casually Viṣṇu, skilful in wielding his Māyā, spread his Māyā, as Śiva had willed.

5. On the path taken by the sage He created a big wonderful city. It was a hundred *yojanas* in extent and surprisingly beautiful.

6. It was far more beautiful than heaven. Many articles were displayed there. Men and women of all the four castes stayed there.

7. The wealthy and prosperous king of that city named Śīlanidhi was preparing for the gorgeous celebration of the voluntary wooing (*svayaṃvara*)¹ of his daughter.

8. Brilliant princes coming from all the four quarters eager to court the princess had thronged there dressed in diverse ways.

¹This was an ancient custom amongst the kings of *kṣatriya* caste to hold a public assembly of suitors for the selection of a husband for their daughters.

9. On seeing such a splendid city Nārada² was enchanted. With his love kindled, he eagerly went to the palace threshold.
10. When the sage reached the palace the king Śīlanidhi adored him, having offered him a seat on the splendid throne studded with precious gems.
11. He called his daughter Śrīmatī and asked her to kneel down at the feet of Nārada.
12. Being struck with wonder on seeing the girl, Nārada said—“O king, who is this lovely girl comparable to celestial damsels?”
13. On hearing the words of the sage, the king replied with his palms joined in reverence—“O sage, this is my daughter Śrīmatī.
14. She has attained the marriageable age. She is in search of a qualified bridegroom. She has all charms and accomplishments and her *svayamvara* is imminent.
15. O sage, kindly foretell her destiny, everything that is in her horoscope. Please tell me what sort of a husband she will get.”
16. By the time these words were spoken Nārada had become an agitated victim of love and desired her. Addressing the king, he said thus:
17. “O great king, this daughter of yours is endowed with all characteristics: She is highly fortunate and blessed like Lakṣmī. She is an abode of all qualities.
18. Her future husband will certainly be a splendid God, lord of all, unvanquished, heroic, on a par with Śiva, and vying with Kāmadeva”.
19. Having said this, the casual visitor Nārada took leave of the king. Deluded by Śiva’s Māyā he was extremely oppressed by love.
20. The sage began to muse—“How shall I get her? How shall she woo me amongst the princes in the *svayamvara* hall.
21. A comely appearance appeals to all women in every respect. Only by seeing a charming personality will she become enamoured”.
22. Thinking thus, Nārada who was agitated by love, went to Viṣṇuloka somehow to acquire Viṣṇu’s form to captivate her.
23. He saluted Viṣṇu and said—“I shall tell you secretly my affairs entirely.”
24. When Viṣṇu who did everything according to Śiva’s wish agreed and asked him to narrate, the sage said:

Nārada said:

²Nārada is one of the ten mind-born sons of Brahmā having sprung from his thigh. He is celebrated as a divine sage and is associated with another sage Parvata. He is represented as the messenger from the Gods to men and vice versa and as being very fond of promoting discords among Gods and men; hence he is called Kalipriya.

25. The king Śīlanidhi is one of your devotees. He is a righteous king. His daughter Śrīmatī is a maiden of very fair complexion and wide eyes.

26. She has the lustre of Jaganmohinī (enchantress of the universe—a manifestation of Viṣṇu) and is the most beautiful woman in all the three worlds. O Viṣṇu, I wish to marry her without delay.

27. The king at the request of the princess has arranged for a *svayaṃvara*. Thousands of princes have come from all the four quarters.

28. If you can favour me with a splendid form I shall be able to gain her certainly. She will not put the wedding garland round my neck without your splendid form.

29. O lord! give me your form. I am your servant and favourite. Give me your beautiful form so that the princess Śrīmatī may choose me.

Sūta said:

30. On hearing these words of the sage Viṣṇu, the slayer of Madhu demon laughed and sympathetically replied, bearing in mind the overwhelming power of Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

31. “O sage, you can go to the place where you wish. I shall do what is beneficent to you in the manner of a physician doing what is good to the patient, since you are a great favourite of mine.”

32. After saying thus, Viṣṇu blessed the sage with a form like his own and the face of Hari (*i.e.*, the monkey since the word Hari means a monkey also). The lord then vanished.

33. The sage thus consoled became highly delighted on receiving Hari’s form. He was contented but did not know the scheme behind the scene.

34. The great sage Nārada hastened to the place where *svayaṃvara* was to be held and where the princes had assembled.

35. O great *brāhmaṇas*, the *svayaṃvara* hall splendidly decorated and graced by so many princes shone like another council-chamber of Indra.

36. Nārada too went in and sat down in the hall of his king. With his mind surging with love he began to think like this.

37. “She will choose only me since I am in Viṣṇu’s form”. The poor sage did not know the ugly character of his face.

38. The men assembled there saw the sage only in his old form. O *brāhmaṇas*, the princes and others did not know the difference created therein.

39. Two of the attendants of Rudra knew this difference. They had come there in the guise of *brāhmaṇas* in order to protect him.

40. Considering the sage a fool, the two attendants sat near the sage and began to mock at him seemingly conversing between themselves.

41. “See Nārada’s features as splendid as Viṣṇu’s, but the face as that of a monkey deformed and awful.

42. Being deluded by Kāma he wishes to marry the Princess”. With these and other veiled remarks they mocked at him.

43. The sage overwhelmed by love did not heed their whisper. He went on gazing at the princess Śrīmatī and was eager to get her.

44. In the meantime, the princess had come out of the harem surrounded by ladies in waiting. The comely maiden came to the hall.

45. With the beautiful golden garland in her hands, the princess of auspicious features, shone in the middle of the *svayaṃvara* hall like Goddess Lakṣmī.

46. The princess in search of a suitable bridegroom went round the hall with the garland in her hands.

47. On seeing the sage with the face of a monkey and the body of Viṣṇu she was infuriated. Averting her eyes she went elsewhere being distressed in her mind.

48. Failing to find a bridegroom of her choice she was afraid. She remained in the middle of the hall and did not put the garland round the neck of any one.

49. Meanwhile Viṣṇu came there in the guise of a king. He was not seen by anyone. Only the princess saw him.

50. Then on seeing Viṣṇu, her lotus-like face beamed. The comely lady put the garland round his neck.

51. Lord Viṣṇu in the guise of a king took her with him and vanished from there immediately back to his own abode.

52. The assembled princes lost their hope of getting Śrīmatī. The sage oppressed by love became excessively agitated.

53. Immediately the two attendants of Rudra, of perfect wisdom, disguised as *brāhmaṇas* spoke to Nārada.

The attendants said:

54. O sage Nārada, being deluded by love, you are desirous of getting her. Your effort is in vain. See, your face is as despicable as that of a monkey.

Sūta said:

55. On hearing their words Nārada was surprised. Deluded by Śiva’s Māyā he looked into a mirror.

56. On seeing his face like that of a monkey he became infuriated. The deluded sage cursed the two attendants.

57. Since you had mocked at me, you will become demons born of brahmanical semen and of that form.

58-59. On hearing the curse, the two attendants of perfect wisdom remained silent because they knew that the sage was deluded. O *brāhmaṇas*, they returned to their abode and sitting there quietly went on eulogising Śiva. They considered everything as Śiva's will.

Chapter 4

Nārada goes to Vaikuṇṭha and curses Viṣṇu there

The sages said:

1-2. Sūta, O Sūta of great intellect, a wonderful tale has been narrated by you. Blessed indeed is the Māyā of Śiva. All mobile and immobile things depend upon it. When the two attendants of lord Rudra had left at their own will what did the infuriated Nārada, the sage disquieted by Kāmadeva, do?

Sūta said:

3-5. After cursing the two attendants of Śiva suitably, the sage still under the earlier delusion looked into the water and saw that his face was quite normal. It was also due to Śiva's will. He did not wake from the delusion still again due to Śiva's will. Thereupon recollecting that it might have been a deception of Hari, he became unbearably infuriated and went to Viṣṇuloka. There he angrily poured abusive words blazing like kindled fire since his wisdom had vanished due to Śiva's will.

Nārada said:

6. O Viṣṇu, you are extremely wicked, deceptive enchanter of the world. You are unable to brook others' enthusiastic success. You dabble in illusory tactics and your intentions are always dirty.

7. Formerly you assumed the form of an enchantress¹ and showed your deceptive power. You made the demons drink liquor and not the nectar.

8. If out of pity Śiva had not drunk poison², O Viṣṇu, all your illusory tactics would have been quelled since you take pleasure only in deception.

¹It refers to the form assumed by Viṣṇu at the time of cheating the demons of nectar.

²It refers to Śiva's swallowing the poison produced at the churning of the ocean.

9. O Viṣṇu, a deceptive path is extremely attractive to you. You had never been of saintly nature, but the lord made you free from control.

10-11. What is done by Śiva the supreme Ātman does not seem proper. Thinking of your influence and strength when you act independently and seeing the way you go He has now repented. He has announced that a *brāhmaṇa* is superior to all, thereby making the Vedas pronounced by Him authoritative.

12. O Viṣṇu, knowing that, I shall now teach you through that power so that hereafter you will never do such things.

13. You are fearless because till now you have not come into clash with an equally powerful person. Now you will derive, O Viṣṇu, the fruit of your own “deeds”.

14. After saying this, the sage still under the influence of Māyā furiously cursed Viṣṇu, thereby exhibiting the superiority of his brahmanical power.

15-16. O Viṣṇu, the enchanter that you are, you made me distressed for the sake of woman. O Hari, you shall experience misery in that human form which you imitated while proceeding with your deceptive tactics. Your allies will be those whose face you assigned to me.

17. O inflictor of miseries upon others, you shall get the misery of separation from a woman. You shall have the travails of a human being deluded by ignorance.”

18. Thus Nārada, deluded himself by ignorance, cursed Hari. Viṣṇu quietly accepted the cause praising the Māyā of Śambhu.

19. Thereafter Śiva, of great divine sport withdrew his enchanting Māyā whereby Nārada became wise (as before) and free from delusion.

20-21. When the Māyā vanished he became as intelligent as before regaining perfect knowledge and becoming free from distress. He was surprised (at his own action in the meantime). He cursed himself after repenting again and again. He praised the Māyā of Śiva which could enchant even wise people.

22. On realising his mistakes due to illusion, Nārada, the most excellent of the devotees of Viṣṇu, fell at his feet.

23. Consoled by Hari and freed from wicked ideas he said—“Being deluded and evil-minded I have spoken many wicked words to you.

24. O lord, I heaped curses on you. O master, please make them ineffective. I have committed a great sin. Certainly I will be falling into a hell.

25. O Hari, I am your slave. Please direct me what to do whereby I may destroy my sins and prevent my downfall into hell.”

26. Saying thus, the excellent sage once again fell at Viṣṇu’s feet and with the mind purified repented sincerely.

27. Thereupon Viṣṇu lifted him up and spoke affably and courteously.

Viṣṇu said:

“Do not be sorry too much. Undoubtedly you are my true devotee.

28. Dear sage, now listen. I shall tell you what is certainly beneficial to you. You will not fall into hell. Śiva will make you happy.

29. Deluded by your haughtiness you disobeyed the instructions of Śiva. The true bestower of fruits according to the actions, He has given you this result.

30. Be sure in your mind that everything has happened in accordance with Śiva’s wish. That lord Śiva, the supreme lord, removes haughtiness.

31. He is the supreme Brahman; the supreme Ātman, Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. He is free from the three *guṇas*, changes and deviations. He is beyond *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*.

32. He is both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* (with and without attributes). He Himself availing of his own Māyā manifests into three Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśa.

33. In his attributeless pure form He is glorified as Śiva, the supreme Ātman, Maheśvara, the supreme Brahman, the undecaying, the endless, and Mahādeva.

34. Serving him, Brahmā becomes the creator and I the sustainer of the worlds. He himself in the manifestation as Rudra is the annihilator always.

35. Different from Māyā, the pure Being in the form of Śiva is the Sākṣin (cosmic witness) and moving about according to His Will and indulging in divine sport He blesses his devotees.

36. O sage Nārada, please listen to a good remedy that bestows happiness, removes all sins and yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

37. Cast off all your doubts. Sing the songs of noble glory of Śiva. With your mind not turning to anything else, always repeat the hundred names of Śiva and his hymns.

38. By his *japa* all of your sins will perish instantaneously. After saying this to Nārada, Viṣṇu continued mercifully.

39. “O sage, do not be grief-stricken. Nothing has been perpetrated by you. It was Śiva who did everything. There is no doubt in this.

40. It was lord Maheśvara who deluded your splendid intellect and made you suffer on account of love. It was he who made you His mouthpiece and cursed me.

41. In this manner the great Conqueror of Death, Kāla of Kāla, always devoted to the uplift of his devotees, made His own conduct of life manifest in the world.

42. There is no other lord and master so loving and pleasure-inspiring unto me as Śiva. The same Parameśvara bestows all power on me.

43. O sage, perform His adoration. Worship him always. Hear and sing his glory. Perpetually pay Him homage.

44. He who approaches Śiva by means of his body, mind and speech is a great scholar. He is called a living liberated soul.
45. The name Śiva blazing like the forest conflagration reduces mountainous heaps of great sins to ashes without any difficulty. True, it is undoubtedly true.
46. The different kinds of miseries arising from sins shall be destroyed only through the worship of Śiva, and not through other means.
47. He who always seeks refuge in Śiva, O sage, is the real follower of the Vedas, a meritorious soul and a blessed scholar. He must resort to Him by means of his body, speech and mind for ever.
48. The different sacred rites of those who have full faith in the worship of Śiva, the destroyer of Tripura³ become fruitful instantaneously.
49. O great sage, there are not so many sins in the world as the worship of Śiva is capable of destroying.
50. Innumerable heaps of sins like that of the slaughter of a *brāhmaṇa* perish by remembering Śiva. Truth, I am telling you the truth.
51. The sins (that usually cause worldly existence) relating to persons who cross the ocean of worldly existence in the raft of Śiva's names, perish undoubtedly.
52. The sins which are at the root of worldly existence are destroyed certainly by the axe of Śiva's name.
53. Persons scorched and distressed by the conflagration of sins must drink the nectar of Śiva's names. Without that there is no peace and tranquillity to those who are scorched and distressed by the sins' wild fire.
54. Those who are drenched by the downpour of the nectarine names of Śiva are not distressed in the midst of the conflagration of worldly existence. There is no doubt in this.
- 55-56. Immediate salvation can be achieved only by the people who have performed penance in various lives. They alone will have devotion for Śiva the cherished consort of Pārvatī. Men who frequently indulge in passions of love and hatred will never have devotion for Śiva.
57. The devotion for Śiva that extends to other deities is futile. It is necessary to be exclusively devoted to Śiva.
58. It is my conviction that salvation is easy of access only to the person who has exclusive and unflinching devotion for Śiva and not for any other.
59. Even if he commits endless sins, he will be freed from them all, if he has true devotion for Śiva. There is no doubt about it.

³Śiva is called Tripurāri (the enemy of Tripura) because he killed the demon, Tripura, who presided over the three cities built for the *dānavas* by Māyā etc. after having burnt down the cities along with the demons inhabiting them.

60. Just as trees in the forest are reduced to ashes in the wild fire so also the sins of the devotees of Śiva are burnt away in the fire of Śiva's name.
61. He who is ever devoted to the worship of Śiva with his body purified by the ash, definitely crosses the terrible and endless expanse of the ocean of worldly existence.
62. A man serving the three-eyed⁴ Śiva is never sullied by sins even if he misappropriates a *brāhmaṇa*'s wealth or kills many *brāhmaṇas*.
63. After going through all the Vedas this has been definitely concluded by ancestors that the sole means of destroying worldly existence is the worship of Śiva.
64. From now onwards you shall always worship lord Śiva who is Sāmba and Sadāśiva, with care, effort and due observance of the rules of procedure.
65. Dusting profusely and carefully your body from head to foot with the particles of ashes, you shall perform the *japa* of the six-syllabled mantra⁵ of Śiva, well-known in all the Vedas.
66. You shall wear on the different parts of your body *rudrākṣa* beads pleasing to Śiva, repeating the respective mantras with devotion and observing the rules of procedure.
67. Listen to Śiva's anecdotes for ever. Narrate the stories of Śiva always. Strenuously worship the devotees of Śiva again and again.
68. Without blundering ever seek refuge in Śiva, because a perpetual worship of Śiva bestows bliss.
69. Bearing the lotus-like feet of Śiva within your pure heart, carry on at first the pilgrimage to various holy centres of Śiva, O excellent sage.
70. Observing the unrivalled greatness of Śiva, the supreme Ātman, O sage, you must next go to Ānandavana which is a great favourite of Śiva.
71. Seeing Śiva, the lord of the universe there, worship Him with devotion. After bowing to him and eulogising Him you will become free from all doubts.
72. Thereafter you must go to Brahmāloka, O sage, to achieve your wishes. That is my command to you out of love.
73. O sage, after bowing to and specifically eulogising your father Brahmā, you shall ask him many points regarding Śiva's greatness with an endearing mind.
74. Brahmā, the foremost among the devotees of Śiva, will narrate to you the greatness of Śiva as well as the hymn of hundred names, out of love.
75. O sage, from now onwards become a devotee of Śiva, solely devoted to Śiva. You will be liberated. Śiva will grant you his special blessings".
76. After advising the sage thus, Viṣṇu was pleased. Remembering, saluting and eulogising Śiva he vanished from that place.

⁴Śiva is called Virūpākṣa 'odd-eyed', because he is represented as having three eyes: two on either side of the nose and one on the forehead.

⁵The six-syllabled mantra is "oṃ namaśśivāya"

Chapter 5

Nārada goes to Kāśī

Sūta said:

1. O *brāhmaṇas*, when Viṣṇu vanished, the excellent sage Nārada roamed over the Earth seeing Śiva *liṅgas* (in the various holy centres) with piety.
2. In the course of his wanderings over the Earth, O *brāhmaṇas*, with his mind full of devotional pleasure he saw many forms of Śiva that confer worldly pleasures and salvation on the devotees.
3. On knowing that Nārada of divine vision was wandering over the Earth, the two attendants of Śiva approached him who by that time had become pure in mind.
4. They bowed to him and touched his feet. With a desire to secure release from the curse they spoke to him respectfully.

The attendants of Śiva said:

5. O celestial sage, son of Brahmā, please hear our words. We who formerly offended you are really not *brāhmaṇas*.
- 6-7. O brahmanical sage, we, your former offenders, are the attendants of Śiva. Induced by Śiva you had cursed us when your mind was deluded by the illusory infatuation for the princess at the *svayaṃvara*. Realising that the occasion was inopportune we kept quiet then.
8. We reaped the fruit of our own action. No one is to be blamed for it. O lord, be pleased. Bless us now.

Sūta said:

9. On hearing the words of the attendants uttered with devotion and respect, the sage replied lovingly, repenting (for his previous fury).

Nārada said:

10. O attendants of Lord Śiva, most worthy of the respect of good people, please listen to my words now free from delusion. They are true and shall make you happy.

11. Formerly my mind had been depraved. Certainly it was Śiva's will. In that state of delusion and crookedness of the mind I had unfortunately cursed both of you.

12. What I have said is bound to happen. Still, O Gaṇas (attendants) listen. I shall tell you the way of redemption from the curse. Please forgive my sin now.

13-14. You will be born as demons from the semen virile of a great sage and due to his power you will secure the commanding position of the king of demons endowed with prosperity, strength and valorous exploits. You will rule over whole of the universe as devotees of Śiva with your sense conquered. You will gain your former position after courting death at the hands of a manifestation of Śiva.

Sūta said:

15. On hearing these words of the noble-souled Nārada, the two attendants of Śiva became delighted and went back to their abode joyfully.

16. Nārada too was delighted. Meditating exclusively on Śiva he continued his wanderings over the Earth seeing the various holy centres of Śiva personally.

17-18. Reaching Kāśī that excelled all other cities in holiness, which is a favourite resort of Śiva, which easily bestows the favour of Śiva and which is identical with Śiva, the sage became contented. He saw Śiva, the lord of Kāśī and worshipped Him with very great pleasure and love.

19. While staying at Kāśī, the excellent sage became contented; he bowed to the lord, described his glory piously, and remembered him with the flutter of love.

20. Nārada then went to the region of Brahmā, his mind being highly purified by remembering Śiva. He was eager to know further the principles of Śiva.

21. There he bowed to Brahmā with devotion and eulogised him with various prayers. With his mind riveted to Śiva he asked him the good principles of Śiva.

Nārada said:

22-23. O Brahmā, knower of the form of Brahman, O Pitāmaha, the lord of the universe, by your grace I have heard the greatness of Viṣṇu entirely and also the path of devotion, of knowledge, of austere penance, of charitable gifts and of holy centres.

24. But I have not understood the principle of Śiva. Hence, O lord, please explain the rules of His worship and also the various activities of the lord.

25. O dear sage, how can Śiva who is free from attributes become full of attributes? Since I am deluded by Śiva's Māyā, I do not know the principle of Śiva.

26. How did Śiva remain in His pure form before Creation? In the middle of creation how does He sport about?

27. At the time of dissolution how does He remain? How is He, the benefactor of the world, propitiated?
28. O Brahmā, when propitiated what benefit does He bestow on His devotees and on others? Please satisfy me on all these enquiries
29. I have heard that the lord becomes delighted immediately. The merciful Great God cannot bear the stress and strain of His devotees.
30. The three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa are born as parts of Śiva. Maheśa, having all the parts of Śiva, is Śiva Himself.
31. Please tell me all about His manifestation and especially His exploits. O lord, please narrate the manifestation of Umā and her marriage.
32. Their domestic life, especially their great divine sports and other things which are worthy of mention should be narrated to me, O sinless one.
33. Pārvatī's birth and her marriage as well as Guha's birth shall be narrated in detail, O lord of people.
34. O lord of universe, this I have heard from many, before, but I am not satisfied. Hence I have sought refuge in you. Please have mercy on me.
35. On hearing these words of Nārada his own son, Brahmā, the grandfather of the world, said this.

Chapter 6

Description of the nature of Mahāpralaya and the origin of Viṣṇu

Brahmā said:

1. O *brāhmaṇa*, foremost among the celestial beings, a good matter has been enquired into by you rendering service to the worlds and desiring their benefit.
2. I shall explain to you the wholesome and salutary 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 create, in the course of its own sport, an auspicious form of its own endowed with all power, qualities and knowledge.
- 16-18. A form that goes everywhere, that has all forms, that sees all, that is the cause of all, that should be respected by all, that is at the beginning of all, that bestows everything, and that sanctifies everything should be created (So it wished) and hence created that form of Īśvara of pure nature. The original Being without a second, with neither beginning nor end, that illuminates everything, that is in the form of *cit* (pure knowledge), that which is termed Supreme Brahman, the all-pervasive and undecaying, vanished, the manifest form of the formless Being is Sadāśiva. Scholars of the ancient and succeeding ages have sung of it as Īśvara.
19. Īśvara though alone, then created the physical form Śakti from his body. This Śakti did not affect his body in any way.
20. This Śakti is called by various names. Pradhāna, Prakṛti, Māyā, Guṇavatī, Parā. The mother of Buddhi Tattva (The cosmic Intelligence), Vikṛtivarjitā (without modification).
21. That Śakti is Ambikā, Prakṛti and the goddess of all. She is the prime cause and the mother of the three deities.
22. She has eight arms. Her face wears a peculiar splendour, the splendour of a thousand moons. Thousands of stars perpetually sparkle round her face.
23. She is bedecked in various ornaments. She has various weapons. She is capable of various movements. Her eyes beam like a full blown lotus.
24. She has a brilliance which could hardly be conceived. She is the generating cause of all. She sprang up singly as Māyā. In her union she manifested in various forms.
25. The supreme Puruṣa is Śiva. He is called Śambhu. He has no other lord over Him. He holds the Mandākinī (Gaṅgā) on His head, and the crescent moon on His forehead. He has three eyes.
26. He has five faces. He is always joyful. He has ten arms. He holds the trident. He is as pure and white as camphor. His body is entirely dusted with the ash.

27. That Brahman of the form of Kāla (Time) together with Śakti, simultaneously created the holy centre called Śivaloka.
28. The same is called Kāśikā, the excellent holy centre. It is the seat of salvation shining over and above everything.
29. The holy centre is of the nature of extreme Bliss inasmuch as the primordial lovers, supremely Blissful, made that beautiful holy centre their perpetual abode.
30. O sage, that holy centre is never, even at the time of Great Dissolution, free from Śiva and Śivā (Śakti). Hence it is called Avimukta.
31. Since the holy centre is the cause of Bliss, the Pināka-bearing lord (Śiva) called it “the blissful forest” and later “Avimukta”.
32. O celestial sage, the blissful, two deities thus sporting in the forest wished, it is said, for another Being to be created.
- 33-38. Śiva thought within Himself like this—“Another being shall be created by me. Let him create everything, protect it and in the end let him dissolve it with my blessing. Having entrusted everything to him we two, remaining in Kāśī shall roam as we please keeping only the prerogative of conferring salvation. We can stay happily in this blissful forest being free from worries (of creation). With the consent of Śiva the supreme lord spread the liquorine essence of nectar on His left side, on the tenth limb, nectar which was the outcome of churning the ocean of His mind wherein thoughts were the waves, the *sattva guṇa* was the precious gem, *rajas* being coral and *tamas*—crocodile. Thereupon a person came into being who was the most charming one in the three worlds, who was calm with *sattva guṇa* being prominent, and who appeared to be the ocean of immeasurable majesty.
39. O sage, he was endowed with patience. There was no one comparable to him. He had the lustre of sapphire. He was glorious with his excellent eyes shining like a lotus.
40. He was having a golden form and features. He wore two excellent silk garments of golden colour. His were brown and brilliant. He was indefatigable.
41. He bowed to Śiva Parameśvara and said—“O lord give me names and assign me my task.”
42. On hearing it Lord Śiva laughed. With words thunderlike in resonance, Lord Śiva addressed the person thus.
- Śiva said:
43. “You will be famous as Viṣṇu by name as you are all-pervasive. You will have many other names conferring happiness on devotees.
44. Perform penance highly conducive to the achievement of the matter in hand, be firm in it.” Saying so, the lord bestowed on him the Vedas through his nostrils.

45. Śiva vanished accompanied by Śakti and his attendants. After due obeisance to Śiva, Viṣṇu began his great penance.
46. Even after performing the penance for twelve thousand divine years, Viṣṇu could not achieve his desire, the vision of Śiva that confers everything.
47. He became suspicious and respectfully meditating on Śiva pondered “What shall I do now?”
48. In the meantime the auspicious voice of Śiva was heard. “Perform penance again for removing your doubts”.
49. On hearing it Viṣṇu performed a terrible penance, for a long time, following the path of meditation.
50. That Being Viṣṇu became enlightened, following the path of meditation. He was delightfully surprised. “O what is that true entity?”
51. From the body of Viṣṇu who thus exerted himself, water-currents of various sorts began to flow as a result of Śiva’s Māyā.
52. O great sage, the Supreme Brahman in the form of divine waters pervaded the entire void. A mere contact with the same is destructive of sins.
53. Viṣṇu, the weary person went to sleep amidst the waters. He was in that blissful state of delusion for a long time.
54. As approved in the Vedas, his name came to be established as Nārāyaṇa (Having water as abode). Excepting for that Primordial Being there was nothing then.
55. In the meantime, the principles too were evolved out of the Great soul. O wise one of great intellect, listen to my enumeration of the same.
56. From *prakṛti* came into being the *mahat* (cosmic intellect), from *mahat* the three *guṇas*. *Ahaṁkāra* (the cosmic ego) arose there from in three forms according to the three *guṇas*¹.
57. The Essences, the five elements, the senses of knowledge and action too came into being then.
- 58-59. O most excellent of sages, I have thus enumerated the principles. All these principles originating from *prakṛti* are insentient but not the Puruṣa. These principles are twenty-four in number². Viṣṇu, the Puruṣa, accepted all these, as was the will of Śiva, and began his sleep in the Brahman.

¹The Ego (*ahaṁkāra*) is threefold according to the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. In the present enumeration it is counted as one.

²A group of 24 *tattvas* includes intellect (*buddhi*), ego (*ahaṁkāra*), *manas* (mind), five elements (*bhūtas*), five subtle elements (*tanmātras*), five senses of action (*karmendriyas*) and five senses of knowledge (*jñānendriyas*) and unmanifest *prakṛti* (i.e., *pradhāna*). Puruṣa stands apart from the *tattvas*. The enumeration follows the Sāṃkhya system.

Chapter 7

The dispute between Brahmā and Viṣṇu

Brahmā said:

1. When lord Nārāyaṇa continued to sleep, an excellent lotus of huge size came out of his navel as desired by Śiva.
2. It was many *yojanas* wide and high. It had an endless stalk. The pericarp was of a brilliant hue.
3. It was very beautiful with the brilliance of ten million suns. It was wonderful, excellent and worthy of vision containing *tattvas*.
4. Exerting himself as before, Śiva, the great lord, with Pārvatī as his better half created me from His right limb.
5. O sage, having deluded me with His illusion immediately, Śiva in the course of His sport, produced me through the umbilical lotus of Viṣṇu.
6. Thus it was that I came to be known as Lotus-born and conceived in a golden womb. I had four faces, red complexion and *tripuṇḍra*-marked forehead.
7. Deluded by His illusion and weakened in knowledge, O dear one, I did not know who the progenitor of my body was, other than the lotus.
8. “Who am I? Whence did I come? What is my duty? To whom was I born a son? By whom have I been created?”
- 9-11. My intellect became confused with these doubts. Then I thought “Why shall I be under delusion? It is easy to gain that knowledge. The place of growth of this lotus is below. My progenitor will undoubtedly be there.” Thinking thus I descended from the lotus. O sage, for a hundred years the downward trend continued.
12. The source of the lotus was not attained by me. In the doubt-tormented state I became eager to go up on to the top of the lotus.

13. O sage, I climbed up to the lotus by the stalk. But the upper part of the lotus I could not reach. I was disappointed.
14. Another hundred years elapsed in my wandering up the lotus. I stopped a while in that confounded state.
15. Then, O sage, by the will of Śiva, an auspicious voice “Perform Penance” was heard from the sky which dispelled my delusion.
16. On hearing the voice of the sky I exerted myself for twelve years in performing a terrible penance in order to see my progenitor.
17. At the same time, the four-armed lord Viṣṇu of beautiful eyes suddenly appeared before me in order to bless me.
18. The great lord was holding the conch, the discus, the mace and the lotus in his hands. He was wearing the yellow silken cloth and had cloud-blue complexion all over his body.
19. He had a crown. He was bedecked in great ornaments. His lotus-like face beamed with pleasure. Such was the lord resembling ten million Cupids that I saw still not out of delusion.
- 20-21. At the sight of that beautiful form I was struck with wonder. On seeing the four-armed Nārāyaṇa, shining like Kāla, of golden hue, the immanent soul of all in that form, of large arms depicting the *sat* and *asat* in Himself I became delighted.
22. Deluded by the illusion of Śiva, the sportive lord, I could not recognise my progenitor in him. I addressed him with delight.
23. “Who are you? Please tell me”, saying this I tried to wake the Eternal Being. [When he did not wake up] I tried to wake him up with fiercer and firmer beatings of the hand.
24. Then the lord who had self-control woke up from his bed and sat. He looked up with his pure eyes resembling a wet lotus, due to sleep.
25. As I stood there quietly, the lord Viṣṇu spread his brilliance over me. Standing up he smiled once and spoke these sweet words.
26. Viṣṇu said:—“Welcome, welcome to you, dear child, O Pitāmaha of great brilliance. Do not be afraid. Undoubtedly I shall confer on you all that you desire.
27. O foremost among gods, on hearing these words uttered with a smile I told Viṣṇu with my inimical attitude roused by the *rajoguṇa*.
- Brahmā said:
28. “O faultless one, how is it that you speak of me trivially as “Dear child”, me who am the cause of annihilation of everything, as a preceptor addresses his disciple?
- 29-30. “I am the creator of worlds, the direct activiser of *prakṛti*, unborn, the eternal, all-pervasive Brahmā. I am born of Viṣṇu. I am the soul of universe, the originator, creator, and the lotus-eyed. You must explain to me quickly why you speak like this.

31. The Vedas speak of me invariably as self-born, unborn, all-pervasive, grandfather, self-governed and the excellent supreme Being.

32-35. On hearing these words of Hari, the lord of Lakṣmī became angry and told me thus:

Viṣṇu said:

“I know you as the creator of the world. For the sake of creation and support you are descended from my undecaying limbs. You have forgotten me, who am a lord of universe, abiding in waters the salubrious, the supreme soul, invoked by many, praised by many, all-pervasive, imperishable, ruler, the source and origin of universe, the longarmed and the omnipresent lord. There is no doubt in this that you are born of the lotus from my umbilicus.

36. “Of course, it is not your fault. I have exercised my power of illusion over you. O four-faced one, listen to the truth. I am the lord of all Gods.

37. “I am the creator, sustainer and destroyer. There is no powerful person equal to me. O Pitāmaha, I am the supreme Brahman, the greatest Truth.

38-39. “I am the greatest light. I am the great Ātman. I am the omnipresent. O four-faced one, whatever in seen or heard today in the whole universe, whether mobile or immobile is enveloped by me. It was I who created the twenty-four manifest Tattvas.

40. “I have created the atoms. I have created the qualities of anger, fear *etc.* Powerful and sportive I have created their parts and limbs.

41. “I have created the Intellect and the threefold ego therein. I have evolved the five subtle elements, the mind, the body and the sense-organs.

42. I have created the elements ether *etc.* and all created beings out of sheer sport. Realising this, O Brahmā, the lord of subjects, seek refuge in me.

43. “I shall certainly protect you from all miseries.”

Brahmā said:

On hearing these words, I, proud of being Brahmā, became angry. Being deluded by illusion in a threatening attitude I asked him “Who are you?”

44. “Why do you talk so much? Your words will bring up disaster. You are neither the lord, nor the supreme Brahman. There must be a creator of yours.”

45. Deluded by the illusion created by Śiva the great lord, I fought a terrific battle with Viṣṇu.

46. Inimical to each other due to *rajoguṇa*, we fought a fierce battle in the middle of that vast expanse of the sea of dissolution.

47. Meanwhile a phallic image appeared before us in order to enlighten us and to settle out dispute.

48. It had no beginning, middle or end. It had neither decrease nor increase. It was as furious as hundreds of the fire of death with thousands of leaping rows of flames.

49. It was unequalled, inexpressible unmanifest universal Being. The lord Viṣṇu became unconscious by its thousand flames.

50. When I too became senseless, Viṣṇu said to me. Oh, why do you contend with me now? A third person has now come. Let our quarrel cease.

51. Whence has this arisen? Let us examine this fire-Being. I shall go down to find the root of this matchless column of fire.

52. “O lord of subjects, with the speed of the wind you will please go up to examine its top.”

Brahmā continues the story:

53. Having said so, Viṣṇu assumed the form of a Boar. O sage, I became a swan immediately.

54. From that time onwards, people call me Haṃsa-Haṃsa, a supreme Being, Virāṭ, an illustrious being. He who repeats ‘*haṃsahaṃsa*’, shall become a swan (a symbol of purity and discrimination).

55. Very white of complexion and endowed with wings on either side I flew up and up with the speed of the mind and wind.

56-58. Nārāyaṇa, the soul of the universe too, became white then. His body was ten *yojanas* wide and a hundred *yojanas* long, as huge as the mountain Meru. He had white sharp teeth. His brilliance resembled the sun at the time of dissolution. His snort was long and his roar tremendous. His feet were short. His limbs were of diverse colours. His form as the boar was of matchless firmness which assured his eagerness to be victorious, and he went down quickly.

59. For a thousand years his downward course continued. From that time onwards Viṣṇu came to be called “Śvetavārāha” (white boar) in all the worlds.

60. A *kalpa* had elapsed according to human calculation when Viṣṇu thus went down and wandered in his eagerness to come out victorious.

61. The Boar did not find even the smallest trace of the root of the Liṅga. O, destroyer of enemies, I too spent the same time in going up.

62. From a desire to know its top as quickly as possible I exerted myself and was exhausted. Unable to see the top I came down after some time.

63. Similarly, lord Viṣṇu, the lotus-eyed, too became weary. Appearing like the lord of everything in his huge body he too rose up.

64. As soon as he came up, we bowed to Śiva again and again. He stood aside with a gloomy mind as he too was deluded by the illusion of Śiva.

65. We bowed down to Liṅga at His back, sides and in front. He mused within himself “What can this be?”

66. “That form can’t be directly expressed. It is without action and name. Without any sex-distinction it has become a *liṅga*. It is beyond the path of meditation.

67. Both of us, Hari and I, with the peace of our minds, became eager to perform obeisance.

jānīvo na hi te rūpaṃ yo’siyo’si mahāprabho |
namo’stu te maheśāna rūpaṃ darśaya nau tvaran

68. “We do not know Thy true form, what Thou art Thou art, O great lord. Obeisance be to Thee, O Maheśāna. Please hurry up to reveal Thy form to us.”

69. Thus performing obeisance and prayer to quell our earlier pride, O foremost of sages, we spent a hundred autumns therein.

Chapter 8

The description of the body of Śabdabrahman

Brahmā said:

1-2. O most excellent sage, we were eager to have a vision of the lord. Our haughtiness had been curbed. O sage, we waited there patiently. Śiva, the protector of the distressed, remover of the haughtiness of the haughty and the undecaying lord of everything took mercy on us.

3. There arose the sound “Om Om” in the prolated accent¹. It was very clear. The divine sound in the form of a word came out from the most excellent of Gods.

4-5. “What shall be this great sound?” thinking like this I stood perplexed. Viṣṇu who is worthy of respect from all the Gods, who is free from all inimical thoughts, saw with the delightful heart, the eternal being’s manifestation on the right side of the *liṅga*. First, he saw the syllable “A” and he saw the syllable “U” thereafter.

6-10. He saw the syllable “M” in the middle and Nāda (the mystical sound) in the form “Om” in the end. He saw the first syllable on the right like the blazing sphere of the sun. O foremost of sages, thereafter he saw the syllable “U” dazzling like fire. In the middle he saw the syllable “M” glittering like the lunar sphere. Above that what he saw was the supreme Brahman, the greatest refuge. It had the lustre of the pure crystal. It was the pure Being beyond the Fourth (*turiya*), the unsullied and free from extraneous harassment. It was free from mutually clashing opposites. It was single (isolated), void, free from exterior and interior though stationed in the exterior and the interior, devoid of beginning, middle and end, the primordial cause of Bliss, the truth, The Bliss and the Nectar.

11-12. Viṣṇu thus meditated on the universal soul enveloped by the two Vedic sounds and wished to examine the source whence the Fire-column arose and to go deep down the unequalled fiery column. Then there came a sage who told him the essence of the truth.

¹The pluta is a prolated vowel, as in Om, often marked with the figure three (ओ३म्, o3m), as it contains three syllabic instant in pronouncing it.

13. Viṣṇu realised that the sage himself was the great lord and the supreme Brahman embodied in the Śabda Brahman. (*i.e.*, the mystic syllable Om).
14. The Brahman is Rudra free from worries. The words and the mind are incapable of comprehending it; without reaching it they return. It can be expressed by the single-syllabled mantra “Om”.
15. The supreme Brahman, the Truth, the Bliss, the Amṛta, the greatest of the great and the ultimate cause can be expressed by the single-syllabled mantra.
16. The single syllable “A” is the source of the lord Brahmā. The single syllable “U” is the source of Viṣṇu, the ultimate cause.
17. The single syllable “M” is the source of Rudra. The creator is expressed by the letter “A”. The enchanter is expressed by the letter “U”.
18. The being expressed by the letter “M” blesses always. It is all-pervasive and progenitor; the letter “A” is the seed.
19. The being expressed by the letter “U” is Viṣṇu. It is the source, the receptacle, the lord of primordial nature and primordial being, the progenitor, the seed, source and sound. All these constitute Lord Śiva.
20. The progenitor is stationed after dividing itself. From the *liṅga* of the progenitor, the lord, arose the seed—the syllable “A”.
21. The *bīja* being deposited in the *yonī*, the letter “U” began to increase all round. It became a golden egg. It was something known which could not be delineated.
22. The divine egg floated in the waters for many years. Then at the end of a thousand years, it split into two giving birth to Brahmā.
- 23-24. The egg floating in the waters on being hit by Īśvara split into two. The auspicious golden upper lid became the upper region and the lower one became the Earth of five characteristics. From (the inner part of) the egg was born the four-faced lord (Brahmā) expressed by the letter “KA”.
25. He is the creator of all the worlds. He alone is the lord manifesting in three forms. Persons well-versed in the Yajurveda call it Om Om.
26. On hearing the words of the Yajurveda, both the Ṛgveda and the Sāmaveda respectfully called us then Viṣṇu and Brahmā.
27. Then realising the lord of the Gods we eulogised, as far as we could, Lord Śiva, the cause of great achievement.
28. Viṣṇu, the protector of the universe, in the meantime, saw another wonderfully beautiful form, along with me.
- 29-30. On seeing that wonderful form, Viṣṇu and I became satisfied. The form had five faces, ten arms, and a complexion white as camphor, O sage. It had diverse brilliant features. It was

decorated in different ornaments. It was highly liberal and endowed with great prowess. It had all the characteristics of a great man.

31. Thereafter, the lord Śiva was pleased. Revealing his form embedded in letters He laughingly stood before us.

32. The short letter “A” is His head. The long letter “Ā” is His forehead. The letter “I” is His right eye and the letter “Ī” His left eye.

33. The letter “U” is His right ear and the letter “Ū” His left ear. The letter “Ṛ” is the right cheek of that great lord.

34. “Ṝ” is His left cheek. The two letters “Ṝ” “Ṝ̄”, are His nostrils. The letter “E” is His upper lip and the letter “AI” is His lower lip.

35. The letter “O” and the letter “AU” are respectively the two rows of his teeth. The letters “AM̐” and “AḤ” [Anusvāra and Visarga] are his palates.

36. The five letters beginning with KA [*i.e.*, KA, KHA, GA, GHA and ṆA] are His five hands on the right side. The five letters beginning with CA [*i.e.*, CA, CH, JA, JHA and ṆA] are His hands on the left side.

37. Similarly the five letters beginning with ṬA and the five letters beginning with TA constitute His legs. The letter PA is His belly and the letter PHA is His right side.

38. The letter BA is His left side. The letter BHA is His shoulder. The letter MA is the heart of the great yogin Mahādeva.

39. The letters YA, RA, LA, VA, ŚA, ṢA and SA are the seven Dhātus (vital secretions) of the lord. The letter HA is His umbilicus and the letter KṢA is His nose.

40. Viṣṇu and I became contented on seeing this letter-embedded form of the *saguṇa* manifestation of *nirguṇa* lord in the company of Umā.

41. On seeing Lord Śiva in the form of the letter-embedded Brahman, Viṣṇu bowed down along with me and looked up again.

42-47. The mantra beginning with Oṃkāra with its *kalās* five in number, consisting of the auspicious thirty-eight syllables, being pure as crystal, increases intelligence and is an effective medium of accomplishing sacred rites. The mantras in the Gāyatrī metre of twenty-four syllables and having four *kalās* are conducive to enjoyment. The five-syllabled mantra of eight *kalās* consisting of thirty syllables is employed for black magic. Mantras of Yajurveda consisting of twenty-five syllables and eight *kalās* are used for conciliatory purpose. The mantra of thirteen *kalās* consisting of sixty-one syllables is conducive to outcome, increase and destruction.

48-49. The lord Viṣṇu secured these five mantras:—Mṛtyuñjaya mantra, five-syllabled mantra, Cintāmaṇi mantra, Dakṣiṇāmūrti mantra and the “*tattvamasī*” mantra which is Hara’s Mahāvākya. Lord Viṣṇu performed *japa* by means of these mantras.

50-53. The lord Viṣṇu and I being glad at heart eulogised the boon-bestowing lord Śiva with appropriate words,—Śiva who was seen in the form of *kalās*, *varṇas* (syllables), Ṛk, Yajus, Sāman, Īśāna, Īśa, Purātana Puruṣa (the ancient Being), the merciful, pleasing to the heart, hidden from all, ever auspicious, a great deity, of beautiful feet, bedecked with huge serpents, with legs, eyes and hands extending on all sides, the lord of Brahmā, and the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction of the world.

Chapter 9

Description of Śivatattva

Brahmā said:

1. On hearing his own eulogy from the mouth of Viṣṇu, the delighted Śiva, the store-house of kindness, revealed Himself to us along with his consort.

2-3. He had five faces and three eyes, and the crescent moon on his forehead. He wore matted hair. He was white-complexioned and had wide eyes. His body had been dusted with the ashes. He had ten arms. His neck was blue in colour. He was bedecked with all ornaments. He was very handsome with respect to every limb. Three ash-lines marked His forehead.

4. On seeing lord Śiva accompanied by His beautiful consort, Viṣṇu along with me eulogised Him again with appropriate words.

5-6. Śiva, the merciful, who was delighted breathed the Vedas into Viṣṇu and conferred perfect knowledge on him, the secret of the supreme Ātman. O sage, thereafter, out of sympathy, the supreme Ātman conferred these on me too.

7. After receiving the Vedas, Viṣṇu was satisfied and bowing to Him with palms joined in reverence along with me, he asked the lord Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

8. O Lord, How are you propitiated? How shall I worship you, O lord? How shall I meditate on you? How are you impressed by anyone?

9. O Great God, tell us what at Thy bidding shall we ever do? Please command us, O Śiva, do this to favour us.

10. O Great lord, be merciful to tell us all these things. O Śiva, we are your followers. Taking this into mind, you will enlighten us on these and other similar points too.

Brahmā said:

11. On hearing these words, the lord Śiva was delighted. The merciful lord then spoke lovingly.

Śiva said:

12. O foremost among gods, I am delighted by your devotion. Look upon me as a great deity. Cost off all your fears.

13. Worship my *līṅga* and do always meditate upon the form which you see just before you.

14. When I am worshipped in the phallic form I will be delighted and will bestow different benefits upon all people, all that they wish for in their minds.

15. O foremost among the deities, whenever any misery befalls you, it shall be destroyed when my *līṅga* is worshipped.

16. O strong ones, you two are born of my own *prakṛti*, out of my left and right sides. I am the lord of everything.

17. This Brahmā, grandfather for all people, is born of my right side. You, Viṣṇu, are born of my left side. I am the supreme Ātman.

18-19. Delighted I shall confer on you boons and whatever you desire. May your devotion to me be steady. With my permission you can make my form in clay and perform adoration. After rendering different kinds of service like this sensibly you shall attain happiness.

20. O Brahmā, strictly adhering to my direction you carry on the work of creation. Dear child, dear Hari, you shall sustain the mobile and the immobile beings.

Brahmā said:

21. Saying thus, the lord presented to us the auspicious mode of His worship, adored duly by means of which Śiva confers many benefits.

22. On hearing the words of Śiva along with me, Viṣṇu bowed to Śiva with palms joined in reverence and said.

Viṣṇu said:

23. “If you are pleased, if a boon is to be given to us, may our devotion to you be perpetual and unstraying.

24. Although you are Nirguṇa, be pleased to incarnate in the course of your divine sports and help us. Dear lord, you are great lord, the supreme.

25. O lord of lords, even our dispute has turned out to be auspicious, now that you have come here to suppress the same”.

Brahmā said:

26. On hearing these words Śiva told Viṣṇu who stood there with the head bent down and with palms joined in reverence.

Śiva said:

27. Although Nirguṇa, I am Saguṇa too and the author of dissolution, maintenance and creation. I am the supreme Brahman without decay and change. Existence, Knowledge and Bliss are my characteristics.
28. Truly, I am Niṣkala (Nirguṇa) for ever, O Hari. For the activities of creation, maintenance and dissolution I manifest myself in the three forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara, O Viṣṇu.
29. O Viṣṇu, since you, along with Brahmā, have eulogised me and prayed for my incarnation, I shall make that request true, favourably disposed towards my devotees that I am.
30. A great form similar to this, O Brahmā, shall become manifest in the world through your body. He will be called Rudra.
31. His capacity will never be less, since He will be my own part and parcel. He is I. I am he. In the modes of worship too there is no difference.
32. As heat *etc.* in water and other things due to the contact of fire is not permanent in water *etc.*, similarly my Nirguṇa aspect is not affected by the external contact.
33. This form of mine as Śiva is that of Rudra too. O great sage, no one shall make any difference in it.
34. The same form appears split into two in the universe. Hence Śiva and Rudra shall not be considered different.
35. A piece of gold turned into an ornament does not cease to be gold. There may be difference in name but not in the material content.
36. Just as the difference of clay and the various objects made of it is not a material one, so also in this case. The presence of the material cause in the effect can be cited as an example.
37. This shall be known by all scholars and Gods of unsullied knowledge. If you realise this, you will not be seeing the cause of difference.
- 38-39. I think that we all should see the form of Śiva as the basic material. Myself, you, Brahmā and Rudra who will be manifesting himself are of the same form. There is no difference. If there had been difference that would have been bondage. Yet the eternal Śiva-form is mine alone.
40. That pure form is spoken of as the main root, the Truth, the Knowledge, the Endless. Realising this too, it must be meditated upon in the true manner in your mind.
41. O Brahmā, another secret which I am going to unfold to you may be listened to. You two are born of *prakṛti* but not this one (Rudra).
- 42-43. My command is carried to that place through Brahmā's eyebrows. I am therefore spoken of as Tāmasa and Prākṛta, Hara in respect to the *guṇas* alone and shall be known as Vaikārika too which is actually the Ahaṁkāra (the Ego). That is called *tāmasa* only in name and not in reality.

44. For this reason, O Brahmā, this shall be carried out by you. O Brahmā, you shall be the creator and Hari the protector.
45. My would-be part shall be the cause of dissolution. This goddess Umā, Parameśvarī is the *prakṛti*.
46. Her Śakti, the goddess of speech, shall resort to Brahmā. Another Śakti also will be arising out of the *prakṛti*.
47. That Śakti will resort to Viṣṇu in the form of Lakṣmī. Another Śakti Kālī will surely share my part.
48. She will be born in the form of Brilliance for effective work. Thus I have told you of the great auspicious Śaktis of the Goddess.
49. Their activities are respectively creation, maintenance and dissolution. O foremost among Gods, they are the parts of *prakṛti*, my beloved.
- 50-53. O Viṣṇu, you shall carry on your activities with the co-operation of Lakṣmī. O Brahmā, with the cooperation of the goddess of speech, the part of *prakṛti*, you shall carry on joyfully the activity of creation, according to my direction. I shall have the co-operation of Kālī, the part of my beloved, the greatest of the great and shall carry out the excellent activity of dissolution in the form of Rudra. You shall be happy after the creation of the world consisting of the four *varṇa* and their ancillaries—the four *āśramas* (stages of life) and various sorts of other incidental activities. You shall contribute to the welfare of the world making use of your knowledge and perfect wisdom.
- 54-55. O Viṣṇu, be the bestower of salvation too at my bidding. The benefit accruing from your vision will be the same as that from mine. This boon is given to you now. It is the truth, certainly the truth. Viṣṇu is in my heart and I am in Viṣṇu's heart.
56. Those who make any distinction between the two do not know my mind. Viṣṇu is born of my left limb. Brahmā is born of my right limb.
57. Rudra who causes great dissolution and who is the soul of the universe is born of the heart. I manifest in the three forms, O Viṣṇu, known Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Bhava.
58. I am the author of creation, protection and dissolution by the attributes *rajas etc.* But I am different from these *guṇas* and directly beyond *prakṛti* and Puruṣa.
59. I am the supreme Brahman, the eternal, the endless, the perfect and the unsullied. Viṣṇu has *tamas* within but *sattva* outside. He is the protector of the three worlds.
60. Hara who causes dissolution of three worlds has *sattva* within but *tamas* outside.
61. Brahmā who creates the three worlds has *rajas* both within and without. This is the position of the *guṇas* in the three deities. Śiva is spoken of as different from the *guṇas*.
62. O Viṣṇu, guard lovingly this Pitāmaha who is the cause of creation. At my bidding, you will be worthy of respect in the three worlds.

63. Rudra shall be worshipped by you and Brahmā. The author of dissolution of the three worlds is the complete incarnation of Śiva.

64. In the *kalpa* called Pādma, Pitāmaha will be born as your son. Then you will see me. The lotus-born Brahmā shall also see me.

65. After saying this and conferring unequalled mercy, the great lord Hara again spoke lovingly to Viṣṇu.

Chapter 10

Description of Parama Śivatattva

Lord Śiva said:

1. O Viṣṇu of good rites, O Hari, listen to another pronouncement of mine. You will be worthy of honour and worship in all the worlds for ever.
2. Whenever a misery befalls the world created by Brahmā, you shall be eager for the destruction of all miseries.
3. In all difficult and unbearable activities I shall help you. I shall kill your indefatigable and fierce enemies.
4. O Viṣṇu, spread your glory in the worlds far and wide by taking up various incarnations. Strive for their succour. I am always Saguṇa when I become Rudra with this body.
5. Certainly I shall perform your activities for the sake of the worlds if they are impossible for you.
6. You are to be meditated upon by Rudra and Rudra is to be meditated upon by you. There is no difference between you and Rudra.
7. O Great Viṣṇu, your identity is due to inherent nature, the boons conferred and your divine sports. True, it is certainly true.
8. If any devotee of Rudra were to censure you, he will have all his merits reduced to ashes quickly.
9. O Viṣṇu, the most excellent of all persons, by hating you he will certainly fall into hell. That is my directive. True, it is certainly true.
10. In this world, be the bestower of worldly pleasures and salvation to men particularly. Worthy of being honoured and worshipped by devotees, perform the activities of curbing and blessing.
11. Saying this and holding me, the creator, and Viṣṇu by the hand He continued—“Always render help in distress.

12. Be the presiding deity of all. Bestow worldly pleasures and salvation for ever. Be the most excellent accomplisher of the achievement of all desires.
13. You will assume the form of the vital airs in everyone at my bidding. O Hari, in the times of distress, Rudra my manifestation, shall be worshipped.
14. He who has sought refuge in you has certainly sought refuge in me. He who differentiates will certainly fall into Hell.
15. Listen to the span of life of the deities—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara. There shall not be any doubt in this respect.
16. A thousand sets of the four-*yuga* periods constitute one day of Brahmā. The period of night is also similar. Further measurement of time is based on this calculation.
17. Thirty such days (days and nights) constitute one month and twelve months, one year. The span of life of Brahmā is hundred such years.
18. One year of Brahmā constitutes one day of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu lives for hundred years in his own calculation.
19. One year of Viṣṇu constitutes one day of Rudra. When a hundred year period passes, Rudra assumes the form of Nara (supreme Man).
20. He stays like that as long as the breath is retained by Sadāśiva. When He exhales he merges into Śakti.
- 21-22. In the case of all living beings, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Hara, *gandharvas*, serpents, *rākṣasas*, etc., twenty one thousand six hundred respirations constitute the period of one day and one night, O foremost among *devas*.
- 23-24. Six respirations constitute the period of time one *pala*. Sixty such *palas* constitute one *ghaṭī*. Sixty *ghaṭīs* constitute one day and one night. ($6 \times 60 \times 60 = 21\ 600$). There is no limit to the number of respirations of Sadāśiva. Hence He is undecaying.
25. It is my directive that you should preserve this form and maintain all the activities of the created worlds by means of these different *guṇas* so long.”
26. On hearing these words of Śiva the lord Viṣṇu, of controlled senses, spoke slowly to Śiva after duly bowing to Him.
- Viṣṇu said:
27. “O Śankara, the ocean of mercy, the lord of the universe, be pleased to hear. I shall do all these things strictly adhering to your behests.
28. I shall always meditate upon you. I would not act otherwise. Your omnipotency has already been experienced by me.
29. O lord, let not the meditation of your form be ever far removed from my mind even for a moment.

30. O lord, if anyone of my devotees were to censure you, you will please assign perpetual residence in hell to him.
31. O lord, whoever be your devotee shall also be my favourite. He who knows and realises this shall not find salvation inaccessible to him.
32. My greatness has been further heightened by you certainly. If ever I am found deficient in qualities I may be excused.
33. (Brahmā said:—) Then, on hearing the excellent words of Viṣṇu, Śiva said to him “Of course the deficiency shall be excused lovingly.”
34. After saying this mercifully the lord, the ocean of mercy, stroked us all over the body with His hands.
35. With a desire to do what is wholesome to us He instructed us in various sacred rites and conferred on us many boons.
36. Even as we were watching, the lord Śiva, favourably disposed towards devotees, vanished immediately.
37. The rite of the worship of the *līṅga* is instituted ever since in the world. Śiva installed in the *līṅga* bestows worldly pleasures and salvation.
38. The great goddess is the pedestal for the *līṅga*. The *līṅga* is Lord Śiva Himself. Since the whole universe finally merges into in, it is called *Līṅga*.
39. He who reads regularly this anecdote of the *līṅga* in the vicinity of the *līṅga* assumes the form of Śiva within six months. There need be no hesitation in this respect.
40. O great sage, I cannot adequately express the blessedness accruing to the person who carries on any activity whatsoever in the vicinity of the *līṅga*.

Chapter 11

The mode of worshipping Śiva

The sages said:

1. O Sūta the fortunate, O Sūta the disciple of Vyāsa, obeisance be to you. This wonderfully sanctifying story of Śiva has been narrated today.
2. The wonderful and highly divine origin of the *liṅga* has been heard. Listening to its efficacy causes destruction of misery.
3. O store house of mercy, please tell us the mode of the worship of Śiva, in accordance with the conversation of Brahmā and Nārada whereby Śiva becomes satisfied.
4. *Brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* worship Śiva. How shall the worship be performed? Please tell us in accordance with what you have heard from Vyāsa.
5. On hearing their words, Sūta narrated everything in answer to the question of the sages, everything conducive to welfare and in accordance with the Vedas.

Sūta said:

6. O lordly sages, your enquiry covers a very great secret topic. I shall explain it as far as my own intellect can penetrate it and in accordance with what I have heard.
- 7-8. Formerly Vyāsa had asked the same question of Sanatkumāra as you have asked now. Upamanyu learnt it from him. Vyāsa heard it from him and taught me the mode of worship *etc.* of Śiva from a desire for the benefit of all the worlds.
9. It was directly heard from Upamanyu, the noble soul, by Kṛṣṇa (*i.e.*, Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana or Vyāsa). That I shall tell you in the same way as Brahmā had said before.

Brahmā said:

10. O sage Nārada I shall explain briefly the worship of the *liṅga* (the phallic image). It is impossible to explain it in detail even in a hundred years.

11. In order to achieve the fulfilment of all desires one should worship with great devotion the pure and eternal form of Śiva thus.
12. Poverty, sickness, harassment from enemies and the four sorts of sins trouble one only as long as one does not worship Śiva.
13. When Śiva is worshipped, all miseries merge into the lord; all happiness is secured and salvation is attained thereafter.
14. Śiva who secures the achievement of all matters shall be worshipped by the person who considers a continuous series of human pleasures very important.
15. Whether they are *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* or *śūdras*, they shall perform the worship of Śiva duly and regularly for the achievement of all desired objects.
- 16-18. One shall get up early in the morning during the *brāhma muhūrta* ¹ (about an hour before dawn). He shall remember the preceptor and Śiva. O sage, he shall then remember the holy centres and meditate on Hari. Thereafter he shall remember me, the deities and the sages. Then he shall recite a prayer in the name of Śiva duly. Then he shall get up and evacuate his bowels in southern quarter.
19. The evacuation of the bowels shall be done in an isolated place. What I have heard (in this respect) I am mentioning now. O sage, please listen attentively.
20. A *brāhmaṇa* shall use earth for cleaning purposes five times; a *kṣatriya* for four times and a *vaiśya* for three times.
21. A *śūdra* shall use the earth twice for cleaning purposes. Or he shall cleanse the rectum once and the penis once assiduously.
22. He shall then wash the left hand ten times. He shall then wash each of the feet seven times and both the hands three times once again.
23. Women shall perform these cleansing activities with earth like *śūdras*. They shall first wash the hands and feet, then make use of the earth as before.
24. They shall clean the teeth using the tooth brush twig according to their castes.
- 25-26. The tooth brush twig of a *brāhmaṇa* shall be twelve *aṅgulas* long. A king (a *kṣatriya*) shall take one eleven *aṅgulas* long and a *vaiśya* one ten *aṅgulas* long. The tooth brush of a *śūdra* shall be nine *aṅgulas* in length. This is in accordance with Smṛtis. What is enjoined by Manu shall be disobeyed only in emergencies.
27. On *ṣaṣṭī* (sixth), *navamī* (ninth) and new-moon days, on sundays and days of sacred rites and *śrāddhas*, cleaning the teeth with tooth-brush twig is prohibited.
28. The daily ablutions shall be performed duly and those in holy centres shall be performed with mantras in accordance with the time and place.

¹ It is the period between the fourth and the second *ghaṭikas* before sunrise. “*rātriśca paścime yāme muhūrto brāhmaṇa ucyate*”

29. Performing the *ācamana* first, wearing washed cloth, he shall perform the *sandhyā* prayer in a good isolated place.
30. After observing the preliminaries duly he shall enter the chamber of worship keeping the mind steady and begin the rites of worship.
31. Sitting on a good seat and performing *nyāsa* etc. in accordance with the prescribed rules of worship, he shall perform the worship of Śiva duly.
32. Gaṇeśa, the attendants at the threshold of the temple, the guardians of the quarters etc., shall be worshipped and thereafter the pedestal shall be arranged.
- 33-36. Or he shall make the mystical diagram of the lotus of eight petals and install Śiva in its middle. He himself shall sit near all the materials of worship around him. He shall perform *ācamana* thrice and wash the hands. He shall then perform suppression of breath (*prāṇāyāma*) thrice. Then *tryambaka* (three-eyed Śiva) shall be meditated upon in the following manner. The deity has five faces, ten arms, all kinds of ornaments and the tiger-hide as His upper-cloth. He is as pure as the crystal. During meditation he shall identify himself with Śiva and burn off his sins. Having thus created the form of Śiva in meditation, he shall worship lord Śiva.
37. Then the ritualistic purification of the body by touching the various parts of the body with holy water shall be performed. The *nyāsa* of the *mūlamantra* (the root mantra) and that of the six *aṅgas* with *praṇava* (Omkāra) shall be performed thereafter.
38. After ritualistically touching the heart, he shall start worship. Different vessels shall be set apart for *pādya* (water for washing the feet), *arghya* (water for the reception of the guest) and *ācamana* (sipping water).
- 39-40. Nine vessels of different sizes should be kept by the sensible devotee. *darbha* grass shall be spread and cool water sprinkled over these vessels with *darbha* grass. Reciting the *omkāra*, the intelligent devotee shall sprinkle the various materials of worship.
- 41-42. The fragrant root of the plant *uśīra* and sandal paste shall be put in the water for washing feet. Fine powders of *jātī*, *kaṃkola*, *karpūra*, root of *vaṭa* and *tamālaka* should be put in the water intended for sipping. Sandal powder shall be put in all these nine vessels.
43. Nandīśa, the divine Bull of Śiva shall be worshipped beside the lord Śiva. The latter shall be worshipped with scents, incense and different lamps.
- 44-47. The *liṅga* shall be purified and installed with various mantras beginning with *praṇava* and ending with *namaḥ* (obeisance). The pedestal in the form of *svastika* or lotus shall be assigned with *praṇava*. In the eight petals, in the eight quarters, the eight achievements are identified viz. —The eastern petal is *aṇimā* (minuteness), the southern is *laghimā* (lightness), the western is *mahimā* (greatness) the northern is *prāpti* (power of reaching), the south-eastern is *prākāmya* (power of sufficiency), the south-western is *īśitva* (lordliness); the north-western is *vaśitva* (power of control), the north-eastern is *sarvajñatva* (omniscience) and the pericarp is the moon (Soma).

48. Beneath the moon is the sun and beneath that is the fire. *Dharma etc.* are beneath that. All these shall be assigned regularly.

49-50. In the four quarters *avyakta etc.* the unmanifest principle and in the end of Soma the three *guṇas* shall be assigned. Lord Śiva shall be invoked by the formula “I am addressing Sadyojāta”². Then the devotee shall repeat *vāmadeva*³ mantra and stand on his seat. The *sānnidhya* rite shall be performed with *rudra gāyatrī*⁴ mantra and the rite of *nirodha* shall be performed with *aghora*⁵ mantra.

51. Rudra shall be worshipped with the mantra *iśānaḥ sarvavidyānām*⁶, *pādyā*, *ācamanīya* and *arghya* shall be offered duly.

52. Rudra shall be duly bathed with water, scented with sandal in the same manner as with *pañcagavya* after taking it in a vessel duly instilled with mantras.

53. Then the deity shall be bathed invoking *praṇava* with cow’s milk, curds, honey and sugar-cane juice.

54. Worshipping Rudra who bestows everything that is wholesome and desirable with ghee, the devotee shall perform the *abhiṣeka* with all materials of worship reciting *praṇava*.

55. In the holy vessels full of water he shall pour water reciting various mantras after straining it with a white cloth duly.

56. The sprinkling need not be performed until sandal paste is mixed. Then raw rice grains made beautiful (by adding turmeric powder *etc.*) shall be offered joyously to Śaṅkara.

57-58. Offerings of flowers, especially white flowers and rare flowers, shall be made to Lord Śiva. Flowers of *apāmārga*, *karpūra*, *jātī*, *campaka*, *kuśa*, *pāṭala*, *karavīra*, *mallikā*, *kamala* (lotus) and *utpalas* (lilies) of various sorts shall be used. When water is poured it shall be poured in a continuous stream.

59. Vessels of different varieties shall be used for the ceremonial ablution of Lord Rudra. A worship performed with due recitation of mantras bestows all benefits.

60. O dear one, I shall tell you briefly those mantras for the sure achievement of all cherished desires. Please listen attentively.

61-65. Offerings of flowers and water ablutions shall be made with these mantras whether caused to be read or committed to memory and orally repeated—The Rudra mantra, Nīlarudra mantra, Śukla Yajurveda mantras, auspicious Hotṛ mantras, Atharvaśīrṣa mantras, Śānti mantras, Maruta mantras, Sāmaveda mantras, if desired, Devavrata mantras, Rathantara

² *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* (of *Śuklayajurveda*) 29.36.

³ TA. 10.41.1.

⁴ *Kāthaka-saṃhitā* 17.11.

⁵ *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* (of *Śuklayajurveda*) 16.2.

⁶ *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* (of *Śuklayajurveda*) 27.35.

mantras with Puṣpa Sūktas, Mṛtyuñjaya ⁷ mantras and the five-syllabled mantra. The water offerings shall be a thousand times or hundred and eight times. They shall be offered strictly in accordance with Vedic injunctions or by repeating the names of the deity.

66. Sandal paste shall be applied to the deity and flowers placed over the idol. Sweet smelling cloves *etc.* shall be offered with *praṇava*.

67-72. *Śivaliṅga* shall be worshipped next. The lord as pure as crystal, the unsullied, the undecaying, the cause of all worlds, the supreme lord identifying with the created world, the lord who cannot be seen by Brahmā, Indra, Upendra, Viṣṇu and other deities, the lord who is mentioned in the Vedānta by those who know Vedas as the Incomprehensible, the lord who has no beginning, middle or end, the panacea for all sick patients and who is renowned as Śiva Tattva. The worship of the *liṅga* shall be performed, by *praṇava* mantra alone. Incense, lamps, *naivedyas*, good betel leaves, pleasant *nirājana* (waving of lights) shall be duly offered. Prayers, obeisance *etc.* with various mantras shall be performed. *Arghya* and flower offerings shall be made at the foot. The devotee shall kneel down and devoutly pray to the lord.

73. The devotee shall take some flowers in his hands, stand up with palms joined in reverence and repeating the following mantra shall pray again to Īśāna, Śaṅkara:

*ajñānādyadi vā jñānājjapapūjādikaṃ mayā
kṛtaṃ tadastu saphalaṃ kṛpayā tava śaṅkara*

74. O Śiva, may this *japa*, *pūjā* *etc.* performed by me with or without the requisite knowledge be fruitful, thanks to Thy grace.

75-76. After repeating the above mantra he shall place the flowers joyously over the *śivaliṅga*. Then the rites of *svastyayana*⁸, *āśīrvāda* (benediction), *mārjana* shall be performed. Then Homage, a prayer for forgiveness and *ācamana* shall be performed.

77-78. Repeating the *agha*⁹ mantras for the expiation of sins *namaskāra* shall be duly performed. He shall pray with devout feelings:

*śive bhaktiśśive bhaktiśśive bhaktirbhava bhava
anyathā śaraṇaṃ nāsti tvameva śaraṇaṃ mama*

“Devotion to Śiva, devotion to Śiva, devotion to Śiva in every birth. I have no other refuge. You alone are my refuge.”

79. After praying thus to the lord of the Gods, the bestower of all achievements, the devotee shall loudly pray.

⁷Vājasaneyisaṃhitā (of Śuklayajurveda) 3.60.

⁸Ibid. 1.86.6.

⁹Ibid. 20.29.

80. He shall then perform *namaskāra* along with the members of his family. He shall feel delighted in all these and thereafter carry on his daily routine according to convenience.

81. He who performs the worship regularly like this with great devotion to Śiva shall achieve success at every step.

82-83. He will become eloquent. He will achieve all he desires. The Supreme lord Śiva will quell all his miseries, ailments, sorrows, heart-burns, crookedness, poisonings and everything distressing quickly.

84. Just as the moon waxes in the bright half, his joy and merits shall increase day by day certainly by the worship of Śiva.

85. O foremost among sages, thus I have told you the mode of worship of Śiva. O Nārada what else do you wish to hear?

Chapter 12

Consideration of the essential and the non-essential in the worship

Nārada said:

1. O dear father Brahmā, with your mind fixed on Śiva, you are blessed indeed. Please explain this again still more precisely.

Brahmā said:

2. I, the lotus-born, once called together all the sages and all the Gods and addressed them lovingly with these good words.

3. If you have faith in permanent happiness, if you desire the achievement of the same, all of you shall come along with me to the shores of the milk-ocean. ¹

4. On hearing these words they accompanied me to the place where lord Viṣṇu, the benefactor of everyone, was stationed.

5. O sage, on reaching the place, the Gods bowed down with palms joined in reverence and prayed to the lord of the universe Janārdana, lord of the Gods.

6. On seeing Brahmā and other deities standing there, Viṣṇu remembered the lotus-like feet of Śiva and spoke these noble words.

Viṣṇu said:

7. “Why have you all, Brahmā and others and the celestial sages come? What is the matter now? Please tell me lovingly.”

Brahmā said:

¹ According to the Paurāṇic concept, the turbulent and foamy sea known as the southern China Sea which surrounds Śākadvīpa (identified with Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Southern China) on three sides was called ‘the sea of milk’ or Kṣīra Samudra: cp. SM. Ali: *Geography of the Purāṇas*.

8. On being asked thus by Viṣṇu as well as by me, the deities bowed to Him with devotion and said.

The *devas* said:

9. “Whose worship shall we perform regularly for the removal of misery?”

10. On hearing these words, the lord favourably disposed to the devotees, spoke as follows favouring me and the *devas*.

The lord said:

11. O Brahmā, hear. You and these *devas* have already heard this. Yet I shall repeat it to you and to the *devas*.

12-13. It has been seen. It is being seen. Then why is it being asked now? O Brahmā, Lord Śiva, the destroyer of all miseries, shall be served always by all who wish to achieve things. He Himself has told me as well as Brahmā particularly about this.

14. His worship shall never be forsaken by those who wish to attain happiness. A wonderful example has been narrated to and seen by you all.

15. When they abandoned worshipping the lord of the *devas*—Maheśvara in the form of the Liṅga, the sons of Tāra² along with their kinsmen perished.

16. They had been enchanted by me. By my illusion they were driven far by me. When they were devoid of Śiva, they were all destroyed and exterminated.

17. Hence Śiva in the form of phallic image shall be worshipped always. He, the foremost among deities, shall be served with special faith.

18. It is by the worship of the *liṅga* of Śiva that all good men, *devas*, daityas, I and you, O Brahmā, are sustained. How is it that it was forgotten by you?

19. Hence, O Brahmā, His *liṅga* shall be regularly worshipped whatever may be the aim. Śiva shall be worshipped whatever the desire may be.

20. If an hour or even a moment is spent without the worship of Śiva, it is a loss. It is an imperfection, a great foible, blindness, stupidity and foolishness.

21. Those who are devotedly attached to Śiva, those whose minds are turned towards Śiva and those who constantly remember Śiva, never become victims of misery.

22-24. Those who desire magnificent buildings, beautiful ornaments, beautiful women, wealth to satiety, sons and grandsons, health, splendid body, extraordinary status, heavenly happiness and final salvation or profound devotion to the great lord shall duly worship Śiva by virtue of their merit accumulated by them.

²Tāraputras—the children of Daitya Tāraka who was conquered by Indra with the help of Skanda—the son of Śiva. The episode is the central theme of Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhava.

25. Sure success will be his who regularly worships Śiva *liṅga* with great devotion. He will never be afflicted by sins.

Brahmā said:

26. Thus exhorted, the *devas* knelt before Viṣṇu and requested for *liṅga* for the achievement of the desires of all people.

27. O foremost among sages, then, on hearing the request, Viṣṇu, eager for the uplift of all living beings, told Viśvakarman. I too told him.

28. “O Viśvakarman, at my bidding, Śiva’s auspicious *liṅgas* shall be made and given to all *devas*”.

29. At our bidding Viśvakarmā made *liṅgas* and gave them to the *devas* according to their status.

30. O foremost among sages, I shall tell you the same, please listen. Indra took a *liṅga* made of ruby. The son of Viśravas (Naiśravaṇa or Kubera) took a *liṅga* of gold.

31. Dharma took a *liṅga* of yellow stone, Varuṇa took a *liṅga* of dark blue hue. Viṣṇu took a *liṅga* of sapphire. I, Brahmā, took a *liṅga* of gold.

32. The *viśvedevas* and the *vasus* took silver *liṅgas*. O sage, the *Aśvini devas* took the brazen and earthen *liṅga*.

33. Goddess Lakṣmī took a crystal *liṅga*. The *Ādityas* (the twelve suns) took *liṅgas* made of copper. The moon took a *liṅga* made of pearl and the god of fire took a *liṅga* of diamond.

34. Great *brāhmaṇas* and their wives chose *liṅgas* of earth. Maya took a *liṅga* of sandalwood and Śeṣanāga took a coral-made *liṅga*.

35. The Goddesses took the *liṅgas* of butter; the Yogins took *liṅgas* of the ash; the Yakṣas took *liṅgas* of curd and the deity Chāyā took a *liṅga* of beaten flour.

36. The Goddess Brahmāṇī worships, of course, the *liṅga* of *ratna* (precious gem). Bāṇa and others worshipped a *liṅga* of mercury.

37. Thus different kinds of *liṅgas* were given to them by Viśvakarmā which the *devas* and the celestial sages worship regularly.

38. After giving the *devas* the various *liṅgas* from a desire for their benefit, Viṣṇu explained the mode of worship of Śiva to me, Brahmā.

39. After listening to it, I, Brahmā, the foremost among *devas*, came back to my abode highly delighted in mind.

40. O sage, after reaching the place I explained the mode of worshipping Śiva that yields desires to the *devas* and sages.

41. “O sages and *devas*, be pleased to hear with love and pleasure. I am going to explain lovingly the mode of worshipping Śiva that confers worldly pleasures and salvation.

42-43. The life as a human being is very difficult to obtain among all living beings. O *devas*, O sages, a life in a good family is still more difficult. After obtaining the still more difficult birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family of good conduct on account of great merits one shall perform rites assigned to propitiate Śiva.

44. No one shall transgress duties assigned to his caste. Charitable gifts and sacred rites shall be performed to the extent of one's capacity and affluence.

45. The *tapoyajña* (sacrifice in the form of penance) is far superior to thousands of *karmayajñas* (ritualistic sacrifices). The *japayajña* (sacrifice in the form of *japas*) is far superior to thousands of *tapoyajñas*.

46. There is nothing superior to *dhyānayajña* (meditation) which is the cause of true knowledge, since the *yogin* is able to see his favourite (deity) of equanimity through meditation.

47. Śiva is always present near a person set in meditation. There is no necessity for any atonement or expiation for a person of true knowledge.

48-49. O gods, persons who have realised Brahman through pure learning need not perform any rite. They are freed from happiness or misery, virtue or evil, sacrifice or *japa*, meditation or rules regarding the same. By virtue of their learning they are free from base passions and physical changes and decays.

50. The *liṅga* present in the hearts of *yogin* is the purest, blissful, auspicious, undying, all-pervasive and unsullied.

51. O *brāhmaṇas*, *liṅga* is of two types: the exterior and the interior. The exterior is gross and the interior is subtle.

52. Those who are engaged in ritualistic sacrifices and do regularly worship the gross *liṅga* are unable to steady the mind by meditating upon the subtle and hence they use the gross *liṅga*.

53. He who has not mastered the *liṅga* of the mind, the subtle one, must perform the worship in the gross *liṅga* and not otherwise.

54. The pure undying subtle *liṅga* is ever perceived by the masters of true knowledge in the same manner as the gross one is thought to be very excellent by those who are not yogins.

55. If we consider properly there is nothing else for the real interpreter. Whatever is Niṣkala or Sakala is of the form of Śiva in the whole universe. This must be constantly thought of in the mind.

56. Even if they are devoid of the ultimate perfect knowledge, no defect or deficiency can be ascribed to them. Rules regarding what shall be done and what shall not be done are not binding on them.

57. The knower, of course, is not at all bound by actions, even if he continues the householder's life just as the lotus standing in water is not contaminated by the water.

58. Till the realisation of perfect knowledge a man should continue the ritualistic worship of Śiva.

59-60. In order to convince the world, the rituals must be continued. Just as the sun is reflected in many vessels with water, in the same manner, O *devas*, know that the supreme Brahman, Śiva, assumes the forms of whatever is seen or heard in the world, real or unreal.

61. There is difference in the vessels but not in the water that they contain. This is what those who know the real meaning of the Vedas say.

62. "Lord Śiva is within the heart of beings in this world." Of what avail are the idols to those who have this real knowledge?

63. Having an idol is very auspicious for a person who has no such knowledge. It is a ladder that enables him to climb to a higher position.

64. It is very difficult to climb to a position without a support. The idol is only a means to achieve the Nirguṇa Śiva.

65. The attainment of the Nirguṇa through a Saguna is certainly possible. In this manner, the symbols of all lords are conducive to a steady faith and belief.

66. This lord is very great and this is the mode of worship of that lord. If there is no idol, of what avail are scents, sandal paste, flowers, *etc.*?

67. Till the realisation of true knowledge, the idol shall necessarily be worshipped. If any one does not worship the idol before he attains perfect knowledge, his downfall is sure.

68. O *brāhmaṇas*, hear the true statement of facts. For the same reason as mentioned before, the duties of your own caste shall be performed assiduously.

69. Worship shall be performed where devotion is directed. Without worship and charitable gifts, sin cannot be kept at bay.

70. As long as there is a vestige of sin in the body, achievement need not be expected. When the sin is wiped off, all rites will bear fruit.

71. If there is dirt in the cloth the dyeing process cannot be carried out effectively. After the cloth is bleached any dye can be applied to it effectively.

72. Similarly when the body is freed of its dirty stuff by proper worship of deities, the dye of knowledge can stick to it whence true knowledge will arise.

73. The root of true knowledge is unswerving devotion. The root of knowledge too is devotion.

74. The root of devotion is good action and the worship of one's own favourite deity. The root of that is the good preceptor. A good preceptor is secured only through association with good people.

75. If one associates with good people, one will come across a preceptor. From the preceptor mantras and the modes of worship can be learned. *Bhakti* (devotion) is generated by worship and it gives birth to knowledge.
76. Knowledge leads to perfect knowledge and realisation of the supreme Brahman. When there is perfect knowledge, differentiations cease altogether.
77. When differentiation ceases, the misery of mutually clashing opposites vanishes. He who is free from the tangle of opposites and the miseries attendant on them assumes the form of Śiva.
78. O celestial sages, when the mutually clashing opposites do not afflict, a person endowed with true knowledge has neither happiness nor misery. Rules of do's and don'ts do not bind him.
79. Such a person who has not entered a household life is rare to meet with. If there is such a one he will quell all sins by his mere sight.
80. Even the holy centres praise such a person of knowledge. The *devas* and all sages consider him the supreme Brahman, Śiva Himself.
81. The holy centres or the deities in the form of clay or rock idols are not equal to him. They take time in sanctifying persons. But a man of true knowledge purifies through his sheer vision.
82. As long as he continues the life of a householder he shall perform the worship of the idols of the most excellent of the five deities with pleasure.
83. Or it is enough if Śiva alone is worshipped. The root is the most important. When the root is watered, O gods, the branches are well-cared for.
84. O excellent sages, if the branches are taken care of, it does not necessarily mean that the root is cared for. When the deities are propitiated, the same analogy holds good.
- 85-86. Our aim shall be to propitiate Śiva if we are sensible. O gods, if Śiva is worshipped, all the gods are worshipped. Hence a person who wants to do good to all living beings shall worship Śiva, the benefactor of the world, for the attainment of all desires.

Chapter 13

The mode of worshipping Śiva

Brahmā said:

1. O sages, O *devas*, listen. Now I shall explain a mode of worship than which there is no better one and which is conducive to the achievement of all happiness and cherished desires.
2. Getting up in the *brāhma muhūrta* within an hour before dawn one shall remember Śiva accompanied by his consort. With palms joined in great devotion and head bent down he shall offer prayers:

*uttiṣṭhottiṣṭha deveśa uttiṣṭha hṛdayeśaya
uttiṣṭha tvamumāsvāminbrahmāṇḍe maṅgalaṃ kuru*

3. O lord of *devas*, get up, get up. O lord stationed in the heart, get up. O lord of Umā, get up. Confer your auspicious blessings on the entire universe.

*jānāmi dharmam na ca me pravṛttirjānāmyadharmaṃ na ca me nivṛttiḥ
tvayā mahādeva hṛdisthitena yathā niyukto'smi tathā karomi*

4. I know what is virtuous, but I am not inclined to work it up. I know what is unrighteous but I am unable to desist from it. O Mahādeva, I do everything as prompted by you, stationed in my heart.
5. After repeating these words of prayer and remembering the sandals of the preceptor he shall go out to the southern direction for answering the calls of nature.
6. Cleaning the body thereafter with earth and water and washing his hands and feet he shall clean the teeth.
7. Cleaning of the teeth shall be completed before sunrise. He shall gargle sixteen times with so many mouthfuls of water.

8. O celestial sages, the *tithis* of *ṣaṣṭhī*, *navamī* as well as new moon days and sundays are forbidden for cleaning the teeth with tooth brush twigs.
9. Bath shall be taken at a convenient time in rivers or in the house itself. No man shall take bath against the conventions of locality or the convenience of the season.
- 10-11. Hot water bath shall be avoided on sundays, *śrāddha* days, *saṅkrānti* days, at the times of eclipse, on days of Great Charity and fast, in holy centres and during the days of impurity due to death or birth in the family. In the holy ponds and rivers one shall take bath facing the east with great devotion.
12. Oil bath shall be taken on particular days of the week according to convention in the society. If one is accustomed to take oil bath everyday or if one is using scented oil breaking the convention, it is not faulty.
13. Otherwise one should avoid *śrāddha* days, days of eclipse, fast days and the first day of the lunar fortnight for oil baths. Except on the days of eclipse mustard oil can be used on other days.
14. Bath shall be taken after due consideration of the place and season duly. He shall face either the north or the east when taking bath.
15. He shall never take bath wearing another man's clothes. He shall take bath in pure clothes and shall think on his favourite deities.
16. If he wears during the night another man's clothes, the same are not impure, hence there is no harm in taking bath with those clothes on but after taking bath they must be washed and returned.
17. After bath he shall perform water libation propitiating gods, sages and the manes. Thereafter washed and dried clothes shall be worn and *ācamana* performed again.
18. In a clean place washed and smeared with cow-dung, the devotee shall take his seat, O *brāhmaṇas*.
19. The seat shall be made of wood or a cloth-cover. A seat of diverse colours is conducive to the achievement of all desires.
20. Or he can have the hide of a deer for a seat. He shall sit on it and apply *tripuṇḍra* with the ashes.
21. Prayers, penance and charity shall be performed with due markings of *tripuṇḍra* on the forehead for sure results. If ashes are not available marking may be done with holy water.
22. After marking *tripuṇḍra*, on the forehead, the devotee shall wear *rudrākṣas*. After daily rites are over, he shall begin the worship of Śiva.
23. Then he shall perform *ācamana*, the sipping of water thrice with the requisite mantras or once, saying that it is a drop of Gaṅgā water.

24-25. Rice cooked with water shall be brought for the worship of Śiva. Whatever other things he can bring shall also be brought and kept near. A vessel for *arghya* with water and scented raw rice grains shall also be brought.

26-27. To complete the formalities of worship, the vessel shall be placed on the right shoulder. He shall think upon the preceptor and ritualistically take his permission for the worship. He shall perform the rite of *saṃkalpa* (including the requisite mantras and statements about the *pūjā*, the day, month, year *etc.* and the purpose of the *pūjā*) and aver his desire. He shall perform the worship of Śiva with His attendants devoutly.

28-29. Showing the mystic *mudrā* and using saffron and other materials he shall bow to and worship Gaṇeśa who confers benefits a hundred thousand times and is accompanied by his consorts Siddhi and Buddhi¹. He shall repeat his names ending in the dative case appended with *namaḥ* and prefixed with *praṇava*.

30. After craving for forgiveness of the deity, he shall be worshipped again in the company of his brother Kārtikeya with great devotion and shall be bowed to again and again.

31. The big-bellied Gaṇeśa, the gate-keeper of the lord, shall be worshipped. Goddess Satī, Girijā shall be worshipped then.

32-35. After worshipping Śiva with sandal paste, saffron, incense, various lamps, and food-offerings of different sorts he shall bow down again. In the house the *liṅga* shall be made of clay, silver or any other metal or mercury. It shall be bowed to with devotion. If that is worshipped, all deities are worshipped. If the *liṅga* is made of clay it shall be installed duly.

36. The householders shall perform every rite according to prescribed rules. After performing the purificatory rite of the *bhūtas*, the installation of the idol shall be performed.

37-38. If the worship is performed in the temple of Śiva, the guardians of the quarters shall be installed and worshipped. In the house, Śiva shall be worshipped by the root mantra. It is not obligatory that the gatekeeper shall be worshipped. The *liṅga* that is worshipped by me can be worshipped in the house. Everything is installed in the same.

39. At the time of worship, the lord shall be invoked along with his attendants and paraphernalia. But there is no hard and fast rule governing this aspect.

40. He shall provide his own seat in the vicinity of Śiva. He shall face the north and perform the rite of *ācamana* (sipping water).

41. The devotee shall wash his hands and feet and perform *prāṇāyāma* ten times with *mūla-mantra*.

42. Five mystic *mudrās* shall be shown with the hand before the worship. Only after showing the *mudrās* shall the worship be performed.

43-45. The lamp shall be shown then. Homage shall be paid to the preceptor. He shall then seat himself in the yogic poses of Padma, Bhadra, Uttāna or Paryāṅka whichever is convenient

¹ Siddhi and Buddhi are personified as the wives of Gaṇeśa, the son of Śiva and Pārvatī.

and perform the rites once again. After the worship he shall float it along with the cake. If the worship is performed in the house these rules are not binding.

46. Afterwards the excellent *līṅga* shall be washed with the water from the vessel of *arghya* itself after keeping all the material with the concentrated mind.

47-53. The lord shall be invoked then with the following mantra: “I am invoking Śiva, the blissful and favourably disposed to the devotees, Śiva seated on the summit of Kailāsa, the excellent lord of Pārvatī, Śambhu of the form as mentioned before, both with or without qualities possessed of five faces, ten hands, three eyes and the bull for banner, as white as camphor, of divine limbs, having crescent moon on the head, wearing matted hair, clad in the hide of an elephant and with the hide of the tiger as upper garment, with Vāsuki and other serpents turned round his body, holding Pināka and other weapons, having the eight *siddhis* (accomplishments) dancing constantly in front of Him, served by crowds of devotees crying loudly “Be victorious. Be victorious.” of unbearable sight due to excessive splendour, served by all *devas*, the sole refuge for all living beings, of beaming face shining like lotus and always eulogised by Viṣṇu and Brahmā as extolled by the Vedas and sacred text.” After the meditation of Śiva along with his consort, the seat shall be arranged for.

54. Worship shall be performed with the names ending in dative case. *Pādya* and *arghya* shall be offered to Śiva.

55. After offering *ācamana*, the supreme Ātman Śiva shall be bathed with five materials (milk, curds, honey, *etc.*).

56. Then the offerings shall be made with great devotion reciting the requisite Vedic mantras or the names ending in the dative case.

57. Similarly any desirable and desired material shall be offered to Śiva. Thereafter the *vāruṇas-nāna* rite (ceremonial ablution) shall be performed to Śiva.

58. Sweet-smelling sandal paste and other unguents shall then be applied. The water poured over the deity in a continuous current shall be rendered fragrant.

59. The water ablutions shall be made reciting Vedic mantras or six-syllabled mantra eleven times, if so much time can be spared, then the deity shall be wiped with a cloth.

60-61. Then the *ācamana* shall be offered and cloth dedicated. Gingelly seeds, barley grains, wheat, green gram or black gram shall then be offered to Śiva with various mantras. Then flowers shall be offered to the five-faced noble soul.

62-64. Lotuses, rose, *śaṅkha*, and *kuśa* flowers, *dhattūras*, *mandāras* grown in a wooden vessel, holy basil leaves or bilva leaves shall be offered to each of the faces in accordance with the previous meditation or according to one’s wish. By all means Śiva favourably disposed to His devotees shall be worshipped with great devotion. If other flowers are not available, bilva leaves shall be used exclusively in the worship of Śiva.

65-66. With the offering of bilva leaves alone, the worship shall be performed. Then scented powders, sweetsmelling oil *etc.* of various sorts shall be offered to Śiva with great joy. Then

incense, guggulu (the fragrant gum resin) and aguru (the fragrant Aloe wood) shall be offered.

67-69. Thereafter a lamp lighted with ghee shall be offered to Śiva. With great devotion the rite of wiping of the face shall be performed with a cloth. With the following mantra, *arghya* shall be offered with great devotion. “O Śiva, give us good features, good fame, and good enjoyment of pleasures. Taking this *arghya* give us the pleasures of the world and salvation. Obeisance be to Thee”. Then various kinds of food-offerings shall be made to Śiva.

70-72. Then *ācamana* shall be performed immediately. Then the offering of betel leaves with all necessary adjuncts shall be made to Śiva, *Ārātika* (the rite of waving lights) shall be performed with a lamp with five wicks. Light shall be waved four times at the feet; twice in the umbilical region, once near the face and seven times over the whole body. Then the devotee shall perform meditation as stated before and repeat the mantras.

73-74. The mantras shall be repeated in accordance with the knowledge, as many times as are necessary in the manner instructed by the preceptor.

75. The deity Śiva shall be eulogised lovingly with various hymns. Then the devotee shall circumambulate around Śiva by and by.

76. Then he shall perform prostration with the eight limbs touching the ground many times. He shall then offer handfuls of flowers with great devotion repeating the following mantra.

77-83. O Śiva, whatever I have done by way of worship *etc.* with or without sufficient knowledge for Śiva the great lord, in order to secure His satisfaction shall be fruitful by your grace. O Mṛḍa, I belong to you. My vital airs are fixed in you. My mind is always concentrated in you. O Gaurīśa, O lord of goblins, be pleased with me. Those who stagger and falter on the ground are supported by the ground alone. O lord, those who have offended you shall find in you alone as their refuge.

After entreaties like these the devotee shall make a handful of flower-offering. Then he shall bow down many times and take the ritualistic farewell—“O lord be pleased to return to your abode along with your attendants. Please come again when I perform worship”. After requesting thus many times, Śiva who is favourably disposed to His devotees shall be bidden farewell to abide in the heart. The holy water shall then be applied over the head.

O sages, thus I have entirely explained the mode of worshipping Śiva that confers worldly pleasures and salvation. What else do you wish to hear?

Chapter 14

Directions for the worship of Śiva

The sages said:

1. O disciple of Vyāsa, O fortunate one, please explain to us authoritatively the fruits granted by Śiva for the different worships with different flowers.

Sūta said:

2-3. O sages, Śaunaka and others, please listen attentively. I shall lovingly explain to you the mode of offering flowers which is the same as Brahmā explained to Nārada at his request.

Brahmā said:

4. A person desirous of wealth shall worship lord Śiva with lotuses, bilva leaves, petals of lotuses or with *śaṅkha* flowers.

5. O *brāhmaṇa*, if a devotee worships Śiva with a hundred flowers, his sins shall be wiped off and the devotee shall become rich.

6. Twenty full lotuses constitute one *prastha* measure. A thousand bilva leaves constitute half a *prastha*.

7. Petals of lotuses, a thousand in number constitute half a *prastha*. Ten *ṭaṅka* weight constitutes one *pala* and sixteen *palas* make one *prastha*.

8. Flowers for worship shall be weighed in the balance according to this calculation. The worship thus duly performed shall accord all cherished desires. If the devotee worships with no specific desires he will become Śiva himself.

9-14. O lordly sages, a person desirous of obtaining a kingdom shall propitiate Lord Śiva with the worship of a hundred million earthen *liṅgas*. Lord Śiva confers a kingdom on the devotee certainly. He shall use *śivaliṅga* for worship. Flowers shall be used. Unsplit rice grains mixed with sandal paste shall be used. The ceremonial ablution shall be performed. The mantra used shall be pleasing. Bilva leaves are very excellent. Or he can use loose petals or full lotuses

or *śaṅkha* flowers according to ancient authorities. The worship is divine and accords pleasures and achievement of desires both here and hereafter, he shall not omit other items such as incense, lamps, food-offerings, *ārghya*, *ārātika* (waving of lights), *pradakṣiṇā*, *namaskāra*, *kṣamāpāna* (craving forgiveness) and *visarjana* (the ritualistic dismissal). At the end he shall feed other devotees.

15. A person who yearns for important positions shall worship half the former number. A person desiring release from prison shall worship a hundred thousand *lingas* of Śiva.

16. A person afflicted by ailments shall worship half that number. A person desiring a daughter shall worship half that number.

17. A person desirous of learning shall worship half that number. A person desirous of eloquence shall worship Śiva with ghee.

18. In order to drive out enemies, the number of worship is the same as before. For exterminating enemies, worship is for a hundred thousand times and for enchantment worship is half that number.

19. For the conquest of vassal kings, worship for ten million times is recommended. For keeping vassal kings under influence the same for ten thousand times is recommended.

20. For achieving glory with plenty of vehicles, worship for a thousand times shall be performed. A person desiring salvation shall worship Śiva five crores of times with deep devotion.

21. A person seeking knowledge shall worship Śiva, the benefactor of the world, ten million times. A person desiring Śiva's vision shall worship Him five million times.

22. The Mṛtyuñjaya mantra shall be repeated half a million times when Śiva shall be visible to the devotee and fulfil his desires.

23. If a person repeats the mantra a hundred thousand times and begins a second instalment he will be lifted to a higher caste. When he completes the third hundred thousand times all his worldly desires will be fulfilled. In the fourth *lakṣa* he will be able to see the lord.

24. When the fifty *lakṣa* is completed, the lord will confer on him all benefits. When the same mantra is repeated a million times, the merit is tremendous.

25. A person desirous of liberation shall worship him with darbhas. O best of sages, the number everywhere is a hundred thousand times.

26. A person desirous of long life shall worship him with dūrvā grass. A person desirous of sons shall worship him with dhattūra flowers.

27. A dhattūra plant with red stem is specially auspicious for worship. A worshipper using agastya flowers will earn great fame.

28. Worldly pleasures and salvation will be secured by a person who worships with tulasī. Great valour can be secured by worshipping with arka or kubjalkhāra flowers.

29. The worship with japā flowers (China rose) brings about the death of enemies. Karavīra flowers drive away all ailments.
30. By worshipping with bandhūka flowers the devotee will get ornaments; with jāti flowers he will acquire good vehicles; with atasī flowers he will attain favour of Viṣṇu.
31. With śamī leaves he will secure salvation. With mallikā flowers he will secure an auspicious woman.
32. With the splendid yūthikā flowers he will not be deprived of a house. With karṇikāra flowers he will secure plenty of garments.
33. With nirguṇḍī flowers, his mind becomes pure in the world. A hundred thousand bilva leaves used for worship will secure the fulfilment of all desires.
34. Use of lovely flowers in the form of garlands increases happiness and wealth. Use of seasonal flowers for worship yields liberation. There is no doubt in this.
35. The flowers of rājikā bring about the death of enemies. A hundred thousand rājikā flowers shall be used for the worship of Śiva. The benefit accruing will be very great.
36. Excepting the campaka and the ketaka there is no flower which does not appeal to Śiva. All other flowers can be used for worshipping Him.
37. Now, O excellent one, listen to the quantity of and the benefit accruing from grains and pulses in their use for worship of Śiva.
- 38-39. Heaping up rice grains by way of worship causes prosperity. Six and a half prastha, and two palas of rice grains constitute a hundred thousand in number of grains. These shall be used in their unsplit form for the worship of Śiva.
40. Worship of Rudra shall be performed at first and a fine cloth shall be spread over the *liṅga*. The rice grains shall be put over the cloth at the time of worship.
41. At the end of worship, a coconut fruit shall be placed with scents and flowers *etc.* and fumi-gated with incense. The devotee shall attain the benefit of worship.
42. Silver coins and black gram shall be given as fee to the priest as much as for two *prājāpatya* ceremonies. If the devotee cannot afford it he shall give according to his capacity.
43. Thereafter twelve *brāhmaṇas* shall be fed. The whole of this then constitutes the *lakṣapūjā* complete in its details and with requisite mantras.
- 44-46. The mantras shall be repeated hundred and eight times. That is the rule. A hundred thousand gingelly seeds used for worship destroy even great sins. Eleven palas of gingelly seeds constitute a hundred thousand in number. The mode of worship is the same as before. Those who desire beneficent results shall perform the *pūjā*. *Brāhmaṇas* shall be fed. Hence, only those who can afford shall perform this. Certainly all miseries due to great sins perish instan-taneously.

47-48. Performance of the worship of Śiva with a hundred thousand barley grains is highly efficacious. Eight and a half prasthas and two palas of barley grains constitute a hundred thousand in number according to ancient calculation. The worship with barley grains, the sages say, increases heavenly pleasures.

49-50. *Brāhmaṇas* desiring the benefit shall perform the rite of *prājāpatya*. The worship of Śiva with wheat grains is highly praiseworthy. If a hundred thousand grains are used for worship, the devotee shall be blessed with a number of children. Half a droṇa of wheat will constitute a hundred thousand in number of grains. The mode of worship is as before.

51-52. Śiva accords happiness on being worshipped with green grams. Seven prasthas and two palas to seven and a half prasthas of green grams constitute a hundred thousand in number. Eleven *brāhmaṇas* shall be fed.

53-54. If the great Ātman, the presiding deity of Dharma, is worshipped with priyaṅgu (long pepper corns), the devotee will be blessed with happiness. His virtue, wealth and love will flourish. A prastha of these corns constitutes a hundred thousand in number according to ancient authorities. Twelve *brāhmaṇas* shall be fed.

55-56. Worship with rājikā (small mustard) of Śiva shall bring about the death of enemies. Twenty palas of sarṣapa (big mustard) constitute a hundred thousand in number. Worshipping with them also brings about the death of enemies. The *śivaliṅga* shall be decorated with the leaves of āḍhakī and then worshipped.

57-58. A cow along with necessary adjuncts shall be given in charity and a bull shall also be given. Worship with pepper is also conducive to the destruction of enemies. The *śivaliṅga* shall be decorated with the leaves of āḍhakī flowers and worshipped. This worship is conducive to different kinds of happiness and benefits.

59. O best among sages, the measurement and number of grains and pulses have been explained to you by me. O lord of sages, now listen to the calculation of a hundred thousand in the case of flowers.

60. A prastha of śaṅkha flowers constitutes a hundred thousand, says Vyāsa who shows the exact measurement and calculation.

61. Eleven prasthas of jāti and yūthikā flowers constitute a hundred thousand in number in each. Five and a half prasthas of rājikā flowers also constitute so many.

62. Twenty prasthas of mallikā flowers constitute a hundred thousand; while so many flowers of gingelly plant measure a little less than a prastha.

63-64. Karavīra flowers measure three times that. Scholars say that the flowers of nirguṇḍī too measure likewise. In karṇikāra and śirīṣa flowers too, the same mode of calculation holds good. Ten prasthas of bandhujīva flowers constitute a hundred thousand.

65. The devotee shall perform the worship of Śiva with different flowers after considering these modes of calculation for the fulfilment of desires if he has any or for the sake of salvation if he has no desire.

66. Now I shall explain the benefit of great potentiality accruing from dhārāpūjā, a mere listening to which is conducive to great welfare.

67. After performing the regular worship of Śiva, with great devotion in accordance with prescribed rules, the devotees shall pour water in a continuous stream.

68-70. This *dhārā* worship is very efficacious in delirium due to fever. At that time Śatarudriya¹ mantra, Rudraikādaśa mantra, Rudrajāpya mantra, Puruṣa Sūkta², Ṣaḍaṅga mantra, Mahāmṛtyuñjaya³ mantra, Gāyatrī, names ending with *namaḥ* and beginning with *praṇava* or *āgama* mantra shall be repeated.

71. The *dhārā* worship is very excellent in regard to flourishing series of pleasures. Different types of auspicious materials of worship shall be added to the water.

72. If *dhārā* worship is performed with ghee continuously while a thousand mantras are repeated, the family will undoubtedly flourish.

73. Thus the worship of Śiva shall be performed with the mantras mentioned by me. Sages have held that *brāhmaṇas* shall be fed and *prājāpatya* rite shall be performed.

74. Milk without sugar is usually taken for the *dhārā*. If the devotee is deficient in intellect and yearns for the same, sugar shall be added to milk for the sake of *dhārā*.

75. His intellect will become as keen as that of Bṛhaspati. The *dhārā* shall be continued till ten thousand mantras are completely repeated.

76-77. If there is any crack or laceration in the body without an apparent cause, if there is any uncommon increase of love or misery anywhere, or if there be very frequent quarrels in the house, miseries will perish when the *dhārā* worship is performed.

78. Oil-*dhārā* shall be performed on *śivaliṅga* for harassing enemies. Success in the enterprise is certain.

79. If scented oil is used, worldly pleasures will be increased. If mustard oil is used, enemies will be exterminated undoubtedly.

80. If honey is used, the devotee will become Kubera (God of wealth). The *dhārā* of sugarcane juice is conducive to all pleasures.

81-82. The *dhārā* of Gaṅgā water yields worldly pleasures and salvation. In all these *dhārās* Mṛtyuñjaya mantra shall be muttered ten thousand times. Eleven *brāhmaṇas* shall be fed.

83. O lordly saint, what I have been asked I have now explained to you completely. This will be fruitful in the world and will contribute to the achievement of all desires.

84. I shall now tell you, as I have heard, the benefit accruing from the due worship of Śiva in the company of Skanda and Umā.

¹ On the Śatarudriya concept of Śiva, see *Matsya-purāṇa* ('A Study' by V. S. Agrawal) pp.64-65.

² *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* (of *Śuklayajurveda*) 31.1.

³ This mantra is often used for warding off diseases and prolonging life.

85-87. He will enjoy in this world all kinds of auspicious pleasures with sons and grandsons. Then he will go to the region of Śiva that is conducive to all happiness. He will enjoy happy sports with Śiva's attendants, move about in aerial chariots that can go anywhere they pleased and that shine like ten million suns and will be served by Rudra's maidens with songs and instrumental music, till the time of Dissolution. Then he will attain perfect knowledge and ultimately salvation.

Chapter 15

The manifestation of Rudra

Nārada said:

1. O creator, O Brahmā the fortunate, you are blessed O foremost among *devas*. A wonderfully sanctifying story of Śiva has been narrated by you, today.
2. I have heard the wonderfully divine story of the origin of the *liṅga*, the auspicious hearing of the efficacy of which destroys all miseries here.
3. Please narrate what transpired thereafter, the grandeur of the created things and particularly the mode of creation.

Brahmā said:

4. You have requested very pertinently. I shall briefly narrate what transpired later as I have heard before.
- 5-6. When the eternal lord Śiva vanished, O chief of brahmins, Viṣṇu and I in a very happy mood withdrew our forms of swan and boar and wished for creation and sustenance of the worlds.

Nārada said:

7. O Vidhi, O Brahmā, O wise one, I have a great doubt. Please remove the same.
8. How is it that both of you assumed the forms of swan and boar instead of other forms? Please tell me the reason for the same.

Sūta said:

9. On hearing these words of the noble-souled Nārada, Brahmā spoke after remembering the lotus-like feet of Śiva.

Brahmā said:

10. The swan has the power of going up steadily. It has the power of discriminating between the real and the unreal as in separating milk from water.

11. The swan understands the distinction between ignorance and knowledge. Hence I (Brahmā) the Creator, assumed the form of swan.
12. O Nārada! But I failed to cognize the refulgent form of Śiva and therefore could not exercise my power of discrimination.
13. How can real knowledge dawn on one who is engaged in activities of creation? Hence though in the form of Swan I could not attain the power of discrimination.
14. A boar has the power of steadily going deep below. Hence Viṣṇu, the wanderer in the forest, assumed the form of the boar.
15. Or Viṣṇu, the protector of all the worlds assumed the form of a boar to start a new Kalpa (aeon).
16. Since the day he assumed the form of a boar, the aeon by the title of Vārāha has started.
17. Or the Vārāhakaḥkalpa can be considered to have started since the day we two decided to assume these forms.
18. O Nārada, thus I have answered your relevant question. O sage, now listen. I shall resume the context. Remembering the lotus-like feet of Śiva I shall explain to you the mode of Creation.
19. When God Śiva vanished, I, Pitāmaha (grandfather) of the worlds fell into contemplation pondering on the means of carrying out His words of direction.
20. Then after bowing down to Śiva, getting knowledge from Viṣṇu and attaining the highest bliss, I decided to start the work of creation.
21. After bowing to Śiva and instructing me, O dear one, Viṣṇu too vanished.
22. After getting the blessings of Śiva and going out of the cosmic egg, Viṣṇu made Vaikuṇṭha¹ his permanent abode.
23. Desiring to create, I remembered Śiva and Viṣṇu. In the waters that had already been created I offered handfuls of water as libation.
24. Then the cosmic egg arose consisting of twenty-four principles². O *brāhmaṇa*, then a splendid, huge form Virāṭ appeared and the form of waters was not seen.
25. Confusion arose in my mind and I performed a severe penance for twelve years meditating on Viṣṇu.
26. At that time, Viṣṇu appeared before me and touching my body lovingly and joyously he told me.

¹It is Viṣṇu's abode variously described as situated in the Northern ocean or on the eastern peak of mount Meru.

²According to the Paurāṇic account of creation, the cosmic Egg constituted of twenty-four *tattvas* was entirely material. In the beginning, it was a dead egg and it remained so until it was activated by the principle of Brahman which having entered into it split the egg into two halves by the process of fission.

Viṣṇu said:

27. O Brahmā, thanks to the favour of Śiva, I am capable of giving you everything. There is nothing which cannot be given to you. I am delighted. Tell me the boon (you wish to have).

Brahmā said:

28. O Viṣṇu, the fortunate one, I have been entrusted to you by Śiva. Hence it is but proper that I should request you. Please give me who request you what He has told you (to give me). Obeisance be to you.

29. This *virāṭ* form of the cosmic egg consists of twenty-four principles. There is no sentience in it. It is insentient.

30. O Viṣṇu, you have now appeared before me; thanks to the blessings of Śiva. Confer sentience on this cosmic egg originating from Śiva's power.

31. When I said this, the great Viṣṇu adhering strictly to the directives of Śiva assumed infinite forms and entered the cosmic egg.

32. Viṣṇu with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet³ encompassed the cosmic egg touching the earth everywhere.

33. When Viṣṇu who was properly eulogised by me entered it, the cosmic egg consisting of the twenty-four principles became sentient.

34. Viṣṇu shone as the great Being, the lord of the seven worlds beginning with Pātāla⁴.

35. The five-faced lord Śiva created for His residence the beautiful city of Kailāsa that shone above all.

36. O celestial sage, Kailāsa⁵ and Vaikuṇṭha will never be destroyed even if the whole cosmic egg is destroyed.

37. O foremost among sages, I am staying in Satyaloka⁶. O dear one, I desired the activity of creation at the bidding of Śiva.

³RV. X; *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* (of *Śuklayajurveda*) 31.1.

⁴The seven regions descending from the earth, one below the other, are called Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Rasātala, Talātala, Mahātala and Pātāla.

⁵This city is located on the central peak of Hemakūta which is one of the loftiest peaks to the North of the Mānasa lake. It is the abode both of Lord Śiva and his friend Kubera who is the Lord of wealth.

⁶This is one of the seven lokas of the upper region. The other six lokas are Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ, Mahaḥ, Janaḥ, Tapaḥ. For the sanctity and position of this loka compare an unidentified quotation from the *Devī Bhāgavata*.

*satyaṃ tu saptamo loko brahmaṇaḥ sadanaṃ tataḥ
sarveṣāṃ caiva lokānāṃ mūdhni santiṣṭhate sadā
jñānakarmapraṭiṣṭhānāttathā satyasya bhāṣaṇāt
prāpyate copabhogārthaṃ prāpya na cyavate punaḥ
tatsatyaṃ saptamo lokastasmādūrdhvaṃ na vidyate*

38. Even as I stood desirous of creation, the evil creation, viz. the set of five illusions⁷ appeared before me. It was of the nature of darkness endowed with knowledge.

39. Then I created the chief creation⁸ consisting of immobile beings with a delightful mind. At the bidding of Śiva, I continued my meditation in a detached spirit.

40. While creating it I had thought it would be an aspirant after the Ātman. But the creation Tiryaksrotas turned out to be full of misery. And it was not an aspirant.

41-42. Realising that it was not an aspirant I began to ponder over the matter. Then the Sāttvika Sarga otherwise known as Ūrdhvasrotas and Devasarga (Divine creation) took shape. It was really charming. But considering that it too was not aspirant I meditated on my lord.

43. Then the Rājasasarga, otherwise known as Arvāksrotas—the human creation which was a great aspirant, appeared at the bidding of Lord Śiva.

44. Then again at the bidding of Lord Śiva the Bhūtādika Sarga (creation of the elements etc.) appeared. Thus five types of creation collectively called Vaikṛta were set in motion by me.

45-46. Brahmā evolved three types of creation from Prakṛti. The first one was the creation of *mahat* (the cosmic principle of intellect.) The second was that of the subtle elements. The third was *vaikārika* of the nature of transformations and ramifications. Thus with five *vaikṛta* types and three later *prākṛtas* there were eight types of creation.

47. The Kaumāra Sarga was the ninth. It was both *prākṛta* and *vaikṛta*. I cannot adequately describe the divisions and sub-divisions of all these types of creation.

⁷“Avidyā” also designated as “viparyaya” is fivefold. Its five kinds are mentioned in the “Liṅgapurāṇa” (2.9.30).

*tamo moho mahāmohastāmisra iti paṇḍitāḥ
andhatāmisra ityāhuravidyāṃ pañcadhā sthitām*

These are defined in the “Devi Bhāgavata” in the following way:

*tamo’viveko mohaḥ syādantaḥkaraṇavibhramah
mahāmohaśca vijñeyo grāmyabhogasukhaiṣaṇā
maraṇaṃ tvandhatāmisraṃ tāmisaṃ krodha ucyate
avidhā pañcaparvaiṣa(?) prādurbhūtā mahātmanaḥ*

These are further divided into sixty-two kinds. Cp. “Liṅgapurāṇa” 2.9.34-35:

*tamaso’ṣṭavidhā bhedā mohaścāṣṭavidhaḥ smṛtāḥ
mahāmohaprabhedāśca budhairdaśa vicintitāḥ
aṣṭādaśavidhaṃ cāhustāmisraṃ ca vicakṣaṇāḥ
andhatāmisrabhedāśca tayāṣṭādaśadhā smṛtāḥ*

⁸The Paurāṇic cosmology divides the cosmic creation into nine classes: viz. (1) “mukhyasarga”, creation of insentient objects (2) “tiryak sarga”, creation of animals (3) “devasarga”, creation of divine beings (4) “rājasasarga”, creation of human beings, (5) “bhūtādisarga” creation of elements, (6) “mahatsarga”, creation of intellect (7), “sūkṣmabhūtasarga” creation of subtle elements, (8) “vaikārikasarga” secondary creation, (9) “kaumārasarga” primary and secondary creation.

48. Last of all, I shall mention the brahminical creation which is of very little utility. It is here that the great creation of Sanaka and others, referred to above as Kaumāra Sarga, took shape.

49. Sanaka and others, my mental sons, were five⁹ in number. They were all on a par with Brahman, of good rites and averse to worldly attachment.

50. Despite my command they were not inclined to carry on the activities of creation; those scholarly sons turned their attention from worldly activities and were devoted to the exclusive meditation on Śiva.

51. O Nārada, they were bold enough to retort to me whereat I became very furious and nearly senseless.

52. When I became nearly unconscious on account of excessive fury and agitation, drops of tears fell from my eyes.

53. At that time, on being mentally meditated upon, Viṣṇu came there hurriedly and enlightened me.

54. O foremost among sages, I was instructed by Viṣṇu to perform the penance of Śiva. Accordingly I performed a severe penance.

55-56. While I was performing penance for creation, the merciful lord Śiva of Trinity, came out of the spot called Avimukta between the eyebrows and the nose. He manifested himself as Half woman and Half man in full potency.

57-58. On seeing the unborn lord Śiva, a mass of refulgence, the consort of Umā, the omniscient, the creator of everything, famous as Nīllohita, straight in front of me I saluted him with great devotion and was highly delighted. I told the lord "Please create various subjects."

59. On hearing my words, the lord of lords, Rudra, created many Gaṇas identical with Himself.

60. I again told the great lord Rudra—"O lord, please create those subjects, tormented by the fear of birth and death".

61. O foremost among sages! on hearing my words the merciful lord Rudra laughed and said thus.

Lord Rudra said:

62. O Brahmā, I shall not create the subjects tormented by the fear of birth and death. The inauspicious beings are immersed in the ocean of distress by their own actions.

63. In my manifestation in the form of preceptor I shall lift up these beings immersed in the ocean of distress by conferring on them perfect knowledge.

64. You alone, create all the miserable subjects, O Lord! At my bidding, you will not be bound by illusion.

Brahmā said:

65. Saying this, the lord, the glorious Śiva vanished along with His attendants even as I was watching.

⁹These are Sana, Sanaka, Sanat, Sanātana and Sujāta. Elsewhere they are stated to be seven or ten.

Chapter 16

Description of the Creation

Brahmā said:

1-2. O Nārada, after performing the pentuplication of the *bhūtas*, elements and their attributes sound *etc.*, I evolved the gross ether, wind, fire, water and the earth out of them and created mountains, seas, trees *etc.* and the periods of time ending with Kali and other ages.

3. I created many other things as well, but O sage, I was not satisfied. Then O sage, I meditated on Śiva and his consort Ambā and created aspirants.

4-7. I created Marīci from my eyes, Bhṛgu from my heart; Aṅgiras from the head and the great sage Pulaha from the vital breath Vyāna. I created Pulastya from Udāna; Vasiṣṭha from Samāna; Kratu from Apāna; Atri from the ears and Dakṣa from the Prāṇa. I then created you from my lap and the sage Kardama from my shadow. Finally, I created, out of my conception, Dharma which is the means for the achievement of everything. O foremost among sages, creating thus, thanks to the favour of Mahādeva, these excellent *sādhakas* I became contented.

8. Then, O dear one, Dharma, born out of my conception assumed the form of Manu at my bidding and was engaged in activity by the aspirants.

9. Then I created from the different parts of my body innumerable sons, Suras (*devas*) and Asuras (demons) and many others after assigning them different bodies, O sage.

10. I was then prompted by Śiva present within me and hence, O sage, I split myself into two having assumed two forms.

11. One half had the form of a woman and the other half that of a man¹. He then created in her a couple, the means of excellent nature.

12. The man was Svāyambhuva Manu, the greatest of the means (of creation). The woman was Śatarūpā, a *yoginī*, an ascetic woman.

¹ Śiva-purāṇa speaks of Brahmā splitting his body into two parts, the male and female, identified as Manu and Śatarūpā. Cp. *Matsya-purāṇa* ('A Study' by V. S. Agrawal) 3.31.

13. The auspicious lady was accepted by Manu with due matrimonial rites, O dear one, he created beings through her by the process of sexual intercourse.
- 14-16. He begot of her two sons Priyavrata and Uttānapāda and three daughters Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti, all of them very famous. He gave Ākūti in marriage to Ruci and the middle one to Kardama. He gave Prasūti the younger sister of Uttānapāda in marriage to Dakṣa. Their sons and progeny are spread over the world both mobile and immobile.
17. Ruci begot of Ākūti the couple Yajña and Dakṣiṇā. Twelve sons were born of Yajña and Dakṣiṇā.
18. O sage, Kardama begot of Devahūti many daughters. Dakṣa begot twenty-four daughters.
19. Thirteen daughters Śraddhā *etc.* were given to Dharma in marriage by Dakṣa. O lordly sage, listen to the names of Dharma's wives.
20. Their names are Śraddhā (faith), Lakṣmī (fortune), Dhṛti (fortitude), Tuṣṭi (satiety), Puṣṭi (nourishment), Medhā (intelligence), Kriyā (rite, activity), Buddhi (intellect, wisdom), Lajjā (bashfulness), Vasu (wealth), Śānti (peace, calmness), Siddhi (achievement, accomplishment) and the thirteenth is Kīrti (fame).
- 21-23. The eleven younger daughters were Khyāti, Satī, Sambhūti, Smṛti, Prīti, Kṣamā, San-nati, Anurūpā, Ūrjā, Svāhā and Svadhā who were respectively married by Bhṛgu, Bhava (Śiva), Marīci, the sage Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, the excellent sage Kratu, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, the fire-god and the Pitṛs (manes).
24. The great aspirants Bhṛgu and others took the hands of these famous daughters. There-upon the entire universe consisting of three worlds, mobile and immobile was filled (with progeny).
25. Thus according to their own actions and at the bidding of Śiva innumerable famous *brāhmaṇas* were born out of the various living beings.
- 26-28. In another *kalpa*, Dakṣa had sixty daughters. Of them ten were given to Dharma, twenty-seven to the Moon, thirteen to Kaśyapa. O Nārada, he gave four to Garuḍa of excellent form. Two to each of these—Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras and Kṛśāśva. Born of them are many children in the world of mobile and immobile.
- 29-30. O foremost among the sages, the children of the thirteen daughters given to the noble-souled Kaśyapa by Dakṣa spread over the three worlds. Mobile or immobile nothing was void.
- 31-32. *Devas*, sages, demons, trees, birds and mountain-creepers born of the daughters of Dakṣa filled the entire space between Pātāla and Satyaloka ².
33. The whole cosmic egg was filled. Never was it a void. Thus, at the bidding of Śiva, the creation was perfectly accomplished by Brahmā.

²The fourteen worlds from Pātāla to Satyaloka constitute the entire cosmos. Cf. *Nirukta* 210, 212 p.247.

34-35. Dakṣa's daughter Satī was perfectly guarded by Rudra at the tip of His Trident, for the sake of penance. Śiva had created her himself and later for the activities of the world she was born of Dakṣa. In order to uplift the devotees, the lord indulged himself in many divine sports.

36. Śiva manifested himself in three ways in the form of Vaiṣṇu (Viṣṇu) born of the left limb, in my form (of Brahmā) born of the right limb and in the form of Rudra born of the heart.

37. Viṣṇu, Rudra and I represent the three *guṇas*. Śiva is free from *guṇas*. He is the supreme Brahman, the undecaying.

38. Viṣṇu is of *sattva* attribute, I (Brahmā) am of *rajas* attribute and Rudra is of *tamas* attribute. This is only in view of the activities in the world. But in fact and in name it is otherwise.

39. Viṣṇu is of *tāmasika* nature within but externally *sāttvika*; Rudra is of *sāttvika* nature within but of *tāmasic* nature outside, I am of *rājasic* nature throughout.

40. The goddess of speech is of *rājasic* nature; Satī is of the *sāttvika* nature and Lakṣmī is of *tamasic* nature; the great goddess Śivā is of the three natures.

41. Śivā became Satī and Śiva married her. At the sacrifice of her father she cast off her body which she did not take again and went back to her own region.

42. Śivā incarnated as Pārvatī at the request of the *devas*. It was after performing a severe penance that she could attain Śiva again.

43-45. O lordly sage, she came to be called by various names such as Kālī, Caṇḍikā, Cāmuṇḍā, Vijayā, Jayā, Jayantī, Bhadrakālī, Durgā, Bhagavatī, Kāmākhyā, Kāmadā, Ambā, Mṛḍānī and Sarvamaṅgalā. These various names confer worldly pleasures and salvation according to qualities and action. The name Pārvatī is very common.

46. The goddesses of various attributes and the three deities of various attributes performed the diverse excellent activities of creation in mutual collaboration.

47. O excellent among sages, I have thus explained the mode of creation to you. The entire cosmic egg was created by me at the bidding of Śiva.

48. Śiva is the Supreme Brahman. The three deities, Viṣṇu, I and Rudra are His manifestations according to the difference in the attributes³.

³From the Cosmic Egg agitated by the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, the three deities came into existence. The Purāṇas call them Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva and assign the functions of creation, existence and dissolution to each respectively. Cp. *Devi Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 1.8.2-4.

*brahmā viṣṇuśca rudraśca trayo devāḥ sanātanaḥ
nātaḥ parataraṃ kiñcid brahmāṇḍe'sminmahāmate
brahmā sṛjati lokānvai viṣṇuḥ pātyakhilam jagat
rudraḥ saṃharate kāletraya pate'tra kāraṇam*

The statement about the three qualities *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* manifested as the three *devas* is the consensus of the entire puranic lore. Cp. *Līṅga Purāṇa*.

49. The independent Supreme Ātman, who is both Nirguṇa and Saguṇa sports with Śivā in the beautiful Śivaloka.

50. His perfect and complete incarnation is Rudra. He is Śiva himself. The five-faced lord has made His beautiful mansion in Kailāsa. Even if the whole Brahmāṇḍa were destroyed, it knows no destruction.

*maheśvarāt trayo devā jajñire jagadīśvarāḥ
śāśvatā paramā guhyāḥ sarvātmānaḥ śarīriṇaḥ
eta eva trayo devā eta eva trayo guṇāḥ
eta eva trayo lokā eta eva trayo'gnayaḥ*

The Vedas trace the origin of the Trinity to the Brahman, the śaivas to Maheśvara and the bhāgavatas to Mahāviṣṇu.

Chapter 17

The Story of Guṇanidhi

Sūta said:

1. O great sages, after hearing these words of Brahmā, Nārada once again bowed to him and asked humbly.

Nārada said:

2-3. When did Śiva favourably disposed to His devotees go to Kailāsa? Where did he have the intimate acquaintance with Kubera¹ of great and noble soul? What did Śiva of auspicious form do there? Please narrate all these things to me. I am deeply interested in it.

Brahmā said:

4. O Nārada, listen. I shall tell you the story of the moon-crested lord, how he went to Kailāsa and how he contracted friendship of Kubera.

5. In the city of Kāmpilya² there was a sacrificer named Yajñadatta. Born of Somayāji family he was an adept in the performance of sacrifice.

6. He knew Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He was a great scholar of Vedānta *etc.* He was honoured by the king. He was a liberal-minded donor and as such his fame had spread far and wide.

7-8. He assiduously maintained the sacrificial fire and was devoted to the study of the Vedas. His son (Guṇanidhi) was of a very handsome complexion and shone like the moon's disc. After the investiture with the sacred thread he learned all the eight lores³ over and over again. Yet, unknown to his father he indulged in gambling.

¹Kubera is the son of “viśravas” by “iḍaviḍā”. He is the chief of the “yakṣas” and a friend of Rudra. He is mythologised as having three legs and eight teeth.

²The country known to *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā* (xxiii, 18) and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (xiii. 2.8.3) can be identified with the city of Kāmpīla in the Furrukhabad district, Uttara Pradeśa. It was the Southern Capital of Pāñcāladeśa in ancient India. Dr. Awasthi however, places it in the Ānartadeśa, a region of the Western India.

³The eight sciences included (1) the triple Veda (trayī), (2) logic and metaphysics (ānvīkṣikī), (3) the science of Government (daṇḍanīti), (4) practical arts such as agriculture, commerce, medicine *etc.* (vārtā), (5) ancient historical and mythological tradition, (6) science of rituals, (7) logic and (8) dharma or law.

9. Ever and anon he took plenty of sums from his mother and gave them over to other gamblers with whom he contracted great intimacy.
10. He eschewed all brahminical ways and conduct of life. He was averse to the performance of *sandhyā* prayers and ceremonial ablutions. He began to speak ill of the Vedas, sacred texts, *devas* and *brāhmaṇas*.
11. He did not follow the conventions and injunctions of the Smṛti code, He indulged in singing and playing. Actors, heretics *etc.* were his beloved friends.
- 12-15. Although his mother wanted him to meet his father now and then, he never went near his father. Engaged in extra-domestic activities Yajñadatta used to ask his wife “Dear good woman, what is our son Guṇanidhi doing? He is not at home.” Then the woman used to say, “He has gone out just now. So long he had been taking his bath and worshipping the deities. He has finished his Vedic studies and has just gone out in the company of two or three friends for the purpose of learning somewhere”. The poor woman in view of the fact that she had only one son deceived her husband thus.
16. The simple husband did not know anything about the nefarious activities of his son or his bad conduct. All sacred rites ending with *keśakarma*⁴ were performed in the sixteenth year of the son.
17. Thereafter Yajñadatta performed the marriage rite of the son in accordance with the rules prescribed in the *Gr̥hya Sūtras*.
18. O Nārada, every day the woman with her heart melting with motherly affection used to make her son sit up and gently upbraid him.
19. “Dear son, your father is surely a great man, but he is of rash temperament. If he comes to know of your activities he will beat you and will not spare me too.
20. I conceal your nefarious activities from your father every day. Due to his good conduct and his affluent circumstances he is honoured by all the people.
21. Dear child, a good learning and association with men of saintly character constitute a great asset for *brāhmaṇas*. How is it that you do not gladly take interest in such things?
22. Your ancestors and grandfathers had all earned the reputation of being good Vedic scholars, well learned in Śāstras, and performers of sacrifices, especially *somayāgas*.
23. Shun the company of the wicked people, associate with good men, turn your attention to good learning and strictly adhere to brāhmaṇical conventions.
24. Emulate your father in form, fame and traditional activity. Why don’t you feel ashamed? Cast off your wickedness.

⁴The religious ceremony *keśānta* in which the hair were cut off was performed upon *brāhmaṇas* at 16 years of age, *kṣattriṇas* at 22 and *vaiśyas* at 24. Cf. *Manu. U.* 65, *Yājñavalkya* 1.36.

25. You are nineteen now. This girl is sixteen years old. She is a good girl. Take her. Protect her. Above all be devoted to your father.
26. You shall respect your father-in-law also, in view of his good qualities and conduct. How is it that you do not feel ashamed of wickedness?
27. Dear son, your maternal uncles too are matchless in learning, conduct and pedigree and other things. You are not afraid even of them. Your paternal and maternal lineages are equally pure.
28. See the *brāhmaṇas* boys of your neighbourhood. Even in our house see the disciples of your father. How humbly do they behave?
29. Dear son, if the king hears of your evil propensities, he will cease to respect your father and may even suspend the regular maintenance allowance.
30. Till now people used to call your activities the foolish blunders of an ignorant boy. Hereafter they may take away the traditional title of *dīkṣita*.
31. People will curse and cavil at your father and me saying such evil words as “The son has adopted the wickedness of the mother.”
32. Your father has never been a sinner. He strictly follows the path of the Vedas and Smṛtis. Lord Śiva is my witness for the purity of my mind that is riveted to his feet.
33. I have not seen the face of any wicked man after my menstrual bath. Powerful indeed is Fate whence a boy like you is born of my womb!”
34. Although constantly advised thus by his mother, the wicked boy did not abandon his evil ways. For, an idiot indulging in vice is beyond redemption.
35. Who is he that is not broken up by the evil influences of hunting, wine, slander, untruth, theft, gambling and prostitutes?
36. The wicked fellow (Guṇanidhi) used to lay his hands on whatever he could see in the house, a cloth, a base metal *etc.* and take it to the gambling den, there to lose the same to his brother gamblers.
37. Once he stole a very valuable ring of his father set with precious stones and gave it to one of the gamblers.
38. It chanced that one day the *dīkṣita* saw it in the hand of the gambler. He asked the fellow—“Where did you get this ring from?”
- 39-40. First the gambler did not say anything. When repeatedly asked he said—“O *brāhmaṇa*, you are unnecessarily accusing me of theft. It was your son who gave it to me. On the previous day I had won his mother’s upper garment.
41. Do not think that I alone was the winner of this ring. He has lost many costly things to other gamblers as well.

42. He has thus given gems, metals, silk garments, vessels, golden vases, and different sorts of copper and bell metal pots.

43. Everyday he is being bound stark naked by the gamblers. In the whole world you cannot see such a useless poor gambler as he (your son).

44. How is it that till now, O *brāhmaṇa*, you have not realised that your son is a ring leader of base gamblers, very clever in misdemeanour and unfair means?

45. On hearing these words, the poor *dīkṣita*'s head bent down with shame. He covered his face and head with a cloth and quietly slipped back into his house.

46. Yajñadatta, the sacrificer, well versed in Vedic rites spoke thus to his wife who was a very chaste lady.

Yajñadatta said:

47-48. O mistress! where is that gambling rogue of a son, Guṇanidhi? Or let it be. Why should I ask for him? Where is that auspicious ring which you took off at the time of applying unguents on my body? Bring it quickly and give it to me.

49-51. The mistress was frightened at these words. While she was engaged in arranging for bath and midday sacred rites she replied—"O lord, I am busy arranging the various articles of offerings for worship. O lord, fond of guests, the guests may be unnecessarily detained. While I was busy cooking the pudding I kept the ring somewhere in some vessel just now. What a pity! I have forgotten it. I do not know where it has been kept.

Dīkṣita said:

52-53. O truthful lady who has given birth to a base boy, whenever I asked "Where has the son gone?" you used to say, "Dear lord, just now he has gone out after finishing his lesson of the Vedas, in the company of two or three friends for revision of the lesson".

54. Where is your silk saree red like madder which I had presented to you and which used to hang down here in the house always? Tell me the truth. Do not be afraid.

55. That gem-set golden vase which I had given you is also missing. That tripod with a velvet cushion which I had given you is nowhere to be seen.

56. Where is that bell metal pot made in the South? Where is that copper pot made in Bengal? Where is that ivory casket intended for curios and trinkets?

57. Where is that wonderfully fine statuette of a lady lighting a lamp, shining like the moon, and brought from the hilly province?

58. Why should I unnecessarily speak much? O lady of a noble family, it is futile to be angry with you. I shall take food—only after I marry again!

59. I am childless now since that wicked fellow has defiled the whole family. Get up and fetch me some water. Let me offer libations to him with gingelly seeds⁵.

⁵It is customary among the orthodox Hindu families in India to offer libations of water mixed with gingelly seeds to the manes on particular days.

60. Better to be issueless than have a wicked son who defiles the entire family. It is the traditional policy to abandon one to save the family.

61. The *brāhmaṇa* took his bath, performed his daily rites and married the daughter of a Vedic scholar the same day.

Chapter 18

The Redemption of Guṇanidhi

Brahmā said:

1-2. Guṇanidhi, the son of the Dīkṣita Yajñadatta, came to know of this. Regretfully he cursed himself and set off from that place. After wandering aimlessly for a long time, he, the wicked fellow, felt the abandonment keenly and losing all hopes halted at a place.

3-7. He thought to himself: “Where am I to go? What shall I do? I have not studied much, nor am I rich enough. Only a wealthy man can be happy in a foreign land, although he has to face the fear of thieves there. Of course this fear is present everywhere. I am born in the family of priests officiating in sacrifices. Why am I reduced to this wretched plight? Fate is powerful indeed, controlling all our future actions. I cannot even beg as I have no acquaintance, no money. Where shall I seek refuge? Everyday, even before sunrise, my mother used to feed me with sweet pudding. Today whom shall I beg? My mother too is away from me.”

8. O Nārada, even as he was musing like this woefully, sitting at the foot of a tree, the sun set.

9. In the meantime a certain devotee of Lord Śiva came out of the city taking with him various articles of offering.

10. He had observed fast on the Śivarātri¹ day. In order to worship lord Śiva, he was on his way, along with his kinsmen and was carrying different sorts of delightful offerings.

11. The devotee entered the temple of Śiva where he worshipped Him in the prescribed manner with sincere devotion.

12. The *brāhmaṇa* boy, son of Yajñadatta, devoid of his mother and dismissed by his father, was very hungry by this time. He inhaled the sweet fragrance of the sweet puddings and followed the devotee.

¹Śivarātri: Śiva's Night. It is a popular fast and festival held in honour of Śiva on the 14th of the dark half of the month Māgha or January-February with many solemn ceremonies observed during the day and night. In Tāntric literature it is called Kālarātri, one of the three sacred nights, the other two being Mahārātri and Moharātri.

13. “If fortunately these devotees of Śiva go to sleep after offering the eatables to Śiva, I shall eat these vast varieties of puddings and sweets in the night”.

14. With this hope he sat at the threshold of the temple of Śiva watching the great worship by the devotee.

15. When the worship was over, the songs and dances of prayer were duly concluded, the devotees lay down and began to sleep. Immediately the young man entered the sanctum sanctorum of Śiva in order to steal the eatables left there.

16. The lamp was burning very dimly. Hence in order to see the puddings clearly he tore a piece of cloth from his lower garment and put that piece in the lamp as a wick thus making the lamp give a good light.

17. Yajñadatta’s son gleefully took plenty of the sweets offered as eatables to Lord Śiva by the devotees.

18. With sweets in his hands he came out hurriedly. In his hurry he stamped on some person lying there who woke up immediately.

19. “Who is that? Who is running away so fast? Catch him.” So shouted the man who woke up in a voice hoarse with fear.

20. The *brāhmaṇa* boy (Guṇanidhi) who ran for life became blind. So he was caught and killed by the watchmen on duty.

21. O sage, by the favour of Śiva or by the power of accumulated merit, the son of Yajñadatta could not partake of the offerings of eatables made to Lord Śiva.

22. The terrible soldiers of Yama who desired to take him to Saṃyamani² (the abode of Yama), approached him with nooses and clubs in their hands and bound him.

23. In the meantime the attendants of Śiva with tridents in their hands and tinkling anklets on their arms reached the spot in an aerial chariot in order to take him to Śivaloka.

Śivagaṇas said:

24. “O attendants of Yama, leave this righteous *brāhmaṇa* alone. He cannot be punished since his sins have been burnt off”

25-27. On hearing these words of Śiva’s attendants, the attendants of Yama became terrified and addressed the attendants of Śiva:

Yamagaṇas said:

“O Gaṇas, this is a wicked *brāhmaṇa* who has broken the traditions and conventions of his family. He has disobeyed his father’s directions and has forsaken truthfulness or purity. He does not offer his *sandhyā* prayers. He does not take his ceremonial baths regularly.

² Saṃyamini or Saṃyamani, the city of Yama is fabled to be situated on Mount Meru.

28. Leave aside his other activities. He has now transgressed and outraged the offerings of eatables made to Śiva. You can see this personally. In fact he is not worthy of even being touched by people like you.

29. Those who consume or outrage the offerings of eatables made to Śiva and those who offer these to others, the mere touch of these persons, it is said, is sinful.

30. Even poison is not so dangerous when drunk. Never shall a person make use of Śiva's property even if he were to die.

31. It is granted that you are an authority on virtue. We are not. But O Gaṇas, if this fellow has at least a bit of virtue to his credit, please let us hear the same".

32. On hearing these words of Yama's attendants, the attendants of Śiva remembered the lotus-like feet of Śiva and spoke to them thus:

Śiva's attendants said:

33. "O Attendants of Yama, Śiva's ideas of *dharma* are very subtle. They can be observed only by persons of subtle and keen vision, not by people like you whose aim is only the gross exterior.

34. O Gaṇas, hear attentively what this son of Yajñadatta has done which has freed him from sins.

35. The shadow of the lamp was falling on the top of the *liṅga* and this *brāhmaṇa* prevented it by adding a wick to the lamp at night, cutting a piece from his lower cloth.

36. Another great merit he derived from listening to the names of Śiva, though casually, O attendants.

37. He witnessed the worship that was being performed duly by a devotee. He was observing a fast and his mind was concentrated too.

38. Let him go to Śivaloka along with us. As Śiva's follower let him enjoy great pleasures there for sometime.

39. Then he will shake off his sins and become the king of Kalinga³ since he has indeed become a great favourite of Śiva.

40. Nothing else need be mentioned now. Let all of you, emissaries of Yama, return to your own world with contented minds."

Brahmā said:

41. O lordly sage, on hearing these words of Śiva's attendants, the emissaries of Yama returned to Yama's abode.

³The Kalinga Deśa occupied the narrower eastern coastal plain from the delta of the Godāvarī to that of the Mahānadī river. It was probably one of the best-known regions of the south known to ancient Indian literature.

42. O sage, they narrated everything to Yama whatever the messengers of Śiva told them about *dharma etc.*

Dharmarāja said:

43. “O Gaṇas, listen attentively to what I say. Whatever I direct you to do, you shall do with loving devotion.

44. O Gaṇas, you shall avoid those persons who bear on their forehead the mark of *tripuṇḍra* besmeared with white ashes. Never shall they be brought here.

45. O Gaṇas, you shall avoid those persons who regularly dust their body with white ashes. Never shall they be brought here.

46. You shall avoid all those persons who assume the garb and features of Śiva whatever their reason may be. Never shall they be brought here.

47. You shall avoid those persons who wear *rudrākṣas* and keep matted hair. Never shall they be brought here.

48. You shall avoid those persons who imitate the dress or the features of Śiva, even for their livelihood. Never shall they be brought here.

49. You shall avoid those persons who imitate the dress and features of Śiva even for the purpose of deception. Never shall they be brought here.”

50. Yama thus commanded his servants. They too agreed to follow his command and remained silent with the flickering smile on their lips.

Brahmā said:

51. Thus freed from the emissaries of Yama, the *brāhmaṇa* boy became pure-minded and went to Śivaloka along with the attendants of Śiva.

52. There he served Śiva and Śivā (Pārvatī) and enjoyed all sorts of pleasures. Afterwards he was born as the son of Arindama, the king of Kalinga.

53. Known as Dama he was devoted to the service of Śiva. Even as a boy he carried on many acts of devotion to Śiva in the company of other children.

54. When his father passed away he became the king in the prime of his youth. In his kingdom he spread the ideals and tenets of Śiva lovingly.

55. The king Dama was unconquerable. O *brāhmaṇa*, he did not stress any act of piety other than furnishing temples of Śiva with lamps in plenty.

56. He called headmen of the villages in his kingdom and asked them to furnish all temples of Śiva with lamps.

57. He warned them that if they defaulted they would be punished. It is declared in the Vedas that Śiva is delighted at the gift of a lamp to his temples.

58. “Therefore, you headmen shall see that the temples of Śiva in your jurisdiction are properly illuminated with lamps. There is no question of hesitation in this matter.

59. “Undoubtedly I shall get the defaulter beheaded.” Thus for fear of him every temple was duly illuminated.

60. With this act of piety alone, as long as he lived, the king Dama acquired ample prosperity. Finally he passed away.

61. The impression of lamps persisted in his mind. He caused many lamps to be lighted. Finally he became the lord of Alakā⁴ with gem-set lamps to his credit.

62. Thus even the smallest service rendered to Śiva bears rich fruit in time. Let all persons seeking happiness realise this and continue the worship of Śiva.

63-65. That son of Dīkṣita never cared for any act of piety. It was to steal that he had entered the temple of Śiva. To serve his own end he had brightened the lamp there, thereby dispelling the shadow of darkness on the top of the *liṅga*. Then he became the virtuous king of Kaliṅga. O foremost of the sages where the wicked son of the Dīkṣita, and where the guardian of a quarter? Although he had been simply a man, he became the guardian of a quarter.

66. Thus I have narrated the story of Guṇanidhi, the son of Yajñadatta. The story is pleasing to Śiva. Besides, it grants all desires of the listening devotees.

67. O dear one, I shall tell you how he became the close friend of Śiva. Listen attentively.

⁴Alakā—It is the capital of Kubera, the chief of the Yakṣas and Guhyakas. It is also called Prabhā, Vasudharā and Vasusthalī and is fabled to be situated on a peak of the Himālayas, inhabited also by Śiva.

Part II

Satī-khaṇḍa

Part III

Pārvatī-khaṇḍa

Part IV

Kumāra-khaṇḍa

Part V

Yuddha-khaṇḍa

