

## 8. The Trinity tested

Once upon a time Kashyapa and some other sages performed a great Yaga on the banks of the sacred River Ganges. Narada attended the Yaga and questioned those in charge of it : “What for is this Yaga ? Who is the receipt of its fruit?”

The sages could not answer. They deputed Bhrigu the learned Maharshi to go and test the Gods personally and report his conclusions. Bhrigu went to Brahma first. The rulers of the eight corners were there. Recitation of Vedas was echoing. Saraswathi was serving her Lord Brahma. Bhrigu prostrated himself before the four headed Lord Brahma. Brahma remained silent.

“This is an ignorant one!” The Maharshi thought and immediately left for Kailasa.

The three-eyed Lord Siva was in his private chamber with Parvathi, his consort. He did not notice the visitor at all. The divine lady, however, noticed the intruder and felt ashamed. “Leave me, my Lord. A sage has come!” she pointed out. Hara released her from his embrace and tried to kill Bhrigu for his unauthorised intrusion at that moment of amour. The sage grew wild and cursed Siva thus “You will not be worshipped in the world. You will acquire fame by your sex-symbol, which alone will be worshipped.”

Bhrigu then straight-away went to Vykuntha and visited Sreehari. The Lord was in his bed chambers, relaxing on serpent couch. Lakshmi was also there. Bhrigu approached Sreehari and gave a kick on his chest. The Lord got up hurriedly and fell on the feet of the sage, took him within his arms and asked him courteously : “O Great sage, why have you kicked my body which neither gods nor men can attack? It is eight times harder

than a diamond. But your feet are so tender. By contacting my rough body what an amount of pain your feet have suffered!" So saying, he laved the feet of the sage with hot water and sprinkled that water on his head and observed : "Sage, by your Darshan all the worlds get purified."

Bhrigu returned to the assembly of sages and announced his verdict : " Hari is the Supreme God. After him comes Lakshmi. Next come Brahma and Saraswathi". Gods have their ranking just like Suras, Asuras and Men. Sreehari has been allotted the first rank. So, the Yagna was dedicated to that Supreme Being.