
Kumara Upanishad

कुमारोपनिषद्

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Translation and commentary by P.R.Kannan

In Skanda Puranam, in Sambhava Kanda, Sri Parameswara explains to Sri Parvati the significance of various names of their child Subrahmanya. While describing him as Kumara, he says:

एषोपहतपाप्माहि विरजामृत्युवर्जितः ।

विशोको विचिकित्सश्च विपिपासुः कुमारकः । (३५।१६)

सत्यकामस्तथासत्यसङ्कल्पोऽयं महेश्वरी ।

ऋतं च सत्यं पुरुषो विश्वो विश्वाधिकश्च सः ॥ (३५।१७)

“O Maheswari, this Kumara is sinless, free from Rajoguna, indestructible, free from grief, is the medicine for the malady of Samsara, is free from thirst, desirous of truth, who wills truth, embodiment of truth in thought, truth in word, who is the created world incarnate, and who is beyond the created world.”

Kumara Upanishad mantras, brimming with the Ultimate Gnana bestowed by Kumara, are used as Namaskara mantras in the Subrahmanya temple in Tiruchendur in Tamil Nadu. Devotees prostrate near the flagstaff every morning with chant of each mantra.

अथ कुमारोपनिषद् ।

॥ ॐ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

अम्भोधिमध्ये रविकोट्यनेकप्रभां ददात्याश्रितजीवमध्ये ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १ ॥

In these verses, the second line is repeated. It means, “Om, Hamsa, prostrations to that Kumara”. Hamsa or swan refers here to Paramatma. Just as Hamsa has the rare capacity to separate milk from water with which it remained mixed, Paramatma or Gnani is all of Satva with no trace of Rajas or Tamas; Rajas or Tamas does not stick to him.

Kumara grants to Jivas, who completely surrender to him, and who are in the midst of the ocean (of Samsara), the splendour of many crores of Suryas.

He drives away the darkness of ignorance and attachment by his resplendent glow of Gnana. "Ambhodhimadhye" can also be taken to mean Kumara in his abode in Tiruchendur in Tamil Nadu on seashore.

विराजयोगस्य फलेन साक्ष्यं ददाति नमः कुमाराय तस्मै ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ २ ॥

Kumara grants the fruit of the most brilliant Yoga and thus vindicates his presence. Here by Virajayoga is meant the union of Jivatma with Paramatma.

The sight of his devotees attaining Moksha is proof of his presence and blessing.

योऽतीतकाले स्वमतात् गृहीत्वा श्रुतिं करोत्यन्यजीवान् स्वकाले ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ३ ॥

Kumara on his own in the past pulled Jivas away from their instinctive ignorant state, and in due time, he initiates them into Gnana (after preparing them gradually on the path of Bhakti and Gnana).

Kumara's blessing commences with his pulling the Jivas from lower births like birds and animals, and granting them human birth, which alone can give them access to Gnana and Moksha.

यस्यांश्च जीवेन सम्प्राप्तुवन्ति द्विभागजीवाश्च समैककाले ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ४ ॥

Jivas, who reside with Brahma in Satyaloka during the lifespan period of two Parardhas of Brahma, attain to Kumara at the same time at the time of the Great Dissolution (Maha Pralaya).

Jivas, who have attained Atmagnana, spend their time in austerity in Satyaloka during the period of two Parardhas (which is the lifespan of Brahma), and attain to Moksha along with Brahma at the time of Pralaya. Such Jivas are also 'Dvibhagajivas' in another sense; they live in two worlds, as Jiva attached to the world and as speck of Paramatma in the glory of Atman, till they attain Self-realisation.

प्रचोदयान्नाद् हृदिस्थितेन मन्त्राण्यजीवं प्रकटीकरोति ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ५ ॥

Kumara, through the act of enabling the expression of Nada (subtle sound) present in the heart of the Jiva, brings forth mantras to the knowledge of the Jiva.

बान्धव्यकल्लोल हृद्वारि दूरे विमानमार्गस्य च यः करोति ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ६ ॥

The Jiva's heart is constantly battered by the manifold relationships in the world; with development of due maturity, Kumara shows the Jiva the path of the Vimana (aircraft) at a distance.

Till Gnana is attained, the path of the Vimana taking the Jiva to Kumara appears distant. With his grace, it comes nearer. Vimana means the vehicle to higher realm, i.e. Moksha.

सद्दीक्षया शास्त्रशब्दस्मृतिर्हृद्वातांश्च छिन्नादनुभूतिरूपम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ७ ॥

Kumara initiates the Jiva with the sounds given in the scriptures and other memorized texts (mantra), He cuts asunder the winds of Samsara that constantly assail the Jiva's heart through the revelation of His knowledge endowed form.

दीक्षाविधिज्ञानचतुर्विधान्य प्रचोदयान्मन्त्रदेवाद्वरस्य ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ८ ॥

Kumara, through the grace of the great Mantradevata, bestows Gnana on the Jiva by means of the process of Diksha of four types.

Four types of Diksha by Guru on his disciple are: Vagdiksha, rousing the spiritual consciousness by uttering the mantra into the ear of the disciple; Chakshudiksha, same by looking intently at the disciple; Sparsadiksha, same by touching the disciple; Smaranadiksha, same by the power of thought of the Guru.

Gnana is also said to be attained by four paths: Karma, Bhakti, Dhyana and Gnana.

Gnana is further attributed to four means: Pratyaksha, direct perception; Anumana, inference; Agama, scriptural testimony; Aptavakya, verbal testimony of Sishtas, the virtuous.

कोट्यद्भुते सप्तभिरेव मन्त्रैः दत्त्वा सुखं कश्चिदयस्य पादम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ९ ॥

There are seven crores of Mahamantras. Kumara graces the Jiva by initiating him into a suitable mantra, which becomes for him 'iron support' and bestows bliss.

Sastras declare that the mantra taught by Guru is the only strong support for the aspirant on his difficult path of Self-realisation.

स्वस्वाधिकारांश्च विमुक्तदेवाः शीर्षेण संयोगयेद्यस्य पादम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १० ॥

Devas, who lost their positions of power to Asuras, adore Kumara's feet by placing their heads at his feet.

Kumara is Devasenapati, the commander of the army of Devas; he fights the Asuras and destroys them and restores power to Devas.

Kumara helps the devotees, whose minds are enfeebled by the persistent attacks of Samsara.

हुङ्कारशब्देन सृष्टि(प्र)भावं जीवस्य दत्तं स्ववरेण येन ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ११ ॥

Kumara blesses Jiva by giving him the boon; the boon is given by uttering the sound 'Hum' through which Jiva attains the created form.

Jiva goes into latent state after Mahapralaya; Kumara gives Jiva a chance for redemption by bestowing the form on him during creation.

वीराजपत्रस्थ कुमारभूतिं यो भक्तहस्तेन संस्वीकरोति ।

ससर्वसंपत् समवाप्तिपूर्णः भवेद्धि संयाति तं दीर्घमायुः ॥

One, who respectfully receives and wears the Vibhuti (sacred ash) of Kumara placed on the fragrant leaf (called Panneer in Tamil) (at the Tiruchendur Temple) from the hands of the devotee of Kumara (the Pujari in the temple), attains all wealth and fullness of blessings; long life comes to him.

एतादृशानुग्रहभासिताय साकल्यकोलाय वै षण्मुखाय

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १२ ॥

Om, Hamsa, prostrations to that Kumara, the six-faced, who glows with the desire to bless Jivas in this manner and embraces the Jivas in totality.

Embracing the Jiva in totality means granting him Moksha, Liberation.

॥ ॐ श्री सुब्रह्मण्याय नमः ॥

कुमारोपनिषद्



ॐ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

अम्भोधिमध्ये रविकोट्यनेकप्रभां ददात्याश्रितजीवमध्ये ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १ ॥

विराजयोगस्य फलेन साक्ष्यं ददाति नमः कुमाराय तस्मै ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ २ ॥

योऽतीतकाले स्वमतात् गृहीत्वा श्रुतिं करोत्यन्यजीवान् स्वकाले ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ३ ॥

यस्यांश्च जीवेन सम्प्राप्तुवन्ति द्विभागजीवाश्च समैककाले ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ४ ॥

प्रचोदयान्नाद हृदिस्थितेन मन्त्राण्यजीवं प्रकटीकरोति ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ५ ॥

बान्धव्यकल्लोल हृद्धारि दूरे विमानमकार्कस्य च यः करोति ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ६ ॥

सदीक्षया शास्त्रशब्दस्मृतिर्हृद्वाताम्श्च छिन्नादनुभूदिरूपम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ७ ॥

दीक्षाविधिज्ञानचतुर्विधान्य प्रचोदयान्मन्त्रदैवाद्वरस्य ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ८ ॥

कोट्यद्भुते सप्तभिरेव मन्त्रैः हत्वा शुकं कश्चिदयस्य पादम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ९ ॥

स्वस्वाधिकारांश्च विमुक्तदेवाः शीर्षेण संयोगयेद्यस्य पादम् ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १० ॥

हुङ्कारशब्देन सृष्टिभावं जीवस्य दत्तं स्वरवेण येन ।

ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ ११ ॥

वीराजपत्रस्थ कुमारभूतिं यो भक्तहस्तेन संस्वीकरोति ।

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ॐ हंसः तस्मै कुमाराय नमोऽस्तु ॥ १२ ॥

ॐ श्री सुब्रह्मण्याय नमः ॥

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