
mArgabandhustotram by Appayya Dixita

ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯದೀಕ್ಷಿತೇಂದ್ರೈಃ ವಿರಚಿತಂ

Document Information



Text title : Margabandhu stotra

File name : maargabandhu.itx

Category : shiva, appayya-dIkShita, panchaka

Location : doc_shiva

Author : Appayya Dixit

Translated by : (Copyright) N.Balasubramanian bbalu@satyam.net.in

Latest update : February 9, 2023

Send corrections to : sanskrit at cheerful dot c om

This text is prepared by volunteers and is to be used for personal study and research. The file is not to be copied or reposted without permission, for promotion of any website or individuals or for commercial purpose.

Please help to maintain respect for volunteer spirit.

Please note that proofreading is done using Devanagari version and other language/scripts are generated using **sanscript**.

February 2, 2024

sanskritdocuments.org



ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯದೀಕ್ಷಿತೇಂದ್ರೈಃ ವಿರಚಿತಂ



ಶ್ರೀಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಪಂಚರತ್ನಮಾಲಾ ಅಥವಾ ಪಂಚರತ್ನಸ್ತವಂ
ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ ..
ಭಾಲಾವನಮೃತ್ಯುರೀಟಂ ಭಾಲನೇತ್ರಾರ್ಚಿಷಾ ದಗ್ಧಪಂಚೇಷುಕೀಟಂ .
(ಭಾಲಪ್ರದೀಚ್ಯಾತ್ಯುರೀಟಂ ಭಾಲನೇತ್ರಾರ್ಚಿಷಾ ದಗ್ಧಪುಷ್ಪೇಷುಕೀಟಂ)
ಶೂಲಾಹತಾರಾತಿಕೂಟಂ ಶುದ್ಧಮಧೇಂದುಚೂಡಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 1..
ಅಂಗೇ ವಿರಾಜದ್ಭುಜಂಗಂ ಅಭೃಗಂಗಾತರಂಗಾಭಿರಾಮೋತ್ತಮಾಂಗಂ .
ಓಂಕಾರವಾಟೀಕುರಂಗಂ ಸಿದ್ಧಸಂಸೇವಿತಾಂಘ್ರಿಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
(ಹ್ರೀಂಕಾರವಾಟೀಕುರಂಗಂ ಶುದ್ಧ)
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 2..
ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಂ ನಿಹ್ನುತಾಶೇಷಲೋಕೇಶವೈರಿಪ್ರತಾಪಂ .
ಕಾರ್ತವ್ಯರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಚಾಪಂ ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಂ ಭಜೇ ದಿವ್ಯಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 3..
ಕಂದರ್ಪದರ್ಪಘ್ನಮೀಶಂ ಕಾಲಕಂಠಂ ಮಹೇಶಂ ಮಹಾವ್ರೋಮಕೇಶಂ .
ಕುಂದಾಭದಂತಂ ಸುರೇಶಂ ಕೋಟಿಸೂರ್ಯಪ್ರಕಾಶಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 4..
ಮಂದಾರಭೂತೇರುದಾರಂ ಮಂದರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಸಾರಂ ಮಹಾಗೌರ್ಯದೂರಂ .
ಸಿಂದೂರದೂರಪ್ರಚಾರಂ ಸಿಂಧುರಾಜಾತಿಥೀರಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
(ಸಿಂದೂರಗೌರಪ್ರಚಾರಂ)
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 5..
ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯಯಜ್ಞೇಂದ್ರ ಗೀತಂ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರರಾಜಂ ಪಠೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಾಣೇ .
ತಸ್ಯಾರ್ಥಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ವಿಧತ್ತೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಮಧ್ಯೇಽಭಯಂ ಚಾಶುತೋಷೋ ಮಹೇಶಃ .
(ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯಯಮಖಿವರ್ಯವಿರಚಿತಂ ಪಂಚರತ್ನಸ್ತವಂ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧೋರುದಾರಂ .
ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಪಠೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ತಸ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತಿಃ ಕರಸ್ಯೈವ ಸಾಯುಜ್ಯರೂಪಂ .)
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ, ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ .. 6..

ಇತಿ ಶ್ರೀಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯದೀಕ್ಷಿತೇಂದ್ರೈಃ ವಿರಚಿತಂ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣಂ .

The sequence of the verses has variation; also with verse number 6.

Introduction and translation by N. Balasubramanian

A short life sketch of Shri Appayya DikShita (1520-1593 AD)

Shrimad Appayya DikShita was born at Adayapalam village, very near Arni, North Arcot District, Tamil Nadu, in the year 1520 AD. His father Shri Rangarajadhari was the son of Shri Acharya DikShita - also known as VakShasthalacharya who was in the court of Shri Krishnadevaraya. "Appayya" was an endearing form of his real name, Vinayaka Subramaniam. "The 16th century AD, in South India was an age of confusion when begotry and vigorous proselytism were rampant. Persecution of one sect by another with the help of the ruling dynasties was quite common. In such an age, the need was felt for a rare scholar with comprehensive vision and imagination, whose mission in life would be the reconciliation of the various creeds, cults and philosophies. Shri Appayya DikShita filled this essential need. He was a peace maker who pleade for harmony, tolerance and mutual goodwill and understanding at a time when people were quarrelling among themselves as to who was superior Vishnu or Shiva. (Dr. N. Ramesan IAS. Shri Appayya DikShita Page 3) "DikShitar's culture was at once profound, libeal and wide. His characteristic impartiality never failed him even in his out and out militant works." (A. V. Gopalachariar. Introduction to Varadarajastava 1927. P vI) DikShitar's learning, says Y. Mahalinga Shastri, was in the truest sense of the word encyclopaedic.

ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯದೀಕ್ಷಿತೇಂದ್ರಾ-ನಶೇಷವಿದ್ಯಾಗುರೂನಹಂ ವಂದೇ .

ಯತ್ಕೃತಿಬೋಧಾಬೋಧೌ ವಿದ್ವದವಿದ್ವದ್ವಿಭಾಜಕೋಪಾಧೀ .. (ಭಟ್ಟೋಜೀದೀಕ್ಷಿತಃ)

Shri DikShita is the author of not less than 104 works and had enjoyed the patronage of King Chinna Bomma of Vellore. He was offered "kanakAbhiSheka" by this king in 1582AD. He was patronised by Chinna Thimma and Venkatapati also. He lived upto the ripe age of 73 years and spent his last days in Chidambaram. Some of his most famous works are Shivarka maNidIpikA, NyAya rakShAmaNI, siddhAnta lesha sa.ngraha, parimala, chAturmata sArasa.ngraha, yAdavabhyudaya vyAkhyA, varadarAjustava and kuvalayAnanda. His stotras are simple, popular and effective, for example, mArgabandhu stotram, durgAchandrakalA stuti, ApitakuchambA stava, hariharabheda stuti.

Margabandhu stotram: This small hymn is about Lord Marga sahaya or Margabandhu of

Virinchipuram, near Vellore, NA Dt., the family deity of DikShita. It is very effective when recited before and during journey to ward off accidents and ensure success. (The above life sketch is taken from the book Shrimad Appayya DikShita, published by Shrimad Appayya DikShitendrar Grantha Prakasana Samiti, Hyderabad.)

The following abbreviations are used in the commentary: (1) VS: Shri Vishnu Sahasranama stotram with Shri Shankara's bashyam. (2) SS: Shiva Sahasranama stotram (called Vedasara sahasram) from Padmapuranam with the commentary (published by Tanjore Saraswati Mahal Library) of HH Shri Paramasivendra Saraswati - 57th pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam and the guru of the well known saint composer Shri Sadasiva Brahmendra Saraswati. (3) BG: Bhagavat Gita (4) BH: Shrimad Bhagavatam (5) KU: Kathopanishad. (6) MU: mundakopanishad (7)SVU: Svetasvatara upanishad. (8)TU: Taittiriyaopanishad. (9) SA: Shri Shivanama Ashtottara shata stotram from Skandam with the commentary (called Shivatattva Rahasyam) of Shri Neelakanta DikShita (grandson of Shri Appayya DikShita's younger brother), a great scholar and poet in his own right.

ಮಾರ್ಗಃ = a way, road, path; ಬಂಧುಃ = relative or any one associated, well wisher. So the word ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಃ means one who comes along with you giving company and protection ಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ Stotram is a hymn praising the Lord ಗುಣಸಂಕೀರ್ತನಾತ್ಮಕಂ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ (VS681) It talks about His qualities.

ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ

Stotram: At this point it is relevant to say a few words about stotram. Our scriptures are explicit in saying that the Supreme Being is one. It is without name, form and any other attributes. It is called brahman in our scriptures. This is not its name but one of its many attributes बृहत्तमत्वात् That which is big is brahman. Since the adjective 'big' is used simply without a noun to be qualified it implies that the bigness is unlimited. It is infinite and beyond time, space etc., unlike the objects and beings we see in the universe. The scriptures also aver that it is beyond our senses. The famous mantra from the Taittiriyaopanishad (Anu IV) says that the brahman is beyond the reach of our mind and words ಯತೋ ವಾಚೋ ನಿವರ್ತಂತೇ ಅಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯ ಮನಸಾ ಸಹ If so, how does a seeker think of it or pray to it? This is where our scriptures come to our help. They also describe the same God (who indeed is without a form or name) as having many forms and names. This helps a seeker to worship Him through prayers, puja, pilgrimages to holy places etc.. So we have gods like

Rama, Shiva, Durga etc.. The worship of the Lord with form and name is called (ಸಗುಣ ಉಪಾಸನಾ) saguna (sa = with; guna = attributes; upAsana = worship). The names and forms conceal the esoteric truths mentioned in the upanishads. Thus they, like a map, give us some idea of something which is very vast and cannot be grasped by our senses. The Lord graciously accepts the worship offered to Him in any form one may choose. Krishna says

ಯೋ ಯೋ ಯಾಂ ಯಾಂ ತನುಂ ಭಕ್ತಃ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾಽರ್ಚಿತುಮಿಚ್ಛತಿ .
ತಸ್ಯ ತಸ್ಯಾಚಲಾಂ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಂ ತಾಮೇವ ವಿದಧಾಮ್ಯಹಂ .. BG.7-21

He says that in whatever form a devotee seeks to worship Him with faith He upholds that faith and makes it steady.

ಸ ತಯಾ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾ ಯುಕ್ತಃ ತಸ್ಯಾರಾಧನಮೀಹತೇ .
ಲಭತೇ ಚ ತತಃ ಕಾಮಾನ್ ಮಯೈವ ವಿಹಿತಾನ್ವಿತಾನ್ .. BG.7-22 .

He adds that the devotee engages himself with faith in the worship (as said above) and from that he obtains his desires which are really conferred by Me alone. These statements of the Lord lend validity and sanctity to the worship of God with name and form who indeed is without any name, form or attributes. Later on the Lord says

ತೇಷಾಂ ಸತತಯುಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಭಜತಾಂ ಪ್ರೀತಿಪೂರ್ವಕಂ .
ದದಾಮಿ ಬುದ್ಧಿಸಂಯೋಗಂ ಯೇನ ಮಾಮುಪಯಾಂತಿ ತೇ. BG.10-10 .

He assures that to such devotees who worship Him with love He will give the clear wisdom by which they will reach Him. In this manner the saguna upAsana acts as a stepping stone to nirguna upAsana and through that the realisation of God.

Prahlada, the gem among the devotees, mentions nine kinds of devotion (BH .7-5-23). The first two amongst these (viz.) ಶ್ರವಣಂ listening to the Lord's names and stories which bring out His glories and ಕೀರ್ತನಂ chanting them are the simplest and easiest to practise. These can be done by anyone irrespective of age, caste or gender. They are suitable for the young and energetic as well as the old and decrepit, a pundit and also the ignoramus. Thus they are suitable for all. It is possible that their very simplicity deceives one to imagine that they are less potent than the other kinds of devotion. This is not so. Our scriptures repeatedly assert that they can confer the highest benefits on the devotee. The vedas contain stotras like the Rudram, Shri suktam etc.. Our puranas contain many. In addition our acharyas like Shri Shankara and other saints have composed soul-stirring compositions in many languages. All these are ideally suited for recitation.

One remarkable common feature to be found in these stotras is that each one may be in praise of a differently named god like Rama or Shiva. It will praise the attributes of that deity (in saguna form). It will also refer to incidents to be found in the puranas. The Bhagvat Gita says that the Lord incarnates Himself from time to time to subdue the evil and protect the righteous people. The puranas contain details of the incarnations and the deeds performed by Him to fulfill His mission. Behind all the glorification they will refer to His nirguna (without attributes) aspect also. The composition may be in praise of Shri Rama or Devi but it will also talk of the God as the Supreme Being. This clearly shows that the composer of the stotra was in fact praising the formless reality using the form of Shri Rama or Devi as a front. We can see this being done in this stotram also.

There is one more point to note regarding stotras. Poets have sung praises of nobles and kings for pecuniary gains. But these men and kings, howsoever great or rich they may be, are only human. They have their limitations and weaknesses. In view of this a poem in praise of a person has necessarily to overlook the subject's foibles, exaggerate whatever virtues are to be found and if necessary innovate virtues! Exactly opposite is the case with God. He is pure and without limitations. As said earlier He is beyond the reach of the mind and words. So those who have composed stotrams in praise of the Lord have invariably felt severely handicapped because of their own limitations. We find such verses confessing the feelings of inadequacy even in the compositions of great acharyas like Shri Shankara and Shri Vedanta Desika .

Now let us go to the Margabhandhu Stotram proper .

0

ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ ಶಿವ ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವೇಶ ಶಂಭೋ -
ಶಂಭೋ ಮಹಾದೇವ ದೇವ ..

The stotram begins with the recitation of the holy names of the Lord. The recitation of the Lord's names purifies the mind, makes it calm and fit for any serious undertaking. So they are normally repeated before commencing any work like pooja, religious discourse etc.. Here one may recall the familiar verses recited at the time of commencing puja or any religious ceremony .

ಅಪವಿತ್ರಃ ಪವಿತ್ರೋ ವಾ ಸರ್ವಾವಸ್ಥಾಂ ಗತೋಽಪಿ ವಾ .
ಯಃ ಸ್ಮರೇತ್ ಪುಂಡರೀಕಾಕ್ಷಂ ಸಃ ಬಾಹ್ಯಾಭ್ಯಂತರಃ ಶುಚಿಃ ..

ಮಾನಸಂ ವಾಚಿಕಂ ಪಾಪಂ ಕರ್ಮಣಾ ಸಮುಪಾರ್ಜಿತಂ .

ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಸ್ಮರಣೇನೈವ ವ್ಯಪೋಹತಿ ನ ಸಂಶಯಃ ..

ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮ ರಾಮ ರಾಮ ..

These verses say “Anyone - may be impure or pure or whatever may be his condition - if just thinks of the lotus-eyed Lord is certainly pure inside and out. Sins committed by mind, speech or action go away by thinking of Shri Rama. This is certain.” Thus the chanting of the Lord’s names flushes out the impurities in the mind and invigorates it. The author can then look to the successful completion of the work taken on hand - in this case the composing of the hymn. Happily these names may be taken to apply to both to Shiva and Vishnu. They may be seen in the sahasranamams of both Shiva and Vishnu.

SHAMBHU ಶಂಭುಃ . ಶಂ ಸುಖಂ ಭಾವಯತೀತಿ ಶಂಭುಃ

(SS-74: VS-38) He blesses his devotees with happiness and prosperity ಶಂ = happiness, prosperity. All beings go through the repeated cycle of birth and death. They experience varieties of sufferings during each life. During the dissolution of the universe He withdraws all beings within Himself - out of mercy - and after some time He releases them again at the beginning of the next kalpa so that they get relief and respite.

ಯತಃ ಸರ್ವಾಣಿ ಭೂತಾನಿ ಭವಂತ್ಯಾದಿಯುಗಾಗಮೇ .

ಯಸ್ಮಿಂಶ್ಚ ಪ್ರಲಯಂ ಯಾಂತಿ ಪುನರೇವ ಯುಗಕ್ಷಯೇ .. VS-11

“From whom all beings come at the beginning of the kalpa and into whom they again merge at the end of the kalpa.” This implies that they are also sustained by Him during the period in between. This is mentioned in the TU (3-1).

ಯತೋ ವಾ ಇಮಾನಿ ಭೂತಾನಿ ಜಾಯಂತೇ ಯೇನ ಜಾತಾನಿ ಜೀವಂತಿ ಯತ್ ಪ್ರಯಂತ್ಯಭಿಸಂವಿಶಂತಿ

“From whom all these beings emanate, by whom they stay alive and into whom they merge after death.”

MAHADEVA ಮಹಾದೇವಃ - ಮಹಾಂಶ್ಚಾಸೌ ದೇವಶ್ಚ ಮಹಾದೇವಃ .

ಮಹತ್ವಂ ಚ ಸಕಲಪೂಜ್ಯತ್ವಾದ್ವಾ ವಿಭುತ್ವೇನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣತೋ ಮಹತ್ವಾದ್ವಾ He is worshipped by everyone. Also He is great because He pervades every thing.(SS22) ಸರ್ವಾನ್ ಭಾವನ್ ಪರಿತ್ಯಜ್ಯ ಆತ್ಮಜ್ಞಾನಯೋಗೈಶ್ಚರ್ಯೇ ಮಹತಿ ಮಹೀಯತೇ ತಸ್ಮಾದುಚ್ಯತೇ ಮಹಾದೇವಃ (VS492)He is called Mahadeva because of His superior knowledge and His greatness as the greatest of the yogis. Shivarahasya says that the sound “Mahadeva Maha-deva” is a divine medicine for those bitten by the serpent called samsara

ಮಹಾದೇವ ಮಹಾದೇವ ಮಹಾದೇವೇತ್ಯಯಂ ಧ್ವನಿಃ ಸಂಸಾರಸರ್ಪ-ದಷ್ಟಾನಾಂ ದಿವ್ಯೌಷಧಮನುತ್ವಮಂ.

DEVA ದೇವಃ - ಸ್ವಾಮಿಪರ್ಯಾಯೋ ದೇವಶಬ್ದಃ, ನರದೇವ ಇತಿವತ್. ಅಕುಂಚಿತಸ್ವಾಮಿತ್ವಂ ಚ ಶಿವಸ್ಯೈವ The word deva indicates lordship. His lordship is unrestricted ದಿವ್ಯತೇರ್ದೇವಃ (SA93) He is effulgent. Krishna says " I am the splendour of those who possess splendour," ತೇಜಸ್ತೇಜಸ್ವಿನಾಮಹಂ BG(10-36) Accordingly, ತಮೇವ ಭಾಂತಮನುಭಾತಿ ಸರ್ವಂ ತಸ್ಯ ಭಾಸಾ ಸರ್ವಮಿದಂ ವಿಭಾತಿ KU(2-2-15). All these (the sun, the moon, the stars, the lightning and fire) shine only after Him. It is with the infinitesimal part of His luminosity that all these shine.

ತೇಜೋಮೂರ್ತಿಃ SS413 and ಅಮಿತತೇಜಾಃ SS34 are His names. In the course of teaching of Gita at KurukShetra, Arjuna requests Krishna to show him His cosmic form as Iswara. The gracious Lord obliges and reveals His universal form. Arjuna is overwhelmed by the splendour of the form he sees. He feels as though a thousand suns had risen at once in the sky ದಿವಿ ಸೂರ್ಯಸಹಸ್ರಸ್ಯ ಭವೇದ್ಯುಗಪದುತ್ಥಿತಾ . ಯದಿ ಭಾಃ ಸದೃಶೀ ಸಾ ಸ್ಯಾದ್ಭಾಸಸ್ತಸ್ಯ ಮಹಾತ್ಮನಃ . (BG 9-12). Here, as is usual with the scriptures, thousand is only indicative and stands for many or infinite. This is a popular verse and is said to have been quoted by the scientist Oppenheimer to describe the explosion of the first atom bomb which he witnessed.

Effulgence does not stand only for light. It also means wisdom. Shiva stands for infinite knowledge ಯಃ ಸರ್ವಜ್ಞಃ ಸರ್ವವಿತ್ MU(1-9) One who is omniscient and knower of all ದ್ಯುತಿಧರಃ ದ್ಯುತಿಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಲಕ್ಷಣಾಂ ದೀಪ್ತಿಂ ಧಾರಯತೀತಿ ದ್ಯುತಿಧರಃ VS(275)He bears the shine of knowledge ದೀಪ್ತಮೂರ್ತಿಃ ದೀಪ್ತಾ ಜ್ಞಾನಮಯೀ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯಸ್ಯೇತಿ ದೀಪ್ತಮೂರ್ತಿಃ VS(719) He is of the form of shining knowledge ಪ್ರಕಾಶಾತ್ಮಾ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಸ್ವರೂಪ ಆತ್ಮಾ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಾತ್ಮಾ VS(276) His form is effulgent knowledge.

SIVA ಶಿವಃ - ಶಿವಃ ಮಂಗಲಸ್ವರೂಪಃ .. ನಿರ್ಮೃಷ್ಟ ನಿಖಿಲದುಃಖಾನುಷಂಗಪರಮಾನಂದರೂ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . Shiva is the personification of auspiciousness. He is completely free from sorrows that characterise all created beings including plants, animals, birds, humans and devas like Indra and even Brahma the creator. He is the embodiment of supreme bliss. (SS18) Also ನಿಶ್ಚೈಗುಣತಯಾ ಶುದ್ಧತ್ವಾತ್ ಶಿವಃ (VS27)He is devoid of the three qualities i.e. sattva(serenity), rajas(activity) and tamas(inertia). These qualities constitute ignorance (of Brahman or reality) and characterise all creation. So Shiva

being free from these is pure. Patanjali sums up all this in his Yogadarsana (1-23) as ಕ್ಲೇಶಕರ್ಮವಿಪಾಕಾಶಯೈರಪರಾಮೃಷ್ಟಃ ಪುರುಷವಿಶೇಷಃ ಈಶ್ವರಃ . ಕ್ಲೇಶಾಃ, ಅವಿದ್ಯಾ, ಅಸ್ಮಿತಾ, ರಾಗ, ದ್ವೇಷ, ಅಭಿನಿವೇಶಾ, ಕರ್ಮ ಧರ್ಮಾಧರ್ಮೌಃ, ವಿಪಾಕಾಃ ಕರ್ಮಫಲಾನಿ - ಜನ್ಮಾಯುರ್ಭೋಗಾಃ, ಆಶಯೋ ಜ್ಞಾನಾದಿ- ವಾಶನಾಃ, ಏತೈಃ ಕಾಲತ್ರಯೇಽಪರಾಮೃಷ್ಟಃ ಪುರುಷವಿಶೇಷಃ ಈಶ್ವರಃ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ ..

ಸ್ಮೃತಿಮಾತ್ರೇಣ ಪಾವಯನ್ ಶಿವಃ He removes the sins of those who just think of His name. DakShayani says this to her father DakSha ಯದ್ವ್ಯಕ್ಷರಂ ನಾಮ ಗಿರೇರಿತಂ ನೃಣಾಂ ಸಕೃತ್ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಾದಘಮಾಶು ಹಂತಿ The celebrated two syllables SIVA uttered with the tongue even once and that too casually, immediately wipes off the sins of those (who utter them).(BH 4.4.13) Shivarahasya says this about the sanctity of Lord Shiva's names:

ಸರ್ವಾಣಿ ಶಿವನಾಮಾನಿ ಮೋಕ್ಷದಾನೈವ ಸರ್ವದಾ .
ತೇಷ್ವಪ್ಯತ್ಯುತ್ತಮಂ ನಾಮ ಶಿವೇತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸಂಜ್ಞಿತ ..

All the names of Shiva give mokSha no doubt. But amongst them the name Shiva is the best and denominates brahman. The name Shiva is considered as the best among the Lord's names .

ವಿದ್ಯಾಸು ಶ್ರುತಿರುತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟಾ ರುದೈಕಾದಶನೀ ಶ್ರುತೌ .
ತತ್ರ ಪಂಚಾಕ್ಷರೀ ತಸ್ಯಾಂ ಶಿವ ಇತ್ಯಕ್ಷರದ್ವಯಂ ..

Of all the knowledge the vedas are superior. Among the vedas Shri Rudram that consists of sixteen chapters is superior. In that the PanchakShari is superior. In that also the two letters SIVA are the best. The glory of the Lord's names is dealt with in great detail in Puranas and hymns of the saints.

DEVESHA ದೇವೇಶಃ - ಪ್ರಾಧಾನ್ಯೇನ ದೇವಾನಾಮೀಶಃ ದೇವೇಶಃ He is the foremost among the gods like Indra, Agni etc.. VS(492) ಸುರೇಶಃ - ಸುರಾಣಾಂ ದೇವಾನಾಮೀಶಃ ಸುರೇಶಃ He is the lord of the devas. VS(85). He rules with a firm hand. None can dare to transgress His commandments without facing serious consequences .

ಭೀಷಾಸ್ಮಾತ್ ವಾತಃ ಪವತೇ. ಭೀಷೋದೇತಿ ಸೂರ್ಯಃ .
ಭೀಷಾಸ್ಮಾದಗ್ನಿಶ್ಚೇಂದ್ರಶ್ಚ . ಮೃಗುತ್ಯುರ್ಧಾವತಿ ಪಂಚಮಃ

TU(VII-1) It is for fear of Him that the wind blows; the sun rises; the fire and Indra perform their duties. It is for fear of Him that death the fifth runs about doing his work with diligence.

The same is said by none other than Yama, the lord of death:

ಭಯಾದಸ್ಯಾಗ್ನಿಸ್ತಪತಿ ಭಯಾತ್ ತಪತಿ ಸೂರ್ಯಃ .

ಭಯಾದಿಂದ್ರಶ್ಚ ವಾಯುಶ್ಚ ಮೃತ್ಯುರ್ಧಾವತಿ ಪಂಚಮಃ . KU(3-3).

Now let us go to the stotram proper. It consists of five verses and a sixth one - called ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ that gives the benefit of reciting the hymn. In this hymn Lord Margabandhu is described as the God with form as Shiva bearing weapons, as the consort of Parvati. It refers to various incidents to be found in puranas that reveal His unrivalled power and glory. He is also praised in His aspect as the supreme reality, the attributeless brahman whose nature is existence, wisdom and bliss .

1

1. ಭಾಲಾವನಮೃತ್ಕಿರೀಟಂ ಭಾಲನೇತ್ರಾರ್ಚಿಷಾ ದಗ್ಧಪಂಚೇಷುಕೀಟಂ .
ಶೂಲಾಹತಾರಾತಿಕೂಟಂ, ಶುದ್ಧಮಧೇಂದುಚೂಡಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ...

ಭಾಲಃ - forehead; bhAla is preferred to (wrongly used) phAla; ಅವನಮೃ - descended or come down; ಕಿರೀಟಂ - crown: indicates that Lord Shiva wears a crown on the head ಕಿರೀಟೇ - ಕಿರೀಟಮಸ್ಯಾಸ್ಥೀತಿ ಕಿರೀಟೇ (SS782). The crown implies that Shiva wears other ornaments also ಹಿರಣ್ಯಃ (SS273) and ಹಿರಣ್ಯಬಾಹುಃ (SS387) ಸುವರ್ಣವರ್ಣಃ -ಸುವರ್ಣಸ್ಯೇವ ವರ್ಣೋಽಸ್ಯೇತಿ ಸುವರ್ಣವರ್ಣಃ VS(737). One who is golden-hued and ಹೇಮಾಂಗಃ - ಹೇಮೇವಾಂಗಂ ವಪುರಸೇತಿ ಹೇಮಾಂಗಃ VS(738) One with body like gold are also His names. Shri Rudram salutes Him saying ನಮೋ ಹಿರಣ್ಯಬಾಹವೇ. ಪಾದಾವನಮೃತ್ಕಿರೀಟಂ is another reading found in some books ಪಾದಃ = foot; implies that when gods like Indra bow down to salute Him their crowns touch His feet. The crown indicates lordship. Please see the comments on DEVESHA above. He demands respect and in fact He is the only one to be respected ಪೂಜ್ಯಃ .. ಪೂಜಾಯೋಗ್ಯಃ ಪೂಜ್ಯಃ ಸರ್ವವಂದ್ಯಃ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ SS(70) He deserves to be worshipped by all. There is none equal to or greater than Him says Shri Suka while saluting Him before he begins to narrate Bhagavatam to King Parikshit ನಿರಸ್ತನಾಮ್ಯಾತಿಶಯೇನ ರಾಧಸಾ ಸ್ವಧಾಮನಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಿ ರಂಸ್ಯತೇ ನಮಃ BH(2-4-14)ಅತುಲಃ - ತುಲೋಪಮಾನಮಸ್ಯ ನ ವಿದ್ಯತೇ ಇತಿ ಅತುಲಃ He has none equal to Him. VS(355) ಅನುತ್ತಮಃ - ಅವಿದ್ಯಮಾನ ಉತ್ತಮೋ ಯಸ್ಮಾತ್ ಸಃ ಅನುತ್ತಮಃ There is none greater than Him. VS (80). Further there is none superior to Him. VS(626) ಅನೀಶಃ - ನ ವಿದ್ಯತೇಽಸ್ಯೇಶ ಇತಿ ಅನೀಶಃ All other devas including Brahma the creator are limited by time and are subject to sorrows ಪ್ರಥಮಃ - ದೇವಾನಾಂ ಪ್ರಧಾನಭೂತ ಆದ್ಯೋ ವಾ ಪ್ರಥಮಃ He is the

first and foremost among the devas. SS(111). Shri Rudram says He is the foremost and is the inner self of the devas ಪ್ರಥಮೋ ದೈವ್ಯಃ Such is His glory ಭಾಲನೇತ್ರಾರ್ಚಿಷಾ ದಗ್ಧಪಂಚೇಷುಕೀಟಂ - ನೇತ್ರಂ = eye: ಅರ್ಚಿಸ್ = fire: ದಗ್ಧ = burnt: ಇಷುಃ = arrow: ಕೀಟಃ = a worm, insect ಪಂಚೇಷುಃ is the name Manmatha, the god of love, because he has five arrows: they are ಅರವಿಂದಂ, ಅಶೋಕಂ, ಚೂತಂ, ನವಮಲ್ಲಿಕಾ and ನೀಲೋತ್ಪಲಂ(lotus, ashoka, mango, jasmine and blue lotus). The five arrows are also said to be ಸಂಮೋಹನಃ , ಉನ್ಮಾದನಃ, ಶೋಷಣಃ, ತಾಪನಃ and ಸ್ತಂಭನಃ They are fascination, intoxication or extravagance of love, emaciation, suffering pain and benumbing or stupifying respectively. Kalidasa vividly narrates the story connected with Shiva destroying the god of love in his masterpiece Kumarasambhavam. Manmatha shot his arrow ಸಂಮೋಹನಂ at Shiva who was deep in meditation. He wanted to seduce Shiva's mind and make Him fall in love with Parvati who was attending on Him, but failed in his attempt. Shiva could sense that something was amiss and looked about. He saw Manmatha cowering at a distance. He just knit his brows in annoyance. In that moment fire shot out of His third eye and reduced the wretched Manmatha into a handful of ashes. Manmatha is contemptuously termed a worm or insect as he was foolish enough to try his tricks on none other than the great Shiva. So Shiva is known as ಕಾಮಾರಿಃ - ಕಾಮಸ್ಯ ಮನ್ಮಥಸ್ಯ ಅರಿಃ ಕಾಮಾರಿಃ SA(25)

Leaving the story apart, the implication is that there is no place for carnal desires in the presence of the Lord; just like there is no place for darkness in the presence of the sun. By the same logic, there will be no place for evil tendencies in the heart of a devotee who establishes the Lord therein.

Shiva's third eye is situated in His forehead. So Shiva is known as ಭಾಲನೇತ್ರಃ SS(159) and ಲಲಾಟಾಕ್ಷಃ SA(28) It is to be noted that the third eye is unique. None of the human beings and gods including Indra and the creator Brahma possess such an eye. So Shiva is also known as ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷಃ . ವಿರೂಪಾಣಿ ವಿರುದ್ಧಸ್ವರೂಪಾಣಿ ಲೋಕವಿರುದ್ಧತ್ರಿತ್ವವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾನಿ ಅಕ್ಷೀಣಿ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷಃ . SS(129). He has an abnormal third eye. The third eye situated in a high position (viz) forehead and stands for supreme knowledge ಉನ್ನತಸ್ಥಾನವರ್ತಿಲೋಚನಶಾಲಿತ್ವಕೀರ್ತನೇನ ವಿಶ್ವೋತ್ತರಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಲಿತ್ವಂ ಸೂಚಿತಂ SA(28). With such an eye He could easily look into the inmost recesses of anyone's heart and see the thoughts lurking there. So He could detect by a mere glance that the god of love has come to His presence with an evil thought

and meted out severe punishment.

The Shiva-Mahimna stotram (15) says that for his foolishness Manmatha paid a heavy price with his life and became an object of memory ಸ್ಮರಃ ಸ್ಮರ್ತವ್ಯಾತ್ಮಾ ನ ಹಿ ವಶಿಷು ಪಥ್ಯಃ ಪರಿಭವಃ . ಸ್ಮರ Smara is another name of Manmatha. His arrows have not failed anywhere in the world of gods, demons and men. So he became conceited. Smara became (ಸ್ಮರ್ತವ್ಯಾತ್ಮಾ) an object of memory. The moral of the story, says the poem, is that an insult to the great will produce serious consequences ವಹ್ನಿನೇತ್ರಃ - ವಹ್ನಿನೇತ್ರಂ ಲಲಾಟೇ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ವಹ್ನಿನೇತ್ರಃ (SS131) is also one of Shiva's names. Bhartrihari in his Vairagya Satakam refers to this incident thus: ಲೀಲಾದಗ್ಧ-ವಿಲೂಲಕಾಮ ಶಲಭಃ (i.e.) who effortlessly burnt up the flippant god of love as a moth. A big fire instantly reduces a moth into ashes.

ಶೂಲಃ = the Trident of Shiva; ಆಹತ = struck; ಅರಾತಿ = enemy; ಕೂಟಂ = mass, heap: Shiva has destroyed His enemies with His Trident. But Shiva has no enemies ಸಮೋಽಹಂ ಸರ್ವಭೂತೇಷು ನ ಮೇ ದ್ವೇಷ್ಯೋಽಸ್ಮಿ ನ ಪ್ರಿಯಃ (BG9-29) "I am the same to all beings. There is none hateful or dear to me" says the Lord in Gita. So we have to take "enemies" to mean the enemies of His devotees. We find that during the Mahabharata war Lord involved Himself to help His devotee Arjuna. During the KurukShetra war Arjuna was struck with wonder to see a figure radiant like the sun going ahead of him. The figure destroyed his enemies very easily with His trident. Arjuna tells this to sage Vyasa and asks who that radiant figure was. He adds that people think he has killed his enemies so valiantly though all the work was done by that figure. Vyasa says "You have seen Lord Shiva." ಈಶಾನಮೀಶ್ವರಂ ದೇವಂ ದೃಷ್ಟವಾನಸಿ ಶಂಕರಂ Krishna confirms this and says "Your enemies have already been killed by Me. Be a mere instrument." BG(11-33) ಮಯೈವೈತೇ ನಿಹಿತಾಃ ಪೂರ್ವಮೇವ ನಿಮಿತ್ತಮಾತ್ರಂ ಭವ ಸವ್ಯಸಾಚಿನ್

The more dangerous "enemies" a devotee has to face are internal such as desire, anger etc.. In reply to Arjuna's question as to what impels a person to commit sins even though he may be unwilling, Krishna says ಕಾಮ ಏಷ ಕ್ರೋಧ ಏಷ ರಜೋಗುಣಸಮುದ್ಭವಃ . ಮಹಾಶನೋ ಮಹಾಪಾಪ್ಮಾ ವಿದ್ಧ್ಯೇನಮಿಹ ವೈರಿಣಂ. BG(3-37) "It is desire. It is anger. They are born out of rajo guna. It has huge appetite and makes one to commit sins. Recognise it as your enemy." And later on BG(16-21) He describes these as open gateways to hell that will destroy the self. He cautions Arjuna to be careful and avoid them. So a devotee in order to avoid these internal enemies installs Him in his heart and

feels safe. Krishna tells Uddhava that once He is established in the heart evil tendencies like desires get destroyed ಕಾಮಾ ಹೃದಯ್ಯಾ ನಶ್ಯಂತಿ ಸರ್ವೇ ಮಯಿ ಹೃದಿ ಸ್ಥಿತೇ BH(11-21-26). They cannot live together like light and darkness. He is called ಕಾಮಹಾ - ಕಾಮಾನ್ ಹಂತಿ ಮುಮುಕ್ಷುಣಾಂ ಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಹಿಂಸಕಾನಾಂ ಚೇತಿ ಕಾಮಹಾ He destroys the desires of His devotees who seek liberation and the intentions of those who trouble them. VS(294). Also ಕಾಮನಾಶಃ .. ಮುಮುಕ್ಷುಣಾಂ ಕಾಮಂ ನಾಶಯತೀತಿ ಕಾಮನಾಶಃ SS(126). Lord Shiva is the ಆದಿ ಗುರುಃ the earliest or the first guru. He teaches by demonstration. He shows He has destroyed His desires and wants His devotee to do likewise. He is only too willing to help him provided he makes his heart His temple. In view of this Bhartruhari describes a sadhu whose heart is pure as having devotion to Shiva with trident ಭಕ್ತಿಃ ಶೂಲಿನಿ

Unfortunately a devotee has to contend with one more “enemy” - more pernicious than the enemies mentioned in the preceding para. It is attachment. Desire is a longing to possess something which we do not have and we feel that thing can give us satisfaction or pleasure or security. We try to get that thing and when someone or something thwarts the desire the desire turns into anger. Thus desire precedes anger or anger is the result of frustrated desire. Once the object of desire is got and is in our possession we tend to hold on to it. This inclination to bind ourselves to objects or people around us is known as attachment. We look to those objects or people to give us pleasure or security. Vedanta warns us to avoid getting attached to things or people; because firstly the objects of attachment are perishable as anything in the world is. If we develop strong attachment to something, then parting with it can be a very painful experience and we may sink under the load of the resultant grief. That was the case with Dasaratha who was excessively attached to his son Rama. He could not bear the pangs of separation from Rama who had to leave for the forest for fourteen years. He died in agony.

Secondly it is wrong to look to such objects or people for security as they are perishable and so are themselves insecure. Hence they cannot confer security on us. We will be left in the lurch. Attachment is called (ಈಷಣಾ) IshanA. Three types of attachments are mentioned in our scriptures. They are attachment to (1) the money (2) wife/husband and (3) children. Further it is said that attachment, once developed to something, is very difficult to get rid of. It is like a blob of coal tar that has somehow got stuck to our body. It will take a long time and repeated washing to get rid of it. So we are warned to be wary of developing attachment

to anything or any person. This does not prevent us from showing love to others.

Prahlada gives a description of these attachments (BH .7-6) in his advice to his friends. Talking about the attachment to money he says ಕೋ ನ್ವರ್ಥತ್ವಷ್ಟಾಂ ವಿಸ್ವಜೀತ್ ಪ್ರಾಣೇಭ್ಯೋಽಪಿ ಯ ಈಪ್ಸಿತಃ .. ಯಂ ಕ್ಷೀಣಾತ್ಯಸುಭಿಃ ಪ್ರೇಷ್ಟೈಸ್ತಸ್ಯರಃ ಸೇವಕೋ ವಣಿಕ್. (BH 97-8-10) He says that money is valued higher than life itself and so who can give up attachment to it? The thief, the soldier and the merchant trade their dear life for money. In view of this he warns all to stay away from the objects of attachment and seek the Lord. The boy Nachiketa said ನ ವಿತ್ತೇನ ತರ್ಪಣೀಯೋ ಮನುಷ್ಯಃ He said man can never get satiated with the wealth when Yama offered him immense wealth in exchange for the teaching about self.

Kunti, the mother of Pandavas, in her prayer to Krishna before He leaves for Dwaraka says ಸ್ನೇಹಪಾಶಮಿಮಂ ಛಿಂಧಿ ದೃಢಂ ಪಾಂಡುಷು ವೃಷ್ಟಿಷು. She prays to the Lord to cut her attachment to her relatives so that her mind can think of Him without distractions. BH(1-8-41)

The foregoing introduction is to explain the other implication of shula or the trident of Shiva. The three sharp points of the trident can destroy the three kinds of attachment that can assail a devotee and hinder his progress.

The devotee shakes off his attachments to the worldly objects first. This was what Vibhishana did before surrendering to Rama. As the brother of Ravana and his minister he was very powerful. He was immensely rich. He had palaces, loving wives and children. But he gave up every thing and rushed to Rama without even taking leave of his wife and children. He said ತ್ಯಕ್ತ್ವಾ ಪುತ್ರಾಂಶ್ಚ ದಾರಾಂಶ್ಚ ರಾಘವಂ ಶರಣಂ ಗತಃ Renouncing my wives and children I have surrendered to Raghava and again ಪರಿತ್ಯಕ್ತಾ ಮಯಾ ಲಂಕಾ ಮಿತ್ರಾಣಿ ಚ ಧನಾನಿ ಚ Lanka, friends and all wealth had been left behind by me. (Ramayana-Yuddhakanda-17-16 and 19-6). Then he transfers his attachment to the Lord and enshrines Him in his heart. Then the devotee ties His feet firmly with the cord of love and so He becomes immobilised ಪ್ರಣಯರಶನಯಾ ದೃಢಾಂಘ್ರಿಪದ್ಮೈಃ BH(11-2-55). Thus firmly stationed in the devotee's heart He destroys the evil tendencies therein ಹೃದ್ಯಂತಸ್ಥೋ ಹ್ಯಭದ್ರಾಣಿ ವಿಧುನೋತಿ ಸುಹೃತ್ಸತಾಂ BH(1-2-17) ಶೂಲಹಸ್ತಃ - ಶೂಲಂ ಹಸ್ತೇ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ (SS114): ಜಿತಶತ್ರುಃ - ಜಿತಾಃ ಶತ್ರುವಃ ಯೇನ ಸಃ ಜಿತಶತ್ರುಃ (SS211) and ರಿಪುಘ್ನಃ - ಸುರರಿಪೂನ್ ಹಂತೀತಿ ರಿಪುಘ್ನಃ (SS370) are Shiva's names. Further it is said ತ್ರೈಗುಣ್ಯಂ ಶೂಲಮೇತಸ್ಯ - ಏವಂ ಭೂತಸ್ಯ ಶೂಲಸ್ಯ

ಕರಸ್ಥತ್ವೋಕ್ತಾ ತ್ರಿಗುಣಾತ್ಮಿಕಾಯಾ ಮಾಯಾಯಾ ಸ್ವಾಧೀನತ್ವಮುಕ್ತಂ ಭವತಿ
SA(11) The trident represents the three gunas (traits). Shiva holding it in His hand shows
He is in control of maya of which they are the constituents.

ಶುದ್ಧಂ = ಕಾಲತ್ರಯೇಽಪಿ ಪರಮಾರ್ಥತಃ ಮಾಯಾಽವಿದ್ಯಾದಿ ಸಂಬಂಧರಹಿತಃ
ಶುದ್ಧಃ . ಶುದ್ಧಮಪಾಪವಿದ್ಧಂ ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ (SS310) Forever He is free from maya (the
illusion by which one considers the unreal universe as really existent and as distinct from
the Supreme Spirit) and spiritual ignorance. This is made explicit by what is said about the
moon next.

ಅರ್ಧೇಂದುಚೂಡಂ - ಅರ್ಧ = half ಇಂದುಃ = the moon ಚೂಡ = crest, Shiva has
partial moon on the crest ಸೋಮವಿಭೂಷಃ - ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾ ಭೂಷಾ ವಿಭೂಷಾ, ಸೋಮಃ
ವಿಭೂಷಾ ಭೂಷಣಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಸೋಮವಿಭೂಷಃ ಚಂದ್ರಧರಃ (SS32) and also
ಶಶಿಮೌಲಿಃ = ಶಶೀ ಚಂದ್ರಃ ಮೌಲೌ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಶಶಿಮೌಲಿಃ (SS929)The moon
appears as a special ornament to Shiva ಶಶಿಶೇಖರಃ - ಅಯಂ ಚಂದ್ರಃ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಸ್ಯ
ಜ್ಞಾನರೂಪ ಇತಿ ಶಿವಾಗಮೇ ದರ್ಶಿತಂ.ಯತೋಕ್ತಂ “ ಜ್ಞಾನಚಂದ್ರಕಲಾಚೂಡಂ.”
SA(5). The moon represents His infinite wisdom. Please see notes under Deva above. It
is to be noted that the crown that Shiva wears does not cover the moon. This implies
that Shiva's lordship over the universe - His omnipotence - does not veil His wisdom. The
shining moon announces to the world that one who yearns for knowledge should come to
Him. Shankaracharya says in his Prasnotara ratnamalika ಕೋ ಹಿ ಜಗದ್ಗುರುರುಕ್ತಃ?
ಶಂಭುಃ, ಜ್ಞಾನಂ ಕುತಃ? ಶಿವಾದೇವ. Who is the universal teacher? Shambu. From
where can one get wisdom? From Shiva only. So we have the saying ಜ್ಞಾನಮಿಚ್ಛೇತ್
ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಾತ್ ” One should pray to Maheswara for wisdom.”

ಭಜೇ = worship: ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ = the Lord Margabandu. I worship Lord Margabandu
who wears a crown, who destroyed the insect like god of love with the fire from His eye
in His forehead, who destroyed the enemies (of gods) with His Trident, who is pure(i.e.)
beyond maya and ignorance and who wears the moon on His head as an ornament.

2

2. ಅಂಗೇ ವಿರಾಜದ್ಭುಜಂಗಂ ಅಭ್ರಗಂಗಾತರಂಗಾಭಿರಾಮೋತ್ತಮಾಂಗಂ .
ಓಂಕಾರವಾಟೀಕುರಂಗಂ ಸಿದ್ಧಸಂಸೇವಿತಾಂಘ್ರಿಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ ...

ಅಂಗೇ ವಿರಾಜದ್ಭುಜಂಗಂ - ಅಂಗಂ = limb; may mean hand, or leg; ವಿರಾಜತ್

= shining or appearing prominently; ಭುಜಂಗಃ = serpent, snake; Lord Shiva is decked with snakes ಸರ್ಪಭೂಷಃ - ಸರ್ಪಾಃ ಭುಜಗಾಃ ಭೂಷಾಃ ಭೂಷಣಾನಿ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಸರ್ಪಭೂಷಃ (SS43) His other names are ಸರ್ಪಹಾರಃ: ಸರ್ಪಾಃ ನಾಗಾಃ, ತೇ ಹಾರಾಃ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ (SS494) and ನಾಗಚೂಡಃ - ನಾಗೋ ವಾಸುಕಿಃ ಕೋಟೀರಬಂಧನಾರ್ಥಂ ಚೂಡಾಯಾಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ನಾಗಚೂಡಃ (SS736). Shiva wears a garland of snakes and has tied Vasuki -the king of snakes - around His head to keep His locks of hair in place.

Snakes:-

We fear snakes because we identify them with death. And everyone is afraid of death ಕಸ್ಮಾದ್ಭಯಮಿಹ? ಮರಣಾತ್ says Sankaracharya in his Prasnotara ratnamalika. The symbolism is used in our scriptures frequently. For example: ಗ್ರಸ್ತಂ ಕಾಲಾಹಿನಾಽಽತ್ಮಾನಂ ಕೋಽನ್ಯಸ್ತ್ರಾತುಮಧೀಶ್ವರಃ BH(11.8.41) meaning “who else, other than the Lord can save one seized by the serpent of Time ? When Gajendra, the lord of the elephants was seized by a crocodile and found that he could not extricate himself from its grip he called the Lord saying ಯಃ ಕಶ್ಚನೇಶೋ ಬಲಿನೋಽನ್ತಕೋರಗಾತ್ ಪ್ರಚಂಡವೇಗಾದಭಿಧಾವತೋ ಭೃಶಂ .. ಭೀತಂ ಪ್ರಪನ್ನಂ ಪರಿಪಾತಿ ಯದ್ಭಯಾನ್ಮತ್ಯುಃ ಪ್ರಧಾವತ್ಯರಣಂ ತಮೀಮಹಿ. BH(8.2.33) He says “Whosoever be the almighty God, who protects one, who has surrendered to Him being very much afraid of the powerful snake in the form of Death - that is very fast and is after him - and from fear of whom Death himself runs hither and thither, let us seek Him as our refuge.”

Kala means the Supreme principle which devours everything and Yama the god of death who is also known by the names Antaka and Mrutyu. So at level one He is Yama ಮೃತ್ಯುಃ ಸರ್ವಹರಶ್ಚಾಹಂ Krishna says “I am Death who seizes all life.” BG(10.34) He is Antaka ಅಂತಕಃ - ಅಂತಂ ಕರೋತಿ ಭೂತಾನಾಮಿತಿ ಅಂತಕಃ VS(520). He causes the end of all life. At the higher level He is the kala or Supreme principle which destroys everything including Yama, the god of death at the time of dissolution. Lord Kapila gives a description of Kala to His mother Devahuti. BH(3.29. 36-45). He says it is none other than Vishnu who draws everything into Himself ಕಾಲಃ - ಕಲಯತಿ ಸರ್ವಮಿತಿ ಕಾಲಃ, - ಕಾಲಃ ಕಲಯತಾಮಹಂ - ಗೀತಾ 10.30 ಇತಿ ಭಗವದ್ವಚನಾತ್ VS(418) and SS(33). The Lord is not limited by time or space or by any material ಅನಂತಾತ್ಮಾ ದೇಶತಃ ಕಾಲತೋ ವಸ್ತುತಶ್ಚಾಪರಿಚ್ಛಿನ್ನತ್ವಾತ್ ಅನಂತಾತ್ಮಾ VS(518). He is not subject to destruction or anything that causes destruction. ಅಮೃತ್ಯುಃ .

ಮೃತ್ಯುವಿನಾಶಃ ತದ್ಧೇತುವಾಸ್ಯ ನ ವಿದ್ಯತೇ ಇತಿ ಅಮೃತ್ಯುಃ VS(198). In fact it is He - the seer and all knowing who had created the gods (including Yama) and assigned to them their duties says Isavasyopanishad. ಕವಿರ್ಮನೀಷೀ ಪರಿಭೂಃ ಸ್ವಯಂಭೂಃ ಯಥಾತಥ್ಯತೋಽರ್ಥಾನ್ವ್ಯ ದಧಾಚ್ಛಾಶ್ವತೀಭ್ಯಃ ಸಮಾಭ್ಯಃ So the snakes, representing kala or death, cannot harm Him but He wears them implying He uses Death for His services. Yama himself says ಮೃತ್ಯುರ್ಯಸ್ಯೋಪಸೇಚನಂ Death to Him is like pickles or achAr - a thing He uses in the process of consumig the creation. KU(1.3.25). Remember that one uses a small quantity of pickle only to push in a large amount of food - the main dish. Similarly the Lord uses the services of Yama in a small measure for His main work. ಕಾಲಹಂತಾ. ಕಾಲಸ್ಯ ಮೃತ್ಯೋರ್ಹಂತಾ SS(83) and ಕಾಲಕಾಲಃ .. ಕಾಲಃ ಯಮಃ, ತನ್ಯಾಪಿ ಕಾಲಃ, . SA(29) are His names. He destroyed even Yama, the god of death to protect His devotee Markandeya. The name also indicates that He is the supreme Lord who withdraws everything , the entire creation, including the god of death into Himself at the time of dissolution and releases them again at the beginning of the next cycle of creation. His other names are ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಃ - ಮೃತ್ಯುಃ ಮರಣಂ ಸ್ವಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಮೃತ್ಯುಂ ಜಯತಿ, ಸ್ವೋಪಾಸನಾದಿನಾ ಪರಿಹರತಿ ಇತಿ ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಃ SS(123), SA(71). He removes or avoids the death of His devotees. The sage Markandeya confidently sings ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರಮಾಶ್ರಯೇ ಮಮ ಕಿಂ ಕರಿಷ್ಯತಿ ವೈ ಯಮಃ “I take refuge in Lord Shiva. What harm can Yama do to me?” This is also said symbolically in the story of Dhruva. Towards the end of the story it is said that a chariot came to take him to the place reserved for him in the skies. The Lord had told him that it was a special place because there will be no return to this world again meaning he had crossed death and will not be reborn. At that time Yama - the god of death - approached him and bowed down. Dhruva stepped on Yama’s head and climbed into the vehicle .. ತದೋತ್ತಾನಪಾದಃ ಪುತ್ರೋ ದದರ್ಶಾಂತಿಕಮಾಗತಂ ..ಮೃತ್ಯೋ-ಮೂರ್ಧ್ನಿ ಪದಂ ದತ್ತ್ವಾ ಆರುರೋಹಾದ್ಭೂತಂ ಗೃಹಂ. BH(4.12.30)

At this point let us take a small detour and see what our scriptures have to say on the subject of life and kala or death. This may sound a bit morbid : but since it is literally a matter of life and death we should know some details.

One who is born has to die and one who dies is reborn ಜಾತಸ್ಯ ಹಿ ಧ್ರುವೋ ಮೃತ್ಯುಃ ಧ್ರುವಂ ಜನ್ಮ ಮೃತಸ್ಯ ಚ BG(2.27). From this it appears that this is a never ending process. One can view it in either of the two ways as follows. 1 - One does not believe in

the existence of the other world. There is no inclination to think about or enquire into the process. Such people are known as Nastikas. 2 - This one - known as Astika - believes in the shastras and the existence of the other world. He tries to find a way out of it.

The shastras say that the people coming under the first category are to be pitied. The human birth is superior to other forms of births. Only humans are endowed with free will and ability to discriminate between the right and the wrong; the good and the bad. Only they have the ability to work for their own and other's uplift. The animals do not have free will. Their life is governed by instincts. Because of this they do not incur any sin for their actions. One obtains a human birth after going through the inferior births and as a result of some good deeds and blessings of the Lord. It is therefore incumbent on us to use this privileged position to our advantage and seek higher goals including liberation from death. But if one fails to seize the rare opportunity that has come his way but fritters his life on petty sense pleasures and garnering pelf he falls from his status and is considered an ignoramus. BH(11.7.74) ಯಃ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯ ಮಾನುಷಂ ಲೋಕಂ ಮುಕ್ತಿದ್ವಾರಮಪಾವೃತಂ. ಗೃಹೇಷು ಖಗವತ್ಸಕ್ತಸ್ತಮಾರೂಢಚ್ಯುತಂ ವಿದುಃ .

The question of escaping death has been discussed again and again in our scriptures. We will structure the discussion as answers to the following questions.

- 1 - What leads to rebirth?
- 2 - What is wrong with rebirth or why rebirth is to be avoided?
- 3 - What is the process called death? and
- 4 - Can death be avoided and if so how to avoid death?

1 - What leads to rebirth?

Everyone has to work, at least to keep the wolf from the door. In addition people work to improve their standard of living, to provide for the rainy day, old age etc.. All these activities - called karma - can be classified as good or bad. The good ones are those that are enjoined by our scriptures and those that can be called virtuous, selfless and such. The bad ones are those that are prohibited by our scriptures and those that are motivated by greed, anger, selfishness etc.. Both acts produce results which are to be "enjoyed" by the doer. ಸ್ವಕರ್ಮಣೋನುರೂಪಂ ಹಿ ಫಲಂ ಭುಂಜತಿ ಜಂತವಃ . ಶುಭೇನ ಕರ್ಮಣಾ ಭೂತಿದುಃಖಂ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ಪಾತಕೇನ ತು .. Skanda Puranam. The good deeds produce happiness, prosperity etc.. and lead to higher births - life of better quality and happiness in this world or higher worlds. The bad deeds produce unhappiness, misery etc..

By neglecting to do the duties expected of him and also doing acts that are prohibited he falls and is thrown into inferior births.

ವಿಹಿತಸ್ಯಾನನುಷ್ಠಾನಾತ್ ನಿಂದಿತಸ್ಯ ಚ ಸೇವನಾತ್ .

ಅನಿಗ್ರಹಾಚ್ಛೇಂದ್ರಿಯಾಣಾಂ ನರಃ ಪತನಮೃಚ್ಛತಿ ..

(Yagnavalkya Smrithi) Then he climbs up the ladder slowly and gets the human birth again

after a long time says Lord as Kapila to His mother Devahuti. ಅಧಸ್ತಾನ್ನರಲೋಕಸ್ಯ

ಯಾವತೀರ್ಯಾತನಾದಯಃ . ಕ್ರಮಶಃ ಸಮನುಕ್ರಮ್ಯ ಪುನರತ್ರಾವ್ರಜೇಚ್ಛುಚಿಃ .

BH(3.31.34) Yama - the god of death - tells the same to Nachiketa: "One who is infatuated

with wealth; not having a thought for the other world; such an ignorant person believing

there is no such thing as hell or heaven comes within my clutches again and again."

ನ ಸಾಂಪರಾಯಃ ಪ್ರತಿಭಾತಿ ಬಾಲಂ ಪ್ರಮಾದ್ಯಂತಂ ವಿತ್ತಮೋಹೇನ ಮೂಢಂ ..

ಅಯಂ ಲೋಕೋ ನಾಸ್ತಿ ಪರ ಇತಿ ಮಾನೀ ಪುನಃ ಪುನರ್ವಶಮಾಪದ್ಯತೇ ಮೇ.

KU(1.2.6) So the doer of the deeds has to be prepared to enjoy or suffer the fruits. If

the fruits cannot be exhausted in one lifetime one has to take another birth and try to

exhaust them. The problem, according to our shastras is, that everyone of us had taken

countless number of births, done karmas in these births and accumulated vast amounts

of the karmas. This accumulated store waiting to bear fruit is called ಸಂಚಿತಂ ಕರ್ಮಾ

sanchitam karma. In addition we continue to do karma in this life also and add to the

stock of sanchitam karma thus necessitating more and more births. Out of this vast stock

a chunk begins to yield the results. This chunk is called ಪ್ರಾರಬ್ಧಂ prarabdham. There

is no escape from the results of the prarabdham. It determines the duration of life, the

wealth, education and the mode of death even as one is born ಆಯುಃ ಕರ್ಮ ಚ ವಿತ್ತಂ

ಚ ವಿದ್ಯಾ ನಿಧನಮೇವ ಚ. ಪಂಚೈತಾನಿ ವಿವಿಚ್ಯಂತೇ ಜಾಯಮಾನಸ್ಯ ದೇಹಿನಃ . We

have to infer the impressions of the past deeds only when we are confronted with the results.

Kalidasa says this in Raghuvamsa (1.20) ಫಲಾನುಮೇಯಾಃ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಾಃ ಸಂಸ್ಕಾರಾಃ

ಪ್ರಾಕ್ತನಾ ಇವ

2 - What is wrong with rebirth or why rebirth is to be avoided?

If one asks what is wrong with being born, saints like Shri Shankara want us to think

and find out if anything is right with it?ಕಿಂ ಸಂಸಾರೇ ಸಾರಂ ? ಬಹುಶೋಽಪಿ

ವಿಚಿಂತ್ಯಮಾನಮಿದಮೇವ(Prasnottara ratnamalika). If one were to think that Shankara

was a sanyasi and so had such a dark view of life, so did Bhartruhari and Kulasheakhara

who were kings and had access to all kinds of pleasures ನ ಸಂಸಾರೋತ್ಪನ್ನಂ

ಚರಿತಮನುಪಶ್ಯಾಮಿ ಕುಶಲಂ (Bhartruhari Vairagya Shatakam).

The problems start right from the beginning. Sage Kapila points out that nothing can equal the pain one suffers while in the womb ಗರ್ಭವಾಸಸಮಂ ದುಃಖಂ ನ ಭೂತಂ ನ ಭವಿಷ್ಯತಿ BH(3.31.9). Then look at the troubles one goes through as he grows up. As one runs around earning and looking after his family one is assailed by worries and sickness. He is all the time growing old imperceptibly. ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರೀವ ತಿಷ್ಠತಿ ಜರಾ ಪರಿತರ್ಜಯಂತೀ, ರೋಗಾಶ್ಚ ಶತ್ವವ ಇವ ಪ್ರಹರಂತಿ ದೇಹಂ says Bartruhari in his Vairagya shatakam. He says that old age is crouching there like a tigress frightening us, and diseases attack our bodies like enemies. Then there is the fear of the inevitable death. In view of all these Krishna describes rebirth as the seat of pain and impermanent. ಪುನರ್ಜನ್ಮ ದುಃಖಾಲಯಮಶಾಶ್ವತಂ BG(7.15) Later on He again says this world is impermanent and joyless ಅನಿತ್ಯಮಸುಖಂ ಲೋಕಮಿಮಂ BG(9.33). We clearly see that everything in this world is impermanent. This includes our bodies, our relations, friends and possessions. The question then is how can one feel happy when thrown into such a situation? Time is constantly gnawing at our life quietly. Bhartruhari says life is oozing away like water leaking from a pot with a crack ಆಯುಃ ಪರಿಸ್ರವತಿ ಭಿನ್ನಘಟಾದಿವಾಂಭಃ Death is imminent and can strike anyone at any time. This being the case, Krishna asks “how can one find pleasure in wealth or enjoyment? It cannot please him, who like an animal, is being dragged to be slaughtered.” BH(11.10. 20)ಕೋನ್ವರ್ತಃ ಸುಖಯತ್ಯೇನಂ ಕಾಮೋ ವಾ ಮೃತ್ಯುರಂತಿಕೇ. ಆಘಾತಂ ನೀಯಮಾನಸ್ಯ ವದ್ಯಸೇವ ನ ತುಷ್ಟಿದಃ . Next, Krishna said this world is joyless. This is because the pleasures are transitory. They have a beginning and an end and so are fleeting by nature. Their departure may leave a void and a trail of sorrow. Or they may make one to hanker for more of it and leave him restless and unhappy. So He says that one endowed with discrimination will not enjoy them ಯೇ ಹಿ ಸಂಸ್ಪರ್ಶಜಾ ಭೋಗಾಃ ದುಃಖಯೋನಯ ಏವ ತೇ . ಆದ್ಯಂತವಂತಃ ಕೌಂತೇಯ ನ ತೇಷು ರಮತೇ ಬುಧಃ . BG(9.22) Such sensory pleasures are trivial and cannot be termed as pleasures in the true sense.

In view of what is stated here, rebirth is not desireable and one should, if possible, avoid it.

3 - What is the process called death?

This is mentioned briefly in clinical fashion in the Brihadaranyopanishad. It says that as the end approaches the individual's breathing becomes hard and he starts gasping. His pranas, along with the sense organs, withdraw from their respective foci and gather around jivatma

- the individual soul. As he (jiva) departs, the pranas and the sense organs follow him. He gets a body as in a dream and enters another body. The impressions of his karma and the knowledge about brahman that he had acquired in that birth also follow him. He gets a body suitable to his karma in this world or some other world .. ಏವಮೇವಾತ್ಮಾನಮಂತಕಾಲೇ ಸರ್ವೇ ಪ್ರಾಣಾಃ ಅಭಿಸಮಾಯಾಂತಿ ಯತ್ತ್ಯತದೂರ್ಧ್ವೋಚ್ಛ್ವಾಸೀ ಭವತಿ. (4.3.38) ತಮುತ್ಮಾಮಂತಂ ಪ್ರಾಣೋಽನೂತ್ಮಾಮತಿ ಪ್ರಾಣಮನೂತ್ಮಾಮಂತಂ ಸರ್ವೇ ಪ್ರಾಣಾ ಅನೂತ್ಮಾಮಂತಿ ಸವಿಜ್ಞಾನೋ ಭವತಿ ಸವಿಜ್ಞಾ ಮೇವಾನ್ವವಕ್ರಾಮತಿ ತಂ ವಿದ್ಯಾಕರ್ಮಣಿ ಸಮನ್ವಾರಭೇತೇ ಪೂರ್ವಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾ ಚ. (4.4.2) ಅಯಮಾತ್ಮೇದಂ ಶರೀರಂ ನಿಹತ್ಯಾವಿದ್ಯಾಂ ಗಮಯಿತ್ವಾನ್ಯನ್ನವತರಂ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣತರಂ ರೂಪಂ ಕುರುತೇ(4.4.4) Krishna says that the knowledge he had aquired in the earlier birth carries him forward in his next birth and he progresses in the spiritual path. He does not have to start ab initio. ಪೂರ್ವಾಭ್ಯಾಸೇನ ತೇನೈವ ಹ್ರಿಯತೇ ಹ್ಯವಸೋಽಪಿ ಸಃ BG(6.44) Some puranas describe it in detail making it sound a bit scary. Sage Kapila gives a description in His talk to His mother. This is on the same lines as stated above in the upanishad. He says that the individual soul living in the gross body has, in addition, a subtle body called Linga Shariram or SukShma Sariram which is invisible. It is made up of seventeen components (viz.) the five sense organs of perception (called gnanendriyas), the five sense organs of action (called karmendriyas), the five pranas, the mind and the intellect. It requires the gross physical body for functioning. It does not perish when the gross body perishes in the process called death which takes place at the end of prarabdham karma. The Jiva just migrates to another body (called birth) with the Linga Shariram according to the nature of past karmas and generates new karmas which add on to the sanchitam karma and becomes the seed for future births.

4 - Can death be avoided and if so how to avoid death?

Luckily there is a way to escape death and the birth that follows. Krishna says “on reaching Me there is no rebirth.” ಮಾಮುಪೇತ್ಯ ತು ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪುನರ್ಜನ್ಮ ನ ವಿದ್ಯತೇ BG(8.16) The question, now is: ” where is He? and how to reach Him?” The answer to these questions form the main topic of discussions in our scriptures like Gita, Upanishads and puranas like Shri Bhagavatam and is beyond the scope of this essay and so is not attempted. One has to learn it from a qualified teacher.

ಅಭ್ಯಗಂಗಾತರಂಗಾಭಿರಾಮೋತ್ತಮಾಂಗಂ - ಅಭ್ಯಂ = sky; ಗಂಗಾ = the river Ganges. So the word ಅಭ್ಯಗಂಗಾ means the heavenly river Ganges; ತರಂಗಃ = wave;

ಅಭಿರಾಮಃ = pleasing, charming; ಉತ್ತಮ = best; The word ಉತ್ತಮಾಂಗಂ indicates the best limb in the body viz. the head; This says that Shiva looks charming with the waves of the divine river Ganges on His head ಗಂಗಾಧರಃ - ಧರತೀತಿ ಧರಃ .. ಗಂಗಾಯಾಃ ಧರಃ ಇತಿ ಗಂಗಾಧರಃ (SS146) and SA(27). Also ಧೂರ್ಜಟಿಃ - ಧೂಃ ಗಂಗಾ ಜಟಾಸು ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಧೂರ್ಜಟಿಃ . ನಮಃ ಕಪರ್ದಿನೇ ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ (SS286) ಜಟಾದ್ರಃ - ಜಟಸು ಕಪರ್ದನಾಮಿಕಾಸು ಗಂಗಾಪ್ರಯುಕ್ತಮಾದ್ರಃ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ (SS797).

The river Ganges was, according to our scriptures, originally flowing in the heavens. The story of Lord Vishnu's incarnation and His seeking three feet of land from the king Bali is familiar to all. When He lifted up His foot to measure the heavens, Brahma the creator, seized the rare opportunity and washed the holy foot of the Lord that has come his way with water from his water pot. The waters became the holy river Ganga.

ಧಾತುಃ ಕಮಂಡಲುಜಲಂ ತದುರುಕ್ರಮಸ್ಯ
ಪಾದಾವನೇಜನ-ಪವಿತ್ರತಯಾ ನರೇಂದ್ರ .
ಸ್ವಧುನ್ಯಭೂನ್ನಭಸಿ ಸಾ ಪತತೀ ನಿಮಾಷ್ಟಿಃ
ಲೋಕತ್ರಯಂ ಭಗವತೋ ವಿಶದೇವ ಕೀರ್ತಿಃ .. BH(8.21.4)

The story of the descent of Ganga to earth is also familiar. It is mentioned briefly in Bhagavata in skanda 4 - chapter 17 and skanda 9 - chapter 9. It is given in detail in the Balakanda of Ramayana. Sage Viswamitra narrated it to Rama and Lakshmana as he was taking them to Mithila after he had successfully completed his sacrifice with protection offered by the brothers. King Bhagirata - a scion of the Ikshvaku dynasty to which Rama belonged - was instrumental in bringing the river to earth by performing severe penance. At his request Shiva received the mighty flow of Ganga falling from the heavens and released it as a stream on the earth. A large gathering comprising the residents of the higher worlds and great seers came to witness the wonderful event. They, along with the people of this world, praised the waters of the river Ganga as pure because of its contact with Lord Shiva ಭವಾಂಗ ಪತಿತಂ ತೋಯಂ ಪವಿತ್ರಮಿತಿ ಪಸ್ಪೃಶುಃ (1.43.28). Hence the saying ಕಾಶ್ಯಾಂ ತು ಮರಣಾನ್ಮುಕ್ತಿಃ (ie.) death in Kasi, now known as Varanasi, brings about salvation. King Parikshit decided to spend the last seven days of his life at the banks of the river because of this reason ಕಸ್ತಾಂ ನ ಸೇವೇತ ಮರಿಷ್ಯಮಾಣಃ . BH(1.19.6) It asks "which dying man will not resort to such a holy river?"

Ganga:-

Now let us get behind the story of Ganga and see what it means. Brahma to whom Bhagirata

prays blesses his efforts. But He cautions the king that he should pray to Lord Shiva and involve Him in this matter because the earth cannot withstand the fall of Ganga from the heavens. He adds that no one other than Lord Shiva is capable of receiving the torrent from the heaven. This is because Brahma knows that Shiva is firm and unshakeable. ಸ್ಥಾಣುಃ . ಸ್ಥಿರತ್ವಾತ್ (VS 28). Also SA(72) ಸ್ಥಾಣುಃ ವೃಕ್ಷಃ ತತ್ಸಾಮ್ಯಾತ್ ಸ್ಥಾಣುಃ . ವೃಕ್ಷ ಇವ ಸ್ತಬ್ಧೋ ದಿವಿ ತಿಷ್ಠತ್ಯೇಕಸ್ತೇನೇದಂ ಪೂರ್ಣಂ - ಪುರುಷೇಣ ಸರ್ವಂ

The ಗ in the name Ganga stands for Gayatri which represents the eternal, supreme Brahman. In Gangashtakam, she is addressed as the very embodiment of Brahman, ಪೂರ್ಣಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸ್ವರೂಪೇ . She is eternal and formed by the fusion of the powers extracted from the three - Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. So Gayatri is worshipped in their forms during the three times it is recited (viz.) morning, noon and the evening. In view of this Shiva has placed her on the head - in the chakra called Brahmaramdam. The scriptures define six chakras or seats of power in one's body. The chakra on the head is above all these and is the seat of Brahman. This is also the seat where one visualises one's guru in the form of Brahman and meditates on him because one's guru is not different from Brahman ಗುರುಸ್ವಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಪರಂಬ್ರಹ್ಮ . The fact that she is formed from the powers of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva is stated symbolically in the story of Ganga. ಆದಾವಾದಿಪಿತಾಮಹಸ್ಯ ನಿಯಮವ್ಯಾಪಾರಪಾತ್ರೇ ಜಲಂ, ಪಶ್ಚಾತ್ ಪತ್ರಗಶಾಯಿನೋ ಭಗವತಃ ಪಾದೋದಕಂ ಪಾವನಂ .. ಭೂಯಃ ಶಂಭು ಜಟಾ ವಿಭೂಷಣಮಣಿರ್ಜಹ್ನೋರ್ಮಹರ್ಷೇರಿಯಂ, ಕನ್ಯಾ ಕಲ್ಮಷನಾಶಿನೀ ಭಗವತೀ ಭಾಗೀರಥೀ ಭೂತಲೇ. This says that "you Ganga started as water in the water pot of Brahma, then came into contact with the foot of Vishnu and again became the crown jewel on the locks of Shiva etc."

Placed on the head of Shiva who is Himself the embodiment of knowledge the stream of Ganga is symbolic of knowledge. So Shankaracharya refers to it in his Kasi Panchakam as ಜ್ಞಾನಪ್ರವಾಹೋ ವಿಮಲಾದಿ ಗಂಗಾ The stream of right knowledge is the pure original Ganga. Again later he says ತ್ರಿಭುವನಜನನೀ ವ್ಯಾಪಿನೀ ಜ್ಞಾನಗಂಗಾ(ie.) the Ganga of knowledge is the mother of the three worlds. This Ganga who is Gayatri and Brahman and is kept in the chakra in the head by Shiva is same as Uma or Parvati can be deduced from the following references. These are taken from the well known Lalitasahasranamam (LS).

1 - She is of the form of the three gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra.

ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಕರ್ತ್ರೀ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮರೂಪಾ LS(265) ಗೋಪ್ತೀ

ಗೋವಿಂದರೂಪಿಣೀ LS(267) ಸಂಹಾರಿಣೀ ರುದ್ರರೂಪಾ LS(269)

2 - She is Gayatri ಗಾಯತ್ರೀ LS(420)

3 - She is Bhavani ಭವಾನೀ LS(112). Durga ದುರ್ಗಾ

LS(190). Parvati ಪಾರ್ವತೀ LS(246). Uma ಉಮಾ LS(633)

4 - She is seated on the head in the Brahmastrandham.

ಶಿರಸ್ಥಿತಾ LS(591)

So Ganga is Brahman, is Gayatri and is Uma or Parvati. She proclaims the Ardhanari (the inseparable combination of the male and female principles) concept (ಅರ್ಧನಾರೀ ಸ್ವರೂಪಂ) of Shiva which is not explicitly seen in His representations (where Uma is shown as a separate figure). Thus one who knows Ganga knows Shiva and vice versa. Krishna says ಸ್ರೋತನಾಮಸ್ಮಿ ಜಾಹ್ನವೀ Of the rivers I am the Ganges. So it is not an ordinary river that the Lord had placed on His head. No wonder, then, that the very utterance of the name Ganga washes away one's sins even when one is miles away from the river. This is said in this popular verse that is normally recited before taking bath. ಗಂಗೇ ಗಂಗೇತಿ ಯೋ ಬ್ರೂಯಾತ್ ಯೋಜನಾನಾಂ ಶತೈರಪಿ. ಮುಚ್ಯತೇ ಸರ್ವಪಾಪೇಭ್ಯೋ ವಿಷ್ಣುಲೋಕಂ ಸ ಗಚ್ಯತಿ. The avadhuta saint Sadasiva Brahmam has composed a song in praise of Ganga (jaya tungatarange gange ಜಯ ತುಂಗತರಂಗೇ ಗಂಗೇ) wherein he salutes Ganga as one who purifies the worlds and cuts asunder the manifold bonds of mankind (ಕಮಲಭವಾಂಡಕಮಂಡಪವಿತ್ರೇ, ಬಹುವಿಧಬಂಧಚ್ಛೇದಲವಿತ್ರೇ. ಲವಿತ್ರಂ = sickle; instrument for mowing). Shri Gangahtakam says that if one dies on the banks of Ganga he goes to higher lokas compared to which even the world of Indra looks very inferior .

ತ್ವದುತ್ಸಂಗೇ ಗಂಗೇ ಪತತಿ ಯದಿ ಕಾಯಸ್ತನುಭೃತಾಂ ತದಾ
ಮಾತಃ ಶಾತಕೃತವ-ಪದಲ್ಲಾಭೋಽಪ್ಯತಿಲಘುಃ

We can make one observation on the story of Bhagirata bringing down Ganga. The Lord - being the father - always gives much more than what one seeks from Him though this fact is not appreciated. He is ಕಾಮಪ್ರದಃ . ಭಕ್ತೇಭ್ಯಃ ಕಾಮಾನ್ ಪ್ರಕರ್ಷೇಣ ದದಾತೀತಿ ಕಾಮಪ್ರದಃ VS(298). He knows what the devotee asks and why he asks for it. The Lord not only gives what is asked for but goes further and fulfills his mission though unasked. In the case of Bhagiratha, he could have asked Shiva for salvation for himself and his forefathers and got it. Instead, he just asked Him to bear the Ganga as she came down from the heaven. But Lord Shiva helped the king not only in bringing down the river but also gave salvation

to his forefathers then and there itself. Please carefully look at what Shiva told the king when He appeared before him. He said “I am pleased with you. I will do what is dear to you.” Ramayana (1.43.3 and 4) ಉಮಾಪತಿಃ ಪಶುಪತಿಃ ರಾಜಾನಮಿದಮಬ್ರವೀತ್. ಪ್ರೀತಸ್ತೇಹಂ ನರಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಕರಿಷ್ಯಾಮಿ ತವ ಪ್ರಿಯಂ.

We all know what was dear to the king and what was it that had been haunting his mind for years and made him do severe penance, once to Brahma (for thousand years eating once a month and so on) and again to Lord Shiva. The king’s idea was to then lead the river to the place where the ashes of his forefathers were lying for ages and perform their final rites so that they will attain release. But this was what he got as bonus. In addition he got salvation for himself also though he did not ask for it. Ganga represents Brahman and Shiva is DakShinamurthi - the giver of knowledge about the Brahman. Thus the story of the king getting the Ganga with Shiva’s help implies he got the knowledge of Brahman directly from the Lord which knowledge results in salvation.

This was what happened in the case of Arjuna also. He met Krishna at Dwaraka and asked His help during the KurukShetra war. Krishna agreed to help but He said He will not take up arms. But even at the time when Arjuna made his request Krishna knew what was the mission for which he was seeking His help. And He fulfilled it then and there. Later on when teaching Gita before the war had even started He told Arjuna: “These enemies of yours had been killed by me already. You just be the instrument and enjoy all the glory.” ತಸ್ಮಾತ್ಪ್ರಮುಕ್ತಿಷ್ಠ ಯಶೋ ಲಭಸ್ವ ಜಿತ್ವಾ ಶತ್ರುನ್ ಭುಂಕ್ಷ್ವ ರಾಜ್ಯಂ ಸಮೃದ್ಧಂ . ಮಮೈವೈತೇ ನಿಹಿತಾಃ ಪೂರ್ವಮೇವ ನಿಮಿತ್ತಮಾತ್ಮಂ ಭವ ಸವ್ಯಸಾಚಿನ್. BG(11.33)

At the time, Arjuna was unaware of the greatness of Krishna whom, as he admits later on, he considered as his friend only. He laboured hard and “fought the war” but it was over even before it started. He “won” it and got all the glory. In the same way King Bhagirata took the trouble to drive ahead of Ganga all the way to the seas and then to the nether world where he saw the ashes of his forefathers, performed the last rites with the holy waters from Ganga and “got them salvation.” which was already an accomplished fact. The Ganga was named after him as Bhagirathi. This was the case with Dhruva, who wanted to be a king but he got that and also a permanent place in the heavens.

ಓಂಕಾರವಾಟೀಕುರಂಗಂ - ಓಂಕಾರ = the holy syllable OM; (variation ಹ್ರೀಂ bljamaṅtra; ವಾಟೀ = garden, park; ಕುರಂಗಃ = deer; Shiva is likened to a deer in

the garden of the holy syllable - meaning He is represented by OM also known as pranava. ಓಂಕಾರರೂಪಃ - ಓಂಕಾರಃ ರೂಪಂ ಸ್ವರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ತಥಾ(SS138) Shri Krishna says in His Gita (10-25) "I am OM among the words." ಗಿರಾಮಸ್ಮೈಕಮಕ್ಷರಂ Manu, the famous law giver, says that the letter OM by itself represents the ultimate reality - the Brahman ಏಕಾಕ್ಷರಂ ಪರಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ He adds that the creator Brahma extracted the three letters from the three vedas and so the syllable Om is the essence of the vedas ಅಕಾರಂ ಚಾಪ್ಯುಕಾರಂ ಚ ಮಕಾರಂ ಚ ಪ್ರಜಾಪತಿಃ .. ವೇದತ್ರಯಾನಿರದುಹದ್ ಭೂರ್ಭುವಃ ಸ್ವರಿತಿತಿ ಚ A similar reference is seen in Chandogyopanishad (2.23.3) ತಾನ್ಯಭ್ಯತಪತ್ತೇಭ್ಯೋಽಭಿತಪ್ತೇಭ್ಯ ಓಂಕಾರಃ ಸಂಪ್ರಾಸ್ರವತ್ತ್ಯಥಾ Shri Bhagavatam says that sound OM was acquired spontaneously by Brahma - the first born when he was in deep meditation. BH(12.6.44 and 39) . It says that the origin of the sound consisting of three parts is unmanifest. It flashes by itself and it reveals the nature of the almighty and supreme spirit.

ಸಮಾಹಿತಾತ್ಮನೋ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನ್ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಃ ಪರಮೇಷ್ಠಿನಃ .
ಹೃದ್ಯಾಕಾಶಾದಭೂನ್ನಾದೋ ವೃತ್ತಿರೋಧಾದ್ ವಿಭಾವ್ಯತೇ ..
ತತೋಽಭೂತ್ ತ್ರಿವ್ಯದೋಂಕಾರೋ ಯೋಽವ್ಯಕ್ತಪ್ರಭವಃ ಸ್ವರಾಟ್ .
ಯತ್ ತಲ್ಲಿಂಗಂ ಭಗವತೋ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಃ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮನಃ .

Manu says further that a student (during his gurukula days when he learns the vedas) should utter OM both when beginning and ending his studies. The reason, he says, is that without uttering OM in the beginning the learning perishes and if OM is not said in the end what is learnt will not be retained ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಃ ಪ್ರಣವಂ ಕುರ್ಯಾದಾದಾವಂತೇ ಚ ಸರ್ವದಾ. ಸ್ರವತ್ಯನೋಂಕೃತಂ ಪೂರ್ವಂ ಪುರಸ್ತಾಚ್ಚ ವಿಶೀರ್ಯತಿ. In view of this Kalidasa compares Manu -the first of kings in the solar dynasty to OM in a grand simile ಆಸೀನ್ಮಹೀಕ್ಷಿತಾಮಾದ್ಯಃ ಪ್ರಣವಶ್ಚಂದನಾಮಿವ

Pranava :-

We can see discussions about pranava in Mandukya, Shiva Atharvasikha, Prasna and Nrisimha Uttaratapini upanishads. This is also mentioned in Vicharasagaram. Here we will see it in brief. ಪ್ರಣವಃ - ಪ್ರಣವೋ ನಾಮ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮನೋ ವಾಚಕ ಓಂಕಾರಃ , ತದಭೇದೋಪಚಾರೇಣಾಯಂ ಪ್ರಣವಃ (VS-957). He is in the form of pranava represented by OM. He is not different from the creation. So pranava represents both brahman and the universe. Sage Patanjali also has said this in his Yoga Sutra (1.26)ತಸ್ಯ ವಾಚಕಃ ಪ್ರಣವಃ . ಪ್ರಕರ್ಷಣ ನೂಯತೇ ಅನೇನೇತಿ ಪ್ರಣವಃ God is greatly praised

by this. Earlier we saw that a stotram mentions the attributes or the qualities of the subject of the stotram. Thus pranavam indicates the auspicious qualities of the Lord and obtains His blessings to one who chants it. Patanjali adds (1.27): **ತಜ್ಜಪಸ್ತದರ್ಥಭಾವನಂ** The chanting of pranava with understanding and faith is meditation on the Iswara. Pranava is made of the three letters A,U and M. These three letters represent the consciousness presiding over the three states - waking, dream and deep sleep states which one passes through every day. The consciousness is same but it functions differently in these states. The Mandukya upanishad views pranava as being composed of two parts: one having sound and the other without sound. The OM as specified above made up of the three letters is pronounced and constitutes the “sound” part. The upanishad says that the brief interlude that precedes and succeeds this “sound” part forms the “silent” component - the fourth letter **ಅಮಾತ್ರಶ್ಚತುರ್ಥೋಽವ್ಯವಹಾರ್ಯಃ ಪ್ರಪಂಚೋಪಶಮಃ ಶಿವೋಽದ್ವೈತ ಏವಮೋಂಕಾರ ಆತ್ಮೈವ ಸಂವಿಶತ್ಯಾತ್ಮಾನಂ, ಯ ಏವಂ ವೇದ, ಯ ಏವಂ ವೇದ**(Mandukya 12) They represent the two aspects of God (viz.) with form and without form respectively. The “sound” part signifies the saguna Iswara and the “silent” part the nirguna Iswara. Thus one can worship OM as God with form. This is like invoking our favourite deity in an idol or saligrama stone. Here we invoke the God about whom we do not have firsthand knowledge but learnt from scriptures or from some other source in the idol or some other form of representation and worship. The representation is known as pratikam **ಪ್ರತೀಕಂ**. Meditating on the fourth or the silent part as “I the Self” is known as Ahamgrahadhyanam **ಅಹಂಗ್ರಹಧ್ಯಾನಂ** One who meditates like this is called a muni **ಮನನಾತ್ ಮುನಿರುಚ್ಯತೇ** In this type of meditation there is no difference between the meditator and Iswara or the object of meditation. As a result of this meditation the muni is blessed with the knowledge of the Self and crosses over the samsara. Thus is explained Shiva’s name **ಓಂಕಾರರೂಪಃ . ಓಂಕಾರಂ ರೂಪಂ ಸ್ವರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ತಥಾ. ಓಂಕಾರರೂಪತ್ವಂ ಚ ತದಭಿಧಾನತ್ವಾದ್ವಾ, ತತ್ಪ್ರತೀಕತ್ವಾದ್ವಾ, ತದಭಿಧಾನತ್ವಂ ಓಮಿತ್ಯಕ್ಷರಮಿತ್ಯಾದಿನಾ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ. ಓಂಕಾರ ಪ್ರತೀಕತ್ವಂ ತು ಯಃ ಪುನರೇತಂ ತ್ರಿಮಾತ್ರೇಣೇತ್ಯಾದಿನಾ ಪ್ರಶೋಪನಿಷದಾದೌ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ. ಪರಂ ಚಾಪರಂ ಚ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಯದೋಂಕಾರ ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ** VS(138).

The question, now is, if He is Himself omkara or the pranava, why then say He is the deer in the park called OM? The answer is that He is OM the park as Paramatma as well as the deer the individual Jivatma. They are one and the same but look different

to the uninitiated. The deer, unaware of its status, roams around in the park feeding and enjoying itself. This is an echo of the famous Mundakopanishad mantra ದ್ವಾ ಸುಪರ್ಣಾ ಸಯುಜಾ ಸಖಾಯಾ ಸಮಾನಂ ವೃಕ್ಷಂ ಪರಿಷಸ್ವಜಾತೇ. ತಯೋರನ್ಯಃ ಪಿಪ್ಪಲಂ ಸ್ವಾದ್ವತ್ಥನಶ್ಚನನ್ಯೋ ಅಭಿಚಾಕಶೀತಿ. MU (3.1.1) This mantra talks of two friendly birds sitting side by side on a tree. One is eating and relishing the fruits and the other one is quietly watching it. Here one of the birds represents the Jivatma. Eating the fruits is enjoying the results of the past karma and the other bird which looks on is the Paramatma as He is not attached to the fruits of action. Similarly Devi is described as ಓಂಕಾರಪಂಜರಶುಕೀ a female parrot in the cage called OM in the Devi Navaratnamala. The saint composer Thiagaraja of Tiruvaiyaru addresses Rama as ಓಂಕಾರಪಂಜರಕೀರ a parrot in the cage called OM in his famous song beginning Jagadanandakaraka. Similarly the saint composer SadasivaBrahmam talks of Krishna as ಪ್ರಣವಪಯೋರುಹಗರ್ಭಕಪಾಲೀ one who is hidden inside the lotus of pranava (in his song kridathi vanamali ಕ್ರೀಡತಿ ವನಮಾಲೀ) ಸಿದ್ಧಸಂಸೇವಿತಾಂಘ್ರಿಂ - ಸಿದ್ಧಃ = a superhuman being of great purity and holiness possessing eight supernatural powers called siddhis. Can also be taken to mean a great sage; variation is ಶುದ್ಧ for pure; ಸಂಸೇವಿತ = worshipped; ಅಂಘ್ರಿ = foot He is worshipped by great sages and other semidivine beings endowed with supernatural powers ಮಹರ್ಷಿವಂದಿತಃ - ಮಹರ್ಷಿಭಿಃ ವಾಮದೇವಾದಿಭಿಃ ಹರಭಕ್ತಾದಿಭಿಶ್ಚ ಜ್ಞಾನಾತ್ಮಂ ವಂದಿತಃ . ಉಪಲಕ್ಷಣಮೇತತ್ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರ-ಜಪ-ಪೂಜಾ-ತಪ ಆದೀನಾಂ(SS536) ಸದ್ಭಿಃ ಸಂಪೂಜಿತಃ . ಸದ್ಭಿಃ ಸಾತ್ವಿಕೈರ್ದೇವಷ್ಯಾದಿಭಿಃ ಸಂಪೂಜಿತಃ .. ಭಕ್ತಿಶ್ರದ್ಧಾದಿನಾ ಗಂಧಪುಷ್ಪಾದಿಭಿಃ ಪ್ರದಕ್ಷಿಣನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾದಿಭಿಶ್ಚ ಪೂಜಿತಃ ಸಂಪೂಜಿತಃ SS(777) The word siddha ಸಿದ್ಧ means accomplished or perfected. Linking with the earlier word, the muni meditates on the pranava. ಓಂಕಾರಂ ಬಿಂದುಸಂಯುಕ್ತಂ ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಧ್ಯಾಯಂತಿ ಯೋಗಿನಃ Once he understands that he, the meditator, and the Iswara the object of meditation represented by pranava are not different , then he achieves his goal and becomes a siddha purusha. The Mandukya Upanishad sentence quoted earlier says this only (viz.) that one who realises the true meaning of the Omkara - that it stands for the non-dual, indescribable Shiva obtains his goal which is his own Self. Shri Shuka mentions this in his prayer before he begins to narrate Bhagavatam to King Parikshit. ಯದಂಘ್ರ್ಯಭಿಧ್ಯಾನಸಮಾಧಿಧೌತಯಾ ಧಿಯಾನುಪಶ್ಯಂತಿ ಹಿ ತತ್ತ್ವಮಾತ್ಮನಃ BH(2.4.21)

Such a realised sage abides in his Self. So it is said ತದ್ವಿಷ್ಣೋಃ ಪರಮಂ ಪದಂ ಸದಾ

ಪಶ್ಯಂತಿ ಸೂರಯಃ Hanuman is such a siddha who has immersed himself in the sacred Ganga and drank deep its water of knowledge. So he is known as ಬುದ್ಧಿಮತಾಂ ವರಿಷ್ಠಃ = best among the knowledgeable people. He sees his Lord Rama within himself all the time. Whenever His name is mentioned the Ganga within him wells up and flows out as tears of joy and his hands go up over his head in salute ಯತ್ರ ಯತ್ರ ರಘುನಾತ ಕೀರ್ತನಂ ತತ್ರ ತತ್ರ ಕೃತಮಸ್ತಕಾಂಜಲಿಂ ಬಾಷ್ಪವಾರಿಪರಿಪೂರಿತೇಕ್ಷಣಂ ಮಾರುತಿಂ ನಮತ ರಾಕ್ಷಸಾಂತಕಂ says a popular verse about Hanuman. So his being shown as seated at the feet of Rama brings out the idea that siddhas worship the feet of the Lord. Truly speaking a siddha has nothing to worship as he has no second to him. Whatever he does becomes an act of worship. Sankaracharya says this in his Shiva mAnasa puja
 ಆತ್ಮಾ ತ್ವಂ ಗಿರಿಜಾ ಮತಿಃ ಸಹಚರಾಃ ಪ್ರಾಣಾಃ ಶರೀರಂ ಗೃಹಂ
 ಪೂಜಾ ತೇ ವಿಷಯೋಪಭೋಗರಚನಾ ನಿದ್ರಾ ಸಮಾಧಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಃ .
 ಸಂಚಾರಃ ಪದಯೋಃ ಪ್ರದಕ್ಷಿಣವಿಧಿಃ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರಾಣಿ ಸರ್ವಾ ಗಿರಃ
 ಯದ್ಯತ್ಕರ್ಮ ಕರೋಮಿ ತತ್ತದಕಿಲಂ ಶಂಭೋ ತವಾರಾಧನಂ ..

Since the siddha has identified with Ishwara he is detached from his body. He knows that he got his body because of prarabdham and it will continue to hang on as appendage as long as the the vestige of prarabdham remains. He is aware that prarab dam will take care of it. So he is not concerned about it just as drunkard does not overly bother about his dress. Krishna says this to Uddhava:

ದೇಹಂ ಚ ನಶ್ವರಮವಸ್ಥಿತಮುತ್ಥಿತಂ ವಾ
 ಸಿದ್ಧೋ ನ ಪಶ್ಯತಿ ಯತೋಽಧ್ಯಗಮತ್ಸ್ವರೂಪಂ .
 ದೈವಾದಪೇತಮುತ ದೈವವಶಾದುಪೇತಂ
 ವಾಸೋ ಯಥಾ ಪರಿಕೃತಂ ಮದಿರಾಮದಾಂಧಃ . BH(11.13.36)

Once his prarabdham is exhausted the body drops off. There is not death in the usual sense. His soul does not go anywhere as in the case of death of ordinary people but just merges in the all pervading brahman. This is like a pot getting broken. The space within the pot is not disturbed but just becomes one with surrounding space. This is said clearly in Brihadaranyakopanishad (4.4.3) ಯೋಕಾಮೋ ನಿಷ್ಕಾಮ ಆಪ್ತಕಾಮ ಆತ್ಮಕಾಮೋ ನ ತಸ್ಯ ಪ್ರಾಣಾ ಉತ್ಥಾಮಂತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೈವ ಸನ್ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಪ್ಯೇತಿ This was what is said to have happened in Bhishma's case . ಆತ್ಮನ್ಯಾತ್ಮಾನಮಾವೇಸ್ಯ ಸೋಽನ್ತಶ್ಚಾಸ ಉಪಾರಮತ್ BH(1.9.43)

ಭಜೇ = I worship ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ the Lord Margabandhu.

I worship Lord Margabandhuon whose limbs snakes appear prominently, whose head looks charming with the waves of the celestial river Ganga, who is like a deer in the garden of Omkara and whose feet are served by siddhas (great seers).

3

3. ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಂ ನಿಹ್ನುತಾಶೇಷಲೋಕೇಶವೈರಿಪ್ರತಾಪಂ .
ಕಾರ್ತಸ್ವರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಚಾಪಂ ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಂ ಭಜೇ ದಿವ್ಯಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ

This verse is the third among the five verses that make up the stotram. Thus it forms the centre-piece and is loaded with precious vedantic truths. It was said earlier that a stotram will describe the Lord with form and will also refer to His formless aspect. We see the formless aspect of the Shiva being emphasised here ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಂ - ನಿತ್ಯಂ = eternal, ever lasting, imperishable ಚಿತ್ = pure intelligence ಆನಂದ =supreme bliss ರೂಪಂ = form.

These words are the repetition of the famous upanishadic mantra ಸತ್ಯಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಮನಂತಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ TU(2.1.2) that says Brahman is satyam, jnanam and anantam. This is one of Shiva's names ಸಚ್ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಃ . ಸತ್ವದೇನ ಕಾಲತ್ರಯಾಬಾಧ್ಯಂ ಸ್ವರೂಪಮುಚ್ಯತೇ. ಚಿತ್ವದೇನ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಾಂತರನಿರಪೇಕ್ಷತಯಾ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಮಾನಂ. ಆನಂದಪದೇನ ನಿರತಿಶಯಪ್ರೇಮಾಸ್ವದತಯಾ ಸುಖರೂಪಂ ಏತತ್ತಿತ್ತಿಯಾತ್ಮಕರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಸಚ್ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಃ . SS(653). Rama's form is existence, knowledge and bliss ಸತ್ಯಜ್ಞಾನಾನಂದಶರೀರೇ says the saint Sadasiva Brahmendra in the song ಖೇಲತಿ ಮಮ ಹೃದಯೇ (kelati mama hrudaye). So is Shri Lalita's form: ಸಚ್ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಿಣೀ. ಸತ್ವಂ ಚಿತ್ವಮಾನಂದಶ್ಚ ಸ್ವರೂಪಮತ ಏವ ವಿದ್ಯಾಂತರೇಷೂಪಸಂಹಾರ್ಯಮಸ್ಯಾ ಇತಿ ಸಚ್ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಿಣೀ. LS(699) ನಿತ್ಯಂ - Nityam implies eternal existence - that is - it never ceases to be. It is not limited by time. Terms like the past, present and future are not applicable with reference to it. Lalita is known as Nitya ನಿತ್ಯಾ ಕಾಲತ್ರಯೇಽಪ್ಯಬಾಧ್ಯಾ. ಅವಿನಾಶೀ ವಾ ಅರೇಽಯಮಾತ್ಮೇ ತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . LS(136).

ಶಾಶ್ವತಃ and ಸತ್ಯಂ are two other names that have the same meaning as Nityam ಶಾಶ್ವತಃ . ಸರ್ವೇಷು ಕಾಲೇಷು ಏಕರೂಪತಯಾ ಭವತೀತಿ ಶಾಶ್ವತಃ . “ಶಾಶ್ವತೋಯಂ ಪುರಾಣಃ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(398).(ie.) He exists in all times in the same form or without any change ಶಶ್ವತ್ ಸರ್ವೇಷು ಕಾಲೇಷು ಭವತೀತಿ ಶಾಶ್ವತಃ, “ಶಾಶ್ವತಂ ಶಿವಮಚ್ಯುತಂ”

ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(56).

satyam ಸತ್ಯಂ. ಕಾಲತ್ರಯಾಬಾದ್ಯಂ ಸತ್ಯಂ SS(432)ಅವಿತಥರೂಪತ್ವಾತ್ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಸತ್ಯಃ “ಸತ್ಯಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಮನಂತಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(106) In the invocatory verse to Shri Bhagavatam Shri Vyasa salutes the Lord saying ಸತ್ಯಂ ಪರಂ ಧೀಮಹಿ(ie.) we meditate on the supreme Reality that is not affected by the three time periods - the past, present and the future. BH(1.1.1) . He also winds up with the same words ಸತ್ಯಂ ಪರಂ ಧೀಮಹಿ BH(12.13.19) implying what is discussed in between the beginning and the end or the subject matter of the purana is none other than Brahman which is Satyam.

Shri Lalita is known as ಸತ್ಯಜ್ಞಾನಾನಂದರೂಪಾ . ಸತ್ಯಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಂ ಆನಂದಶ್ಚ ರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯಾಃ .. “ಸತ್ಯಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಮನಂತಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ” “ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಾನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇತಿ” ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . LS(790).

Bhartrihari, in the invocatory verse to his Sataktrayam salutes the Lord saying ದಿಕ್ಕಾಲಾದ್ಯನವಚ್ಛಿನ್ನಾ ಅನಂತಚಿನ್ಮಾತ್ರಮೂರ್ತಯೇ He says that God is of the form of eternal consciousness unlimited by spatial direction, time etc ದಿಶಃ ಪ್ರಾಚ್ಯಾದಿಕ್ಪದೇಶಾಃ. ಕಾಲಾ ಭೂತಭವಿಷ್ಯದ್ವರ್ತಮಾನರೂಪಾ, ಆದಿಶಬ್ದಸಂಗ್ರಹೀತಾನಿ ವಸ್ತುನಿ ತಥಾ ಚ ದಿಕ್ಕಾಲಾ ಆದಯೋ ಯೇಷಾಂ ತಾನಿ ದಿಕ್ಕಾಲಾನಿ. ತೈರನವಚ್ಛಿನ್ನಾಪರಿಕ್ಲಪ್ತಾ. ವಿಭುತ್ವಾನ್ನಿತ್ಯತ್ವಾದೇಕತ್ವಾಚ್ಚ ದೇಶತಃ ಕಾಲತೋ ವಸ್ತುತಶ್ಚಾಪರಿಚ್ಛಿನ್ನೇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . ಅತ ಏವ ಅನಂತಾಪರಿಮಿತಾ. ಟ್ರಿವಿಧಪರಿಚ್ಛೇದಶೂನ್ಯತ್ವಾ ದಖಂಡದಂಡಾಯಮಾನೇ- ತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ .. ಚಿತ್ - chit means pure intelligence and indicates brahman. So the Lord gets the following names ಚಿದಾತ್ಮಾ. ಚಿತ್ - ಚೈತನ್ಯಂ ಆತ್ಮಸ್ವರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಚಿದಾತ್ಮಾ SS(456). Also ಚಿನ್ಮಯಃ . ಚಿನ್ಮಯಶ್ಚಿದ್ರೂಪಃ .. SS(829). Devi is described as ಚಿನ್ಮಯೇ .. ಚಿದಭೇದಾಚ್ಚಿನ್ಮಯೇ LS(251). Now let us go back to the reference from Bartruhari: (ie.) ಅನಂತಚಿನ್ಮಾತ್ರಮೂರ್ತಯೇ .. ಚಿನ್ಮಾತ್ರಾ ಜ್ಞಾನಘನಾ ಚ .. ಚಿದೇಕರಸೇತಿ ಯಾವತ್. ತಾದೃಶೀ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯಸ್ಯ ತಸ್ಮೈ . ಏತದ್ರೂಪಾಯೇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . No doubt brahman is without any limitations mentioned above. But it is not void or empty like space which also seems unlimited. It is not inert but shines in the form of consciousness. This is clarified here.

From where did He get His wisdom? In reply the invocatory verse in Shri Bhagavatam referred to earlier says: ಅಭಿಜ್ಞಃ ಸ್ವರಾಟ್. ಸ್ವೇನೈವ ರಾಜತೇ ಯಸ್ತಂ. ಸ್ವತಃ ಸಿದ್ಧಜ್ಞಾನಮಿತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . He is omniscient. His knowledge is inherent and not obtained

from anyone else or any other source. It is knowledge itself without a trace of ignorance.

ಆನಂದ Ananda : Brahmam is of the form of pure bliss **ಆನಂದೋ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇತಿ ವ್ಯಜಾನಾತ್** TU(3.6.1). The Taittiriyanopanishad has a chapter exclusively devoted to the ananda aspect of brahman. This chapter is hence known as Brahmanandavalli or Anandavalli. This chapter is unique in that it talks of several grades of ananda experienced by different beings. It starts with the maximum happiness that is possible to be experienced by a human being as the unit of measure. The next higher grade of ananda is hundred times this unit. Thus several grades are mentioned (including that of Indra and Brihaspathi) and the top most one mentioned is that of Brahma the creator. But a wise person who has studied the shastras and got discrimination knows that even Brahma's happiness is fragile and limited. The Brihadaranyopanishad says that any ananda experienced by any being is just a droplet derived from the bliss that is Brahman **ಏತಸ್ಯೈವಾನಂದಸ್ಯ ಅನ್ಯಾನಿ ಭೂತಾನಿ ಮಾತ್ರಾಮುಪಜೀವಂತಿ**(4.3.32) Incidentally this is one of the names of Shri Lalita. (LS365) **ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮಾನಂದಲವೀಭೂತ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾದ್ಯಾನಂದಸಂತತಿಃ** . The commentator Bhaskararaya explains this name referring to these quotations only. He says **ಸ್ವಸ್ವಾ ಆತ್ಮರೂಪೋ ಯ ಆನಂದಸ್ಯ ಲವೀಭೂತಾ ಇಂದ್ರಾದ್ಯಾನಂದಬಿಂದುಪರ್ಯಾಲೋಚನಯಾ ಸಾಗರಾಯಮಾಣತ್ವೇನಾಲವಾ ಅಪಿ ದೇವ್ಯಾನಂದಸಾಗರಸ್ಯ ಲವಾಃ ಸಂಪದ್ಯಮಾನಾಃ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾದೀನಾಂ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಕರ್ತೃತ್ವಾದಿಧರ್ಮವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾನಾಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಿಷ್ಟುರುದ್ರಾಣಾಮಾನಂದಾನಾಂ ಸಂತತಯಃ ಸಂಯಕ್ಸಮೂಹಾ ಯಸ್ಯಾಃ ಸಾ. “ಏತಸ್ಯೈವಾನಂದಸ್ಯಾನ್ಯಾನಿಭೂತಾನಿ ಮಾತ್ರಾಮುಪಜೀವಂತೀ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . ತೈತ್ತಿರೀಯೇ ಮಾನುಷಾನಂದಮಾರಭ್ಯ ಉತ್ತರೋತ್ತರಾಧಿಕೈನವರ್ಣ್ಯಮಾನಾನಾಮಾನಂದ ಮಧ್ಯೇ ಪರಿಗಣಿತಾನಾಂ ಪ್ರಜಾಪತ್ಯಾದ್ಯಾನಂದಾನಾನಾಮಪಿ ಪರಿಚ್ಛಿನ್ನತ್ವೇನ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥತ್ವಾಯೋಗೈನಾಪರಿಚ್ಛಿನ್ನಾನಂದಸ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಗುಣಸ್ಯ ಸಿದ್ಧತ್ವಾಚ್ಚ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಸಾಧನಜ್ಞಾನೋಪಕ್ರಮಾದಿ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯನಿರ್ಣಯಕ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಿರೋಧಾಯ ತತ್ಪದಸ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಧರ್ಮಕಾತ್ಮಲಕ್ಷಕತ್ವಮೇವ ಯುಕ್ತಮಿತಾಶಯಃ .**

One may wonder why should the upanishad take the trouble to describe the many grades of ananda starting from the bliss that can be enjoyed by a human being. The answer is that the detailed description is a carrot the upanishad is dangling before us. It wants to reveal the fact that even the highest degree of happiness that one could enjoy is just a particle of that limitless ocean of bliss. It wants us to get excited at this revelation. It wants to prod us to strive hard and reach the pinnacle of bliss that is brahmananda and not be content with

merely scratching its surface. The following are the Lord's names in this context

ನಂದೀ. ಪರಮಾನಂದವಿಗ್ರಹೋ ನಂದೀ. “ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಾನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(189) and VS(618)ಆನಂದೀ. ಸುಖಸ್ವರೂಪತ್ವಾತ್ ಆನಂದೀ VS(560) . Also ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾನಂದಃ . ಬ್ರಹ್ಮರೂಪ ಆನಂದೋ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾನಂದಃ . “ಆನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಮಾಂ ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವಾ ನ ಬಿಭೇತಿ ಕುತಶ್ಚನೇ” ತಿ ಪಾದ್ಯೇ. “ ಆನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣೋ ವಿಧ್ವಾನಿ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(560) and ಸದಾನಂದಃ .. ಕಾಲತ್ರಯಾಽಬಾಧಿತನಿರತಿಶಯಸುಖಸ್ವರೂಪಃ ಸದಾನಂದಃ . “ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಾನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(673)

ನಿಹ್ನುತಾಶೇಷಲೋಕೇಶವೈರಿಪ್ರತಾಪಂ - ನಿಹ್ನುತ = eliminated ಅಶೇಷ = without remainder ಲೋಕೇಶಃ = lord of the universe - here it refers to Indra ವೈರಿನ್ = enemy ಪ್ರತಾಪಃ =dignity, glory, valour.

Shiva is the destroyer of the valour and pride of Ravana who was the enemy of Indra. Once Ravana tried to lift Kailasa as he felt he was strong enough to carry even the abode of the Lord. He was inebriated with power because he could conquer even Indra and other gods. He forgot that all his might and glory were only due to the blessings of the Lord. He even said that Shiva has not known that a danger has come to Him! This incident is mentioned in Ramayana (Uttara Kanda - canto 16). ವಿಜ್ಞಾತವ್ಯಂ ನ ಜಾನೀತೇ ಭಯಸ್ಥಾನಮುಪಸ್ಥಿತಂ(Uttara kanda - 16-24). Shiva wanted to teach him a lesson and curb his pride. So He playfully pressed His toe. The pressure applied by Him crushed Ravana under the mountain.

ತತೋ ರಾಮ ಮಹಾದೇವೋ ದೇವಾನಾಂ ಪ್ರವರೋ ಹರಃ .

ಪಾದಾಂಗುಷ್ಠೇನ ತಂ ಶೈಲಂ ಪೀಡಯಾಮಾಸ ಲೀಲಯ್ ..

ಪೀಡಿತಾಸ್ತು ತತಸ್ತಸ್ಯ ಶೈಲಸ್ತಂಭೋಪಮಾ ಭುಜಾಃ . (UK. 16-27,28).

Ravana struggled hard but was not able to extricate himself from the tight spot. Finally he prayed to the Lord and got himself released. So Shiva gets the name

ಅಂಗುಷ್ಠಶಿರಸಾ ಲಂಕಾನಾಥದರ್ಪಹರಃ . ಅಂಗುಷ್ಠಶಿರಸಾ ಪಾದಾಂಗುಷ್ಠಾಗ್ರೇಣ ಲಂಕಾನಾಥಸ್ಯ ರಾವಣಸ್ಯ ದರ್ಪಂ ಗರ್ವಂ ಹರತೀತಿ ಹರಃ . ಇದಂ ಚ ರಾಮಾಯಣಾದೌ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ . ಶಿವರಹಸ್ಯೇ - ಅಮುಷ್ಯ ತ್ವತ್ಸೇವಾಸಮಧಿಗತಸಾರಂ ಭುಜವನಂ ಬಲಾತ್ಕ್ಯಲಾಸೇಽಪಿ ತ್ವದಧಿವಸತೌ ವಿಕ್ರಮಯತಃ . ಅಲಭ್ಯಾಪಾತಾಲೇಽಪ್ಯಲಸಶ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾ ತ್ವಯ್ಯಾಸೀದ್ಭವಮುಪಚಿತೋ ಮುಹ್ಯತಿ ಖಲ ಇತಿ. .. “ನಮಃ ಸಹಮಾನಾಯ ನಿವ್ಯಾಧಿನ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(623).

Ravana was the grandson of the great sage Pulastya and the son of an equally great sage Vivasva. He was born as an asura due to a curse. Krishna gives a description of asuric nature

in the 16th chapter of Gita entitled ದೈವಾಸುರ ಸಂಪದ್ವಿಭಾಗಯೋಗಃ and also in the 18th chapter. He says that people with asuric nature are given to ostentation, arrogance, lust, anger and insolence. They will nurture innumerable hopes. These tendencies will pave the way for their downfall. We see that Ravana's character fits this description exactly. These qualities lead to his ruin. Ravana was vastly learned (as is indicated by ten heads): but was foolish enough to think he could shake the Lord who is ನಿತ್ಯಃ all pervading, firm and unshakeable ಸರ್ವಗತಃ ಸ್ಥಾನುಃ ಅಚಲಃ . BG(2-24). In fact if He shakes the universe will shake and without His will one can not move even a blade of grass. This is graphically described in a story in Kenopanishad. Thus Ravana committed a great mistake but Shiva curbed his pride and let him off ಕಾರ್ತಸ್ವರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಚಾಪಂ - ಕಾರ್ತಸ್ವರಂ = gold: ಅಗಃ = mountain: ಇಂದ್ರಃ = lord and in this context means best: ಚಾಪಃ = bow: This refers to Shiva using Meru - the famed mountain of gold - as a bow in His fight against the three asuras. The three demons named KamalakShan, DarukakShan and Vidyunmali were very powerful because of the boons they obtained. They lived in three cities built by Maya the divine architect. They troubled the devas to no end. The devas entreated Shiva to save them from these asuras. When Shiva started to fight them the devas wanted to take part in the fight. The earth became the chariot, the sun and the moon became the wheels, Meru the bow, the snake Seshan the bow string, Vishnu the quiver and so on. But Shiva felt that all these elaborate paraphernalia was superfluous for the task. So He discarded them and destroyed the three cities just with a smile. When the asuras repented Shiva forgave them and took them into His service. This deed of Shiva is often referred to in hymns

ಕ್ಷೋಣೀ ಯಸ್ಯ ರಥೋ ರಥಾಂಗಯುಗಳಂ ಚಂದ್ರಾರ್ಕ-ಬಿಂಬದ್ವಯಂ
ಕೋದಂಡಃ ಕನಕಾಚಲೋ ಹರಿರಭೂತ್ ಬಾಣೋ ವಿಧಿಃ ಸಾರಥಿಃ .
ತೂಣೀರೋ ಜಲಧಿ-ಹಯಾಃ ಶ್ರುತಿಚಯೋ ಮೌರ್ವೀ ಭುಜಂಗಾಧಿಪಃ
ತಸ್ಮಿನ್ ಮೇ ಹೃದಯಂ ಸುಖೇನ ರಮತಾಂ ಶಾಂಭೇ ಪರಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಿ ..

So He gets the following names ಪುರಂದರಃ . ಸುರಶತ್ರುಣಾಂ ಪುರಾಣಾಂ
ದಾರಣಾತ್ಪುರಂದರಃ . ತ್ರಿಪುರಹಾ . “ಸ ತಿಸ್ರಃ ಪುರೋ ಭಿತ್ವೇ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ
. SS(45) and VS(335). One who shattered the cities of the enemies of the
gods ಪುರತ್ರಯವಿಘಾತೀ. ಪುರತ್ರಯಂ ವಿಹಂತೀತಿ ಪುರತ್ರಯವಿಘಾತೀ.
ಆದಿತ್ಯಪುರಾಣೇ ದ್ವಿಸಪ್ತತಿತಮಾಧ್ಯಾಯೇ- “ಅಥ ರುದ್ರಸ್ಯ ದೇವಸ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಮಿತೋ
ವಿಶ್ವಕರ್ಮಣಾ. ಸರ್ವಲೋಕಮಯೋ ದಿವ್ಯೋ ರಥೋ ಯತ್ನೇನ ಸಾದರಂ ..” ಇತಿ
ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ್ಯ ಸರ್ವಲೋಕಭೂತದೇವೇವೇದಮಯಶ್ಚಂದ್ರಸೂರ್ಯಮಯಚಕ್ರದ್ವಯೇತ್ಯಾದಿ-

ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟರಥನಿರ್ಮಾಣಾಂತರಂ ರಥಾರೂಢೇ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರೇ, ಮೇರೌ ಚಾಪೇ ವಿಷ್ಣ್ವಾದೌ ಬಾಣರೂಪೇ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಾ ಪ್ರೇರಿತೇ, ಅನಂತರಂ ದೇವಾನಾಂ, ಅನಾದಿಸಿದ್ಧತಯಾ ವಿದ್ಯಮಾನಮೇವ ಪಶುತ್ವಂ ಪಣವಿನೋದೇನ, ದ್ರಢೀಕೃತೇ ತದನು ದೇವೈರ್ವಿನಾಯಕೇ ಪೂಜಿತೇ, ಅನಂತರಂ ಇಂದ್ರಸ್ಯಂದಾದಿಭಿಶ್ಚ ಪರಿವೃಲೃತೇ, ತದನು ಪುರತ್ರಯಸ್ಯೈಕತ್ರ ಸಮಾಗಮನೇ ಋಷ್ಯಾದಿಭಿಶ್ಚ ಸಂತೋಷಪುರಃಸರಂ ಜಯಶಬ್ದೇ ಕೃತೇ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಾ “ಜಯ” ಇತ್ಯುಕ್ತೇ ಅಥ ದೇವೋ ಮಹಾದೇವಃ ಸಾವಜ್ಞಂ ತದೈಕ್ಷತ. ಪುರುತ್ರಯಂ ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷಸ್ತತ್ಕ್ಷಣಾತ್ಪ್ರಸ್ಮವೈಕೃತಂ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ. ಉಕ್ತಂ ಚ ಶಿವರಹಸ್ಯೇ- ರಥಃ ಕ್ಷೋಣೀ ಯಂತಾ ಶತದೃತಿರಗೇಂದ್ರೋ ಧನುರಥೋ ರಥಾಂಗೇಚಂದ್ರಾಕೌ ರಥಚರಣಪಾಣಿಃ ಶರ ಇತಿ . ದಿಧಕ್ಷೋಸ್ತೇ ಕೋಸಯಂ ತ್ರಿಪುರತ್ಪಣಮಾಡಂಬರವಿಧಿ- ವರ್ಧೇಯೈಃ ಕ್ರೀಡಂತೋ ನ ಖಲು ಪರತಂತ್ರಾಃ ಪ್ರಭುಧಿಯಃ .. ಇತಿ ಇದಮಪಿ ರಹಸ್ಯಾಂತರಂ - ಸಾಂಗ್ರಾಮಿಕೇಣ ವಪುಷಾ ಪ್ರವಿರಾಜಮಾನಂ ದ್ರವ್ಯತ್ಪುರತ್ರಯತ್ಯಣಾಶನಮಂದಹಾಸಂ . ದೈತ್ಯಾಂದಿಧಕ್ಷುಮಚಲೇಶ್ವರಚಾಪಪಾಣಿಂ ಧ್ಯಾಯೇತ್ಪುರಾರಿಮಮರೌಘರಥಾಧಿರೂಢಂ .. ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಸ್ತು “ತೇಷಾಮಸುರಾಣಾಂ ತಿಸ್ರ ಇತ್ಯಾರಭ್ಯ ಸ ತಿಸ್ರಃ ಪುರೋ ಭಿತ್ವೇತ್ಯೇವಮಂತಾ” ಇತಿ... SS(104). and ಪುರಂಜಯಃ - ಪುರಂ ತ್ರಿಪುರಂ ಜಯತೀತಿ ಪುರಂಜಯಃ . “ತೇಷಾಮಸುರಾಣಾಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(939). One who conquered the three cities and ಗಿರಿಧನ್ವಾ - ಗಿರಿಃ ಮೇರುಃ ಧನುರ್ಯಸ್ಯೇತಿ ವಾ ಧನ್ವ ಯಸ್ಯೇತಿ ವಾ ಗಿರಿಧನ್ವಾ ಇದಂ ಚ ಅರ್ಥತಃ ಶ್ರುತಿಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ ನಾಮ; “ ರುದ್ರಾಯ ಸ್ಥಿರಧನ್ವನೇ ಗಿರಃ” ಇತಿ ಚೈಂದೋಗಾನಾಂ, ದೇವವ್ರತೇ ಚ “ ನಮಃ ಸ್ಥಿರಾಯ ಸ್ಥಿರಧನ್ವನೇ” ಇತಿ. One whose bow is mount Meru. SA(65). Incidentally, this episode shows that the Lord is capable of using anything as a weapon. As Rama He used just a piece of straw to chase Kakasura who misbehaved with Sita. In the case of Tipura He chose to use a mountain as His bow. He can do without any weapon also. He discarded the bow and burnt down the three cities with a smile. He subdued Ravana with a little pressure from His toe. He destroyed Manmatha with a mere look. The Tripura episode conceals the essence of vedanta as do the stories in our puranas. Krishna mentions this fact to Uddhava in His final advice ಪರೋಕ್ಷವಾದಾ ಋಷಯಃ ” The words of the sages are indirect in their import.” BH(11-21-35). The reason is that these great truths are meant only for those who have faith in the words of the shastras and the teachers who expound them, are sincere and are ready to put in the needed effort to learn them. They cannot be laid bare to those who are not qualified to receive them. In fact such people run the risk of misunderstanding the teachings and being mislead by them . That is why Krishna, after concluding the teaching

of Gita, warns Arjuna that the valuable lessons taught to him should not be imparted to one who is not devoted etc., as said above ಇದಂ ತೇ ನಾತಪಸ್ಕಾಯ ನಾಭಕ್ತಾಯ ಕದಾಚನ. ನ ಚಾಶುಷ್ರೂಷವೇ ವಾಚ್ಯಂ ನ ಚ ಮಾಂ ಯೋಃಭ್ಯಸೂಯತಿ. BG(18-67). Great truths, like precious diamonds are not meant to be hawked in the streets like cheap vegetables. A diamond merchant keeps the diamonds carefully locked in an iron safe in his shop. Only a handful of people out of several millions in the city will be fit to enter the shop and enquire about them. The merchant, will welcome the customer, engage him in small talk and enquire about his requirements. By then he would have assessed the customer's worth and seriousness to do business. Then only will he unlock the safe, bring out his wares and show them to the customer. Similarly vedantic truths are invaluable and are to be guarded carefully and given only to the deserving. Brief explanation of the Tripura episode follows.

It was said that our body is viewed as being made of three layers - the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body. These three bodies are the three puras or cities. The paramatma who is of the form of chaitanyam or consciousness is omnipresent and is present in the body also, and enlivens it. The body itself, being mere bundle of matter, is inert. Krishna says this ಇದಂ ಶರೀರಂ ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಮಿತ್ಯಭಿಧೀಯತೇ and in the next verse ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಜ್ಞಂ ಚ ಮಾಂ ವಿದ್ಧಿ ಸರ್ವ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರೇಷು ಭಾರತ. BG(13- 1 and 2). The consciousness present in the body is known as atma or jiva or jivatma. But it is not a part or product of the body that is liable to decay and destruction. Such modifications of the body do not affect the jivatma. Even on death it is the subtle body which travels to take another body (as stated earlier). The atma being all pervading does not travel anywhere. It is like a pot being made. We may call the space confined in the pot as pot-space (to distinguish it from the total space though really there is no such division) but it was not created when the pot was made. When the pot is broken, it is pot that is destroyed and not the "pot space." It has nowhere to go. The confines of the pot having gone it just merges with the total space that is out side the pot also. Thus the atma has nothing to do with the body. This is said in Tattvabodha clearly as ಆತ್ಮಾ ಕಃ?What is the Self? ಸ್ಥೂಲ-ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ-ಕಾರಣ-ಶರೀರಾದ್ ವ್ಯತಿರಿಕ್ತಃ ಪಂಚಕೋಶಾತಿತಃ ಸನ್ ಅವಸ್ಥಾತ್ರಯಸಾಕ್ಷೀ ಸಚ್ಚಿದಾನಂದಸ್ವರೂಪಃ ಸನ್ ಯಸ್ತಿಷ್ಠತಿ ಸ ಆತ್ಮಾ. Self is other than the gross, subtle and causal bodies. It is beyond the five sheaths and the witness to the three states of consciousness. It is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss.

Thus there is no birth or modifications or death for the jivatma as is the case with the body. Krishna says this: ನ ಜಾಯತೇ ಮ್ರಿಯತೇ ವಾ ಕದಾಚಿ-ನ್ನಾಯಂ ಭೂತ್ವಾ ಭವಿತಾ ವಾ ನ ಭೂಯಃ .. ಅಜೋ ನಿತ್ಯಃ ಶಾಶ್ವತೋಽಯಂ ಪುರಾಣೋ ನ ಹನ್ಯತೇ ಹನ್ಯಮಾನೇ ಶರೀರೇ. BG(2-20).

The pot because of which the infinite space (that has nothing to do with the pot) gets the apparent limitation as “pot space” is called upadhi. In the same way the body mind complex is upadhi for the paramatma and it gets the name jivatma (though both are one and the same). Its glorious state gets covered by the veiling power of maya (called avidya or ignorance) and it gets bound. This leads the jiva to identify itself with the limitations of the three bodies. It imagines it is a finite creature, helpless and subject to sorrows like sickness, old age, death etc.. This is known as samsara. Truly speaking the jivatma being none other than the paramatma and of the form of pure wisdom does not act or undergo any change. Since it does not act it does not also reap the fruits of action called ಕರ್ಮಫಲಂ (ie.) joy or sorrow. That is, it is not a ಕರ್ತಾ or ಭೋಕ್ತಾ (i.e.) doer or enjoyer or in other words atma is said to be akarta and abhokta (ಅಕರ್ತಾ and ಅಭೋಕ್ತಾ). One who has shed his identity with the body and clearly established his oneness with the Self is, therefore, not bound by the results of actions . The mistaken identification with the body and imagining he or she is an individual who has to act etc., is called ego or ahamkara and is the cause of all the problems. ಪ್ರಕೃತೇಃ ಕೃಯಮಾಣಾನಿ ಗುಣೈಃ ಕರ್ಮಾಣಿ ಸರ್ವಶಃ .. ಅಹಂಕಾರವಿಮೂಢಾತ್ಮಾ ಕರ್ತಾಹಮಿತಿ ಮನ್ಯತೇ. BG(3-27). An example will illustrate this peculiar situation. A

person goes to sleep in his cosy house after a sumptuous meal. After some time he enters the dream world. In his dream he travels to a distant land and is stranded. He has lost his belongings and is famished. But he has no money to buy anything. The person is not used to such a privation and so is feeling miserable. This goes on for some (dream) days. Ultimately the intensity of the suffering becomes too much to bear and he wakes up with a start . To his utter delight he realises all that had happened was only a dream and he has not left his comfortable bed. He feels sheepish to think of the suffering he had gone through.

In the case narrated above all the suffering and misery was unreal. But it appeared real because the person identified himself with the dream body that was not his. The dream body was merely a projection of his mind and so had no substance. When the dreamer woke up he gave up the identification and was free from sorrow. In the same way vedanta says that the individual’s bondage and ensuing samsara are imaginary and due to wrong identification

with the body-mind complex. This mistake is the result of ajnanam or ignorance. It will go when the individual sheds his ignorance and realises that he is not the body-mind complex but the atma whose nature is ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಚಿದಾನಂದರೂಪಂ as said in the first line of this verse. Krishna says this to his friend Uddhava: ದೇಹಸ್ಥೋಽಪಿ ನ ದೇಹಸ್ಥೋ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ಸ್ವಪ್ನಾದ್ಯಧೋತ್ತಿತಃ .. ಅದೇಹಸ್ಥೋಽಪಿ ದೇಹಸ್ಥಃ ಕುಮತಿಃ ಸ್ವಪ್ನದೃಗ್ಯಥಾ. BH(11-11-8). A wise man, though he appears to be in the body, has no identification with the body like the one who had woken up from a dream. But a man without discrimination is like one having a dream. He has chosen to (dis-identify with his true body and) identify with his (dream) body (and suffers the consequences). The dream body is only thought in the mind but the thought is so powerful that it makes him identify himself with the dream body, undergo the vicarious suffering and forget his real body that is ensconced in the bed. Thus there has to be a second waking up, as it were, from our so-called waking stage to the real awakened stage with the advent of knowledge or jnanam. Till then one is in the clutches of agnanam or ignorance which forces us into karma or action that brings in the fruits of action which in turn results in rebirth etc.. The grace of the Lord confers this wisdom and takes one beyond the three bodies that envelop the jiva. This is said in the DakShinamurthy Stotram as ಯಃ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್-ಕುರುತೇ ಪ್ರಬೋಧಸಮಯೇ ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮಾನ-ಮೇವಾದ್ವಯಂ ತಸ್ಮೈ ಶ್ರೀಗುರುಮೂರ್ತಯೇ ನಮ ಇದಂ ಶ್ರೀದಕ್ಷಿಣಾಮೂರ್ತಯೇ When the dreamer wakes up from the nightmare the dreamer merges with the waker (if we may so call the one who has woken up) and not “become” the waker. He alone remains. He does not see the waker but claims himself to be the waker. This claiming is ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ ಕುರುತೇ So also in the case of self-knowledge one does not experience or “become” the atma; but ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮಾನಂ ಅದ್ವಯಮೇವ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕುರುತೇ owns up his true nature as atma. Shiva’s names relating to Tripura are ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಂತಕಃ . ತ್ರೀಣಿ ಪುರಾಣಿ ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಣಿ, ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಣಾಂ ಅಂತಕಃ ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಂತಕಃ . ತ್ರೀಣಿ ಪುರಾಣಿ ಶರೀರಾಣಿ, “ಪುರಸಂಜ್ಞೇ ಶರೀರೇಽಸ್ಮಿನ್ಮಯನಾತ್ಪುರೋಷೋ ಹರಿಃ” ಇತಿ ವಿಷ್ಣುಪುರಾಣವಚನಾತ್.ತಾನಿ ಚ ಸ್ಥೂಲ-ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ-ಕಾರಣಾತ್ಮಕಾನಿ- ಸ್ಥೂಲಂ ಭೌತಿಕಮೇವ, ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಂ ಲಿಂಗಶರೀರಂ, ಕಾರಣಂ ತ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾರೂಪಮಿತಿ.ಏಷಾಂ ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಣಾಂ ಅಂತಕಃ ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಂತಕಃ; ಶಿವಜ್ಞಾನಸ್ಯ ಚ ವಿದೇಹಕೈವಲ್ಯಹೇತುತ್ವಂ ಮಂತ್ರೋಪನಿಷದಿ ಶ್ರುತಂ. ಇದಂ ಚ ಶ್ರುತಿಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ ನಾಮ, “ತ್ಯಂಬಕಾಯ ತ್ರಿಪುರಾಂತಕಾಯ ತ್ರಿಕಾಗ್ನಿಕಾಲಾಯ ಕಾಲಾಗ್ನಿರುದ್ರಾಯ ನಮಃ” ಇತಿ SA(38)ಪುರಾರಾತಿಃ . ಪುರಾಣಾಂ ಶರೀರಾಣಾಂ ಸ್ಥೂಲ-ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ-ಕಾರಣಾತ್ಮನಾಂ ಅರಾತಿಃ ಶತ್ಪುರಿತಿ ಪುರಾರಾತಿಃ . ತದರಾತಿತ್ವಂ

ಚ ಶಿವಸ್ಯ ಸ್ವಜ್ಞಾನಸ್ಯ ವಿದೇಹಕೈವಲ್ಯಹೇತುತ್ವಾತ್; ತಚ್ಚ ಮಂತ್ರೋಪನಿಷದಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ SA(68). Krishna tells Uddhava that He is Himself Shiva who destroyed the three cities ತ್ರಿಪುರಘೋ ಧನುಷ್ಮತಾಂ BH(11-11-20). Meru mountain. The Meru mountain is mentioned in our puranas, Mahabharata and Ramayana etc.. It is said to be rich in gold and other precious jewels and is said to be in the center of the earth. The Himalayas are in the southern part of the Jambudwipa in whose center is the Meru. The Bharathavarsha (India) is in the south of the Himalayas. One of the mountains surrounding the Meru is the Mandhara which was used by the gods to churn the ocean of milk. Shri Suka mentions this when he gives a description of the creation ಏಷಂ ಮಧ್ಯೇ ಇಲಾವೃತಂ ನಾಮಾಭ್ಯಂತರವರ್ಷಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ನಾಭ್ಯಾಮವಸ್ಥಿತಃ ಸರ್ವತಃ ಸೌವರ್ಣಃ ಕುಲಗಿರಿರಾಜೋ ಮೇರುದ್ವೀಪಾಯಾಮಸಮುನ್ನಾಹಃ ಕರ್ಣಿಕಾಭೂತಃ ಕುವಲಯಕಮಲಸ್ಯ ಮೂರ್ಧನಿ ದ್ವಾತ್ರಿಂಶತ್ಸಹಸ್ರಯೋಜನವಿತತೋ ಮೂಲೇ ಷೋಡಶ್ಸಹಸ್ರಂ ತಾವತಾಂತರ್ಭೂಮ್ಯಾಂ ಪ್ರವಿಷ್ಟಃ . BH(5-16-6). The abodes of the gods like Brahma are situated on the peaks of the mountain. Lalita is said to reside on one of the peaks of Meru and so gets the name ಸುಮೇರುಶೃಂಗಮಧ್ಯಸ್ಥಾ. ಸುಮೇರೋರ್ಹೇಮದ್ರೇರ್ಮಧ್ಯಶೃಂಗೇ ತಿಷ್ಠತೀತಿ ತತ್ಸ್ಥಾ .. ಶೋಭನೇ ಮೇರುಮಧ್ಯಶೃಂಗೇ ಇತಿ ವಾ LS(55). The sun and the moon are said to go round the mountain. Our poets mention this fact often. Kalidasa refers to the sun going round Meru in his Raghuvamsa (7-24). He says that Aja and Indumati going round the sacred fire during their wedding was like the day and the night revolving round Meru ಪ್ರದಕ್ಷಿಣಪ್ರಕ್ರಮಣಾತ್ಕೃಶಾನೋರುದರ್ಚಿಷಸ್ತನ್ಮಿಥುನಂ ಚಕಾಸೇ .

ಮೇರೋರುಪಾಂತೇಷ್ಟಿವ ವರ್ತಮಾನಂ ಅನ್ಯೋನ್ಯಸಂಸಕ್ತಮಹಸ್ತಿಯಾಮಂ .. Krishna says that He is Meru among the mountains ಮೇರುಃ ಶಿಖರಿಣಾಮಹಂ BG (10-23) and ಧಿಷ್ಣಾನಾಮಸ್ಮ್ಯಹಂ ಮೇರುಃ . BH(11-11-21). All these show that meru is considered a very holy mountain

ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಂ- ಕೃತ್ತಿಃ = bark of a tree , skin, hide ವಾಸಃ = dress. Shiva is reputed to be dressed in the bark of trees and skins of tiger and elephant. Once some rishis of Daruka forest performed a sacrifice. It seems they were very proud of their spiritual accomplishments. Shiva wanted to test their mind-set and teach them a lesson. So He passed by in the form of a shabbily dressed mendicant. The sages were furious to see the mendicant. From the sacrificial fire they created a ferocious elephant and a tiger and set them to attack the mendicant. But Shiva killed the animals, and

wrapped Himself in their skins. The sages were humbled. They realised their mistake and surrendered to Shiva. So He gets the following names. ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಚರ್ಮಾಂಬರಃ . ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಚರ್ಮ ಅಂಬರಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ; “ತಥಾ ಪಿನಾಕಹಸ್ತಃ ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಾ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(108). ಗಜಚರ್ಮಾಂಬರಃ . ಗಜಾಸುರಸ್ಯ ಚರ್ಮ ಕೃತ್ತಿರಂಬರಂ ವಾಸೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಗಜಚರ್ಮಾಂಬರಃ . ಶ್ರುತಿರುಕ್ತಾ. SS(158). ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಃ . ಕೃತ್ತಿ ದಾರುಕಾವನಸ್ಥ-ಮುನಿಕೃತಸಃಭಿಚಾರೋತ್ಪನ್ನವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಸ್ಯ ಚರ್ಮ ವಾಸೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸ ತಥಾ. ಅಥವಾ ಕಾಶ್ಯಾಂ ಶಿವಭಕ್ತಜಿಘಾಂಸಯಾಗತಸ್ಯ ಗಜಾಸುರಸ್ಯ ಕೃತ್ತಿರತ್ರ ವಿವಕ್ಷಿತಾ. “ಪ್ರಾಣೇಶ್ವರಃ ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಾಃ ಪಿನಾಕೀ” ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(909) ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಃ . ಕೃತ್ತಿಃ ದಾರುಕಾವನಸ್ಥಮುನಿಕೃತಾಭಿಚಾರೋತ್ಪನ್ನವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಸ್ಯ ಚರ್ಮ ವಾಸಃ ವಸ್ತ್ರಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸ ತಥಾ. ಯಥೋಕ್ತಂ ಸ್ಯಾದೇ “ ತತೋ ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರೋ ಮಹಾನ್ಮೃದ್ಧ ಆಜಗಾಮ ನಖಾಯುಧಃ . ತೇಷಾಮೃಷೀಣಾಂ ಮರ್ಮಸ್ಥಃ ಕೋಪೋಽಯಂ ನಿರ್ಗತೋ ಯಥಾ . ತಂ ಚಾದಾಯ ತ್ವಚಂ ಭಿತ್ವಾ ತದಾ ಚರ್ಮಾಂಬರೋಽಭವತ್. ಶುಶುಭೇ ಚರ್ಮಣಾ ತೇನ ನಾನಾವರ್ಣಯುತೇನ ಚ” ಇತಿ .. ಅಥವಾ ಕಾಶ್ಯಾಂ ಶಿವಭಕ್ತಜಿಘಾಂಸಯಾಗತಸ್ಯ ಗಜಾಸುರಸ್ಯ ಕೃತ್ತಿರತ್ರ ವಿವಕ್ಷಿತಾ .. ಯಥೋಕ್ತಂ ಸ್ಯಾದ ಏವ - “ವಾರಾಣಸ್ಯಾಂ ಪುರಾಯಾತೋ ಗಜರೂಪೋ ಮಹಾಸುರಃ .ತಾಪಸಾಙ್ಗಿವಭಕ್ತಾಂಶ್ಚ ನಿಹಂತುಂ ಕೋಪದೀಪಿತಃ” ಇತ್ಯುಪಕ್ರಮ್ಯ “ ಹತ್ವಾ ತಂ ಕುಂಜರಂ ಭೀಮಮಧ್ಯಷ್ಟ್ಯಂ ದಿಗ್ಗಜೈರಪಿ.ಪಾದಹಸ್ತಯುತಂ ಚರ್ಮ ವಿಶಸ್ಯಾಚ್ಛಿದ್ಯ ತೇನ ವೈ.ಪ್ರಾವೃತ್ಯಾತ್ಮಾನಮಾತ್ಮೇಶಃ ಸ್ತೂಯಮಾನೋಽಖಿಲೈಃ ಸುರೈಃ ” ಇತಿ SA(67). ದುರ್ವಾಸಃ . ದುರ್ನಿರೀಕ್ಷಂ ವಾಸೋ ಗಜಸಿಂಹವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಚರ್ಮಾದಿರೂಪಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ತಥಾ. SS(566). Kalidasa wonders at Shiva, dressing Himself in the bark and skins of animals though He is the supreme lord, and profusely showers blessings on His devotees ಏಕೈಶ್ವರ್ಯೇ ಸ್ಥಿತೇಽಪಿ ಪ್ರಣತಬಹುಫಲೇ ಯಃ ಸ್ವಯಂ ಕೃತ್ತಿವಾಸಾಃ . Malavikagnimitra (1.1).

These incidents show that the Lord is capable of vanquishing his enemies with ease. They are meant to warn one like Ravana who takes Him lightly that they will have to face dire consequences. But His nature is to subdue pride wherever it shows up - be it in an asura like Ravana or god like Manmatha or even great rishis who should have known better. This is because pride is an obstacle to the spiritual progress. Once they realise their mistake and give up their pride Shiva blesses them.

Now a few words about Shiva wearing the bark or skins of animals: First this kind of dress, His matted locks etc., proclaim that Shiva is beyond all varnas or grades of society - like brahmin, kShatriya etc., - and ashramas or stages of life - like student, householder

etc.. In other words He is an ಅತಿವರ್ಣಾಶ್ರಮೀ Such a one is not bound by any rules or regulations applicable to any varna or ashrama. He only gave out the scriptures to enable us to become mature spiritually and realise Him. So He is known as bhandhu or well wisher ಬಂಧುಃ . ಬಂಧುಕೃತ್ಯಂ ಹಿತಾಹಿತೋಪದೇಸಂ ಶ್ರುತಿಸ್ತ್ಮತೀಲಕ್ಷಣಂ ಕೃತವಾನಿತಿ . “ಸ ನೋ ಬಂಧುರ್ಜನಿತೇ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(581). So these very same rules cannot bind Him. The description of Shri Suka in Shri Bhagavatam matches the above description of a paramahansa. It says ತತ್ರಾಭವದ್ ಭಗವಾನ್ ವ್ಯಾಸಪುತ್ರೋ ಯದೃಚ್ಛಯಾ ಗಾಮಟಮಾನೋಽನಪೇಕ್ಷಃ . ಅಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಲಿಂಗೋ ನಿಜಲಾಭತುಷ್ಟಃ ವೃತಶ್ಚಬಾಲ್ಯೈರವಧೂತವೇಷಃ . BH(1-19-25).

Secondly, the bark of the tree and the skins that Shiva wears represent the cessation of birth. Birth and rebirth have been discussed earlier. We saw earlier while discussing the implications of Tripura that one’s mistaken identity with the body is the cause of all problems starting with karma resulting in fruits of karma and then birth(s) to “enjoy” the results of karma. The dawn of wisdom will dispel the ignorance about the reality and reveal one’s true status. This will end the cycle of birth and death. Lord’s grace can give us the wisdom. So Shiva is called Hara ಹರಃ . ಸ್ವ ವಿಷಯ ಜ್ಞಾನೇನಾವಿದ್ಯಾದೇಹರಣಾದ್ಧರಃ . SS(392). The late Paramacharya of Kanchipuram had explained the incident of Shiva burning the three cities with a smile thus. “The All-pervasive, All-knowing Supreme alone can liberate us from the cycle of birth and death by vouchsafing us the jnana to throw off the fetters of this restricting human body and to find bliss supreme in the merger of the jivatma with the paramatma. Shri Parameswara destroyed Tripura by the smile that appeared on His face on a contemplation of the humour of the situation. In relation to ourselves, the Tripura is the physical body in the three states of sthoola, sookshma and karana. The consciousness of these three states of our body can be overcome only when we realise the supreme bliss that radiates from Iswara.” (Acharya’s Call-Part1- P251).

The body is the result of prarabdham and another one is just waiting around the corner when this drops. So one should not get attached to it but be ready to leave it without regret when the prescribed hour comes. Instead, one should use one’s lifetime to gain discrimination and not chase the shadows. The avadhuta sage tells this to king Yadu ಲಬ್ಧ್ವಾ ಸುದುರ್ಲಭಮಿದಂ ಬಹುಸಂಭ್ರಾಂತೇ ಮಾನುಷ್ಯಮರ್ಥದಮನಿತ್ಯಮಪೀಹ ಧೀರಃ .. ತೂರ್ಣಂ ಯತೇತ ನ ಪತೇದನುಮೃತ್ಯು ಯಾವನ್ನಿಶ್ಚೇಯಸಾಯ ವಿಷಯಃ ಖಲು ಸರ್ವತಃ ಸ್ಯಾತ್. BH(11-9-290). The human body is invaluable as it is got

after innumerable births. No doubt it is frail and impermanent. But it is with this human body alone one can work to attain the life's goal. Plants and animals come lower in the rung of evolution. They face many limitations. So our shastras say that if one fails to properly use the rare human birth but lives to eat and leads a hedonistic life-style without a thought about the hereafter he is most unwise and incurs incalculable loss. In fact they say that such a one is no better than a brute or a tree. Harsh words indeed but they are born out of anguish and meant to rub in the point ತರವಃ ಕಿಂ ನ ಜೀವಂತಿ ಭಸ್ತಾಃ ಕಿಂ ನ ಶ್ವಸಂತ್ಯುತ. ನ ಖಾದಂತಿ ನ ಮೇಹಂತಿ ಕಿಂ ಗ್ರಾಮಪಶವೋಽಪರೇ.. ಶ್ವವಿಡ್ವರಾಹೋಷ್ವಖರೈಃ ಸಂಸ್ತುತಃ ಪುರುಷಃ ಪಶುಃ . ನ ಯತ್ಕರ್ಣಪಥೋಪೇತೋ ಜಾತು ನಾಮ ಗದಾಗ್ರಜಃ . BH(2-3-18 and 19). “Do not trees live? Do not bellows breathe? And do not the domestic animals (other than the human beast) take their food and indulge in sex? The human beast who has never heard of the story of the Lord has been declared to be as good as a dog, swine, a camel and a donkey.” But the Lord who is an ocean of mercy is ready to save such a person also if he wants to turn a new leaf and worships Him with single minded devotion. Krishna says he will be considered a righteous person. BG(IX-30,31)ಅಪಿ ಚೇತ್ಸುದುರಾಚಾರೋ ಭಜತೇ ಮಾಮನನ್ಯಭಾಕ್. ಸಾಧುರೇವ ಸ ಮಂತವ್ಯಃ ಸಮ್ಯಗ್ವ್ಯವಸಿತೋ ಹಿ ಸಃ .. ಕ್ಷಿಪ್ರಂ ಭವತಿ ಧರ್ಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಶಶ್ವಚ್ಛಾಂತಿಂ ನಿಗಚ್ಛತಿ. ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪ್ರೇತಿಜಾನೀಹಿ ನ ಮೇ ಭಕ್ತಃ ಪ್ರಣಶ್ಯತಿ. The bark and animal skins that Shiva wears proclaim this fact symbolically. They convey the above assurance that those who turn to Him with devotion will be saved from repeated births irrespective of the kind of life they might have lived. So Shiva has the following names ಭೇಷಜಂ- ಸಂಸಾರರೋಗಸ್ಯೌಷಧಂ ಭೇಷಜಂ VS(578)ಭವಹೇತಿಃ- ಭವಃ ಸಂಸಾರಃ, ತಸ್ಯ ಹೇತಿರಾಯುಧಂ ಸಂಸಾರಚ್ಛೇತ್ತಾ. “ಭವಸ್ಯ ಹೇತ್ಯೈ ಜಗತಾಂ ಪತಯ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(272) ತಾರಕಃ . ತಾರಯತಿ ಸಮ್ನಾರಾದಿತಿ ತಾರಕಃ . SA(07) ತಾರಣಃ . ಸಂಸಾರಸಾಗರಾತ್ತಾರಯತೀತಿ ತಾರಣಃ . VS(337) ತಾರಃ . ಗರ್ಭಜನ್ಮಜರಾಮೃತ್ಯುಲಕ್ಷಣಾದ್ ಭಯಾತ್ತಾರಯತೀತಿ ತಾರಃ . VS(338)ತಾರಃ . ಗರ್ಭಜನ್ಮಜರಾಮರಣಸಂಸಾರಮಹಾಭಯಾತ್ತಾರಯತೀತಿ ತಾರಃ . “ನಮಸ್ತಾರಾಯ ನಮಃ ಶಂಭವೇ ಚೇ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(76) ಭಜೇ ದಿವ್ಯಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ. ದಿವ್ಯ = divine ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ = a companion to one who treads the righteous path ಭಜೇ = I worship; means I worship the lord who is a companion to one who takes to the righteous path. This line provides more than one interpretation. ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಃ . ಸಂಶ್ಚಾಸೌ ಮರ್ಗಶ್ಚ ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಃ . means the virtuous path: the path

trodden by the saints and noble people and that is in keeping with the shastric injunctions ಮಹಾಜನೋ ಯೇನ ಗತಃ ಸ ಪಂಥಾಃ . says Mahabharata. It being very difficult to understand and interpret the scriptures it is safe to follow the path trodden by the great men as they have followed the path and realised the results. The guru, in Vivekachudamani, tells the disciple who had approached him for instruction that he will show the path which ascetics took for crossing samsara ಸಂಸಾರಸಿಂಧೋಸ್ತರಣೇಽಸ್ಯ ಪಾಯಃ . ಯೇನೈವ ಯಾತಾಃ ಯತಯೋಽಸ್ಯ ಪಾರಂ ತಮೇವ ಮಾರ್ಗಂ ತವ ನಿರ್ದಿಶಾಮಿ.

Krishna says that if one chooses to neglect the path laid out by the scriptures it will lead to his downfall. So He urges Arjuna to follow them ಯಃ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವಿಧಿಮುತ್ಸೃಜ್ಯ ವರ್ತತೇ ಕಾಮಕಾರತಃ . ನ ಸ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಮವಾಪ್ನೋತಿ ನ ಸುಖಂ ನ ಪರಾಂ ಗತಿಂ . ತಸ್ಮಾಚ್ಛಾಸ್ತ್ರಂ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಂ ತೇ ಕಾರ್ಯಕಾರ್ಯವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಿತೌ ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವಾ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವಿಧಾನೋಕ್ತಂ ಕರ್ಮ ಕರ್ತುಮಿಹಾರ್ಹಸಿ. BG.(16-23,24.) For those who follow the virtuous path He becomes a friend and guide. But for those like Ravana, who out of vanity or arrogance choose the prohibited path He is not a friend but metes out severe punishment by casting them into inferior births. ತಾನಹಂ ದ್ವಿಷತಃ ಕ್ರೂರಾನ್ಸಂಸಾರೇಷು ನರಾಧಮಾನ್ . ಕ್ಷಿಪಾಮ್ಯಜಸ್ರಮಶುಭಾನಾಸುರೀಷ್ಟೇವ ಯೋನಿಷು. BG(16.19) Sankaracharya explains “inferior births” as cruel beings such as tigers, lions and the like ಅಜಸ್ರಂ ಸಂತತಂ ಅಶುಭಾನ್ ಅಶುಭಕರ್ಮಕಾರಿಣಃ ಆಸುರೀಷ್ಟೇವ ಕ್ರೂರಕರ್ಮಪ್ರಾಯಾಸು ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಸಿಂಹಾದಿಷು ಯೋನಿಷು ಕ್ಷಿಪಾಮಿ . Kalidasa prays in the invocatory verse in Malavikagnimitra ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಲೋಕನಾಯ ವ್ಯಪನಯತು ಸ ವಸ್ತಾಮಸೀಂ ವೃತ್ತಿಮೀಶಃ . He prays to lord to remove the ignorance born out of lethargy to enable us to perceive the right path or the virtuous path. ಸತ್ Sat also means that which really exists or existence and means brahman ಅವಿತಥಂ ಪರಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಸತ್, “ಸದೇವ ಸೋಮ್ಯೇದಂ” (ಭಾ.ಉ. 6.1.4.) ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(478). Thus Margabandhu is brahman only ಸಂಚಾಸೌ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಶ್ಚ ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಃ . Being brahman He is the best guide and companion one can get on the way to liberation. The path of self knowledge, says Yama, is very difficult to tread upon. It is just like walking over the sharp edge of a razor ಕ್ಷುರಸ್ಯ ಧಾರ ನಿಶಿತಾ ದುರತ್ಯಯಾ ದುರ್ಗಂ ಪಥಸ್ತತ್ಕವಯೋ ವದಂತಿ KU(3-14).The knowledge about the Lord is most profound. The means to get it is difficult for the unprepared mind. When one gets struck on the path He (being with us all the time and very much within us), like a sign post, points the way to the next stage. He is a guide and companion as long as a seeker looks for Him. Like the rain bearing clouds He showers His

grace on His devotees without expecting anything in return. Mundane bandhus (relatives) are the cause of bondage and ensuing misery. In fact they are called bandhus only because they bind themselves with us ಬಧ್ನಾತಿ ಮನಃ ಸ್ನೇಹಾದಿನಾ ಇತಿ But lord Margabandhu is a unique bandhu who causes all bondage to drop off (as He is Sat) ಸತ್ಸಂಗತ್ವೇ ನಿಸ್ಸಂಗತ್ವಂ says Shri Sankara in Bhajagovindam. So every one prays to Him for getting free from bondage ತ್ಯಂಬಕಂ ಯಜಾಮಹೇ ಸುಗಂಧಿಂ ಪುಷ್ಟಿವರ್ಧನಂ . ಉರ್ವಾರುಕಮಿವ ಬಂಧನಾನ್ಮೃತ್ಯೋರ್ಮುಷ್ಣೀಯ ಮಾಮೃತಾತ್. Ignorance is like a thick layer of scum covering our wisdom. When the scum is removed the underlying wisdom shines. Wisdom shows the seeker that he is himself Margabandhu. The seeker realises there is no where to go and the seeking ends. So He is known as ಮಾರ್ಗಃ . ಮುಮುಕ್ಷವಸ್ತಂ ಮಾರ್ಗಯಂತಿ ಇತಿ ಮಾರ್ಗಃ; ಪರಮಾನಂದೋ ಯೇನ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯತೇ ಸ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಇತಿ ವಾ VS(365). He is sought by people who want liberation. He is the path through which one can get infinite bliss. Only by knowing Him liberation is attained ಯಂ ವಿದಿತ್ವಾ ಅಮೃತತ್ವಾಯ ಕಲ್ಪಂತೇ ಯೋಗಿನೋ ಮುಮುಕ್ಷವಃ ಸ ಏವ ಪಂಥಾಃ ಮಾರ್ಗಃ . “ನಾನ್ಯಃ ಪಂಥಾ ವಿದ್ಯತೇಸಯನಾಯ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(397). The poet says ದಿವ್ಯ ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ Why say ದಿವ್ಯ divya? The scriptures talk of the paths the jiva can take after the fall of the physical body. They are the dark path (ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಗತಿಃ) and the bright path (ಶುಕ್ಲಗತಿಃ). The former path is available to those who perform duties and sacrifices prescribed in the vedas. Karmas may be performed with desires also (known as sakama karma). One may, for example, perform a sacrifice for achieving wealth or property or even swarga loka. The karmas done properly produce results without fail. One who does the prescribed karmas go to world of manes or pitruloka ಪಿತೃಲೋಕಃ after death through the dark path. One can also do the karmas without any desire (known as nishkamakarma). They are done as offering to the Lord and the results are accepted as gifts from Him. Such karmas naturally do not have a binding effect but result in (ಚಿತ್ತಶುದ್ಧಿಃ) purity of the mind. So, now one with a purified mind can add meditation or upAsana (ಉಪಾಸನಾ) on the Lord in any chosen form, that is saguna Iswara, like Krishna, Rama, Shiva etc.. This becomes a powerful combination and gives better results(i.e.) they go to devaloka through the bright path .These are said to be superior worlds as the pleasures enjoyed are superior. ಏತೇಷು ಯಶ್ಚರತೇ ಭ್ರಾಜಮಾನೇಷು ಯಥಾಕಾಲಂ ಚಾಹುತಯೋ ಹ್ಯಾದದಾಯನ್ .. ತಂ ನಯಂತ್ಯೇತಾಃ ಸೂರ್ಯಸ್ಯ ರಶ್ಮಯೋ ಯತ್ರ ದೇವಾನಾಂ ಪತಿರೇಕೋಧಿವಾಸಃ . MU(1-2-5). We saw earlier that even the worlds of gods are finite and so one who

attains such a place has to come down and be reborn after his merits are exhausted. So it is not considered wise to keep on doing karmas. Those who take to a combination of karma and upasana can practise austerities and develop mental maturity and detachant. They go to Brahmaloaka through the bright path ತಪಃಶ್ರದ್ಧೇ ಯೇ ಹ್ಯುಪವಸಂತ್ಯರಣ್ಯೇ ಶಾಂತಾ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸೋ ಭೈಕ್ಷ್ಯಚರ್ಯಾಂ ಚರಂತಃ .. ಸೂರ್ಯದ್ವಾರೇಣ ತೇ ವಿರಜಾಃ ಪ್ರಯಾಂತಿ ಯತ್ರಾಮೃತಃ ಸ ಪುರುಷೋ ಹ್ಯವ್ಯಯಾತ್ಮಾ. MU(1-2-11). Note the use of the word ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸಃ , that is they are not yet jnAnis but on the way to become a jnAni. A jnani is liberated while alive in this world itself. He is known as a jivanmukta (ಜೀವನ್ಮುಕ್ತಃ). But those who go to the Brahmaloaka study vedanta at the feet of Brahma. They get realisation. At the time of pralaya they, along with Brahma merge with brahman. They do not return to this world. This is what is known as gradual emancipation or kramamukti (ಕ್ರಮಮುಕ್ತಿಃ). The lord is a companion and guide to those who take to the bright path that leads to Him.

Meaning of the verse. I worship Lord Margabandhu who is eternal, of the form of consciousness and bliss, who curbed the pride of Ravana, who used Meru the golden mountain as a bow, who wears the bark of a tree and skins and who is a companion to those who choose to tread the spiritual path leading to liberation.

4

4. ಕಂದರ್ಪದರ್ಪಘ್ನಮೀಶಂ ಕಾಲಕಂಠಂ ಮಹೇಶಂ ಮಹಾವ್ರೋಮಕೇಶಂ .
ಕುಂದಾಭದಂತಂ ಸುರೇಶಂ ಕೋಟಿಸೂರ್ಯಪ್ರಕಾಶಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .
ಶಂಭೋ . . .

ಕಂದರ್ಪದರ್ಪಘ್ನಂ - ಕಂದರ್ಪಃ = Manmatha, the god of love ದರ್ಪಃ = arrogance, pride, vanity ಘ್ನ = used at the end of a word means destroying, removing or curing. So ದರ್ಪಘ್ನಂ means one who removed or cured the pride. Shiva cured or removed the pride of Manmatha, the god of love.

This statement lends itself for more than one interpretation. 1 - Though formless and without attributes Lord assumes various forms such as Shiva, Krishna, Rama, Uma, LakShmi etc., to gladden the hearts of His devotees. Words can not adequately describe the beauty of these forms. Manmatha is said to be the paragon of beauty. But even his famed beauty appears drab and insignificant when one thinks of the lord's bewitching form. Shri Suka describes Krishna as ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ ಮನ್ಮಥಮನ್ಮಥಃ . ಜಗನ್ಮೋಹನಸ್ಯ

ಕಾಮಸ್ಯಾಪಿ ಮನಸ್ಯುದ್ಭೂತಃ ಕಾಮಃ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಸ್ಯಾಪಿ ಮೋಹಕ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . BH(10-32-2), that is His beauty will cast a spell on Manmatha himself. So where is the question of his feeling proud in the Lord's presence? In view of this He is known as ಸುಂದರಃ . ದ್ವಾತ್ರಿಶಲ್ಲಕ್ಷಣೋಪೇತಃ ಸುಂದರಃ . “ಕಾಮಾಯ ಕಾಮರೂಪಿಣ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(416). Also ಸುಂದರಃ . ವಿಶ್ವಾತಿಶಾಯಿಸೌಭಾಗ್ಯಶಾಲಿತ್ವಾತ್ ಸುಂದರಃ . VS(791). One who is more beautiful than anyone else ಸುದೇಹಃ . ಶೋಭನೋ ದೇಹೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸ ಸುದೇಹಃ . “ಮಂಗಲಾಯತನಂ ದೇವಂ ಯುವಾನಮತಿಸುಂದರಂ. ಧ್ಯಾಯೇತ್ಕಲ್ಪತರೋರ್ಮುಲೇ ಸುಖಾಸೀನಂ ಸಹೋಮಯಾ.” ಇತಿ. “ಶಿವಾನ್ಯೈ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(249) ಶುಭಾಂಗಃ - ಸುಂದರಾಂ ತನುಂ ಧಾರಯನ್ ಶುಭಾಂಗಃ . VS(586). Also ಶುಭಾಂಗಃ - ಶೋಭನೈರಂಗೈರ್ಧೈಯತ್ವಾತ್ ಶುಭಾಂಗಃ . VS(782). Saints and devotees have lost themselves in singing about the beauty of the lord. Let us savour some samples. This description of Shiva is from Navaratnamala by the saint Shri Sadasivabrahmendra ಕಂದರ್ಪಕೋಟಿಶತಗುಣಸುಂದರದಿವ್ಯಾಕೃತಿಂ ಶಿವಂ ವಂದೇ Shiva's divine form is millions of times more beautiful than that of Manmatha. Likewise the saint Shri Narayana Tirta in his Krishna Leelatarangini repeatedly calls Krishna as ಕಾಮಕೋಟಿನಮ, ಮನಸಿಜಶತಕೋಟಿಮಂಜುಲವೇಷ, ಮೀನಾಂಕಕೋಟಿಮೋಹನ, ಕೋಟಿಮದನಸುಂದರ, ಜಗನ್ನೋಹನ , that is Krishna is millions of times more beautiful than Manmatha. Such being the case his beauty is completely eclipsed in the presence of the Lord: just like the feeble light of the stars is lost in the blazing light of the sun. Let us look at another example. This one is from Shri Krishnakarnamrutam by Lilasukha. He is amazed at the sweet form of Krishna and could only exclaim “Oh! He is sweet,sweet, the very embodiment of sweetness.”

ಮಧುರಂ ಮಧುರಂ ವಪುರಸ್ಯ ವಿಭೋ-ರ್ಮಧುರಂ ಮಧುರಂ ವದನಂ ಮಧುರಂ. ಮಧುಗಂಧಿ ಮೃದುಸ್ಮಿತ-ಮೇತದಹೋ ಮಧುರಂ ಮಧುರಂ ಮಧುರಂ ಮಧುರಂ. Shri Vedanta Desika should have had the same sentiment as Shri Dikshita and addresses the lord at Tirupathy as ಕಂದರ್ಪದರ್ಪಹರ ಸುಂದರ ದಿವ್ಯಮೂರ್ತೇ! “the One whose beautiful form destroys the pride of Manmatha” (in Venkatesa suprabatam). The use of the word ಕಂದರ್ಪಃ for Manmatha is significant. The name means that he was proud right from birth. Even the pride of such a being vanishes in the presence of the Lord.

2 - We are in the habit of describing things that have no defined form or have no form as beautiful if they please our senses. Thus we say the weather is beautiful or a smell is beautiful when it is pleasing to our senses. Similarly we describe the nature, for example

the sun rise, as beautiful because it is colourful and it is also cool at that time. We do not call the scene beautiful after a couple of hours when the sun is sizzling! In the same way we describe the formless Lord as beautiful as He confers bliss on us. Further weather etc., can give happiness in a very limited manner, that is for a limited time or in a limited quantity only. Soon they tend to pall or they will turn sour. So we may not call them really pleasing. Considering this Krishna says

ಯೇ ಹಿ ಸಂಸ್ಪರ್ಶಜಾ ಭೋಗಾ ದುಃಖಯೋನಯ ಏವ ತೇ .

ಆದ್ಯಂತವಂತಃ ಕೌಂತೇಯ ನ ತೇಷು ರಮತೇ ಬುಧಃ . BG(5-22) .

In sharp contrast the Lord is of the form of unlimited bliss and so infinitely beautiful. And it never gets stale. One never gets sated with looking at the form. Lilasukha is charmed by Krishna's form and describes it in his Shri Krishnakarnamrutam thus: ಪ್ರತಿಪದಲಲಿತಾಭ್ಯಾಂ, ಪ್ರತ್ಯಹಂ ನೂತನಾಭ್ಯಾಂ, ಪ್ರತಿಮುಹುರಧಿಕಾಭ್ಯಾಂ
It appears beautiful every time one looks at it. It seems ever fresh and more lovely than it appeared last time when one saw it. So He is known as ಸುಚಾರುಃ

- ಸುತರಾಂ ದರ್ಶನೀಯಶ್ಚಾರುಃ, ನಿರತಿಶಯ-ಪರಮಾನಂದರೂಪತ್ವಾತ್.
“ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಾನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(818). and ರಮ್ಯಃ - ಸುಖರೂಪತ್ವಾದ್ರಮ್ಯಃ
. “ಯೋ ವೈ ಭೂಮಾ ತತ್ಸುಖಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(924). Devi Lalita is known as ಸರ್ವಾಂಗಸುಂದರೀ - ಸರ್ವಾಣಿ ಚ ತಾನಿ ಅಂಗಾನಿ ಚ ಅವಯವಾಃ
ಶಿರಃಪಾಣ್ಯಾದಯಃ; ತೇಷ್ವನ್ಯೂನಾನತಿರಿಕ್ತಭಾವವತ್ವಾತ್ ಯಥಾಸಾಮುದ್ರಿಕಾ-
ಲಕ್ಷಣಂ ತದ್ವತ್ವೇನ ಸರ್ವಾಂಗಸುಂದರೀ. ಅಥವಾ ಸರ್ವೇಷಾಮಂಗೇಷು ಶರೀರೇಷು
ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸ್ವರೂಪತಯಾ ಅತ್ಯಂತಪ್ರೇಮವಿಷಯತ್ವೇನ ಸುಂದರಪದಾರ್ಥವದವಿನಾಭಾವವಾಂ
ತಥಾ. (Lalitatrishati No. 130, Shankara's commentary).

3 - At a different level we may say that Manmatha was not destroyed really as it is said. He came on a mission but failed miserably. But Shiva was in total control of Himself and so could not be shaken. He has many names that attest this fact. Some of them are: ಶಾಂತಃ - ವಿಷಯಸುಖೇಷ್ಟಸಂಗತಯಾ ಶಾಂತಃ, “ನಿಷ್ಕಲಂ ನಿಷ್ಕ್ರಿಯಂ ಶಾಂತಂ” (ಶ್ಲೋ. ಉ.6.19) ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(582) and SS(9)ವಿರಾಗಃ
- ವಿರತೋ ರಾಗೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ವಿರಾಗಃ . “ಕಥಮನೇನೇದೃಶೇನ ನಿಶ್ಚಿನೋತೀ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(89). ವಿರತಃ - ವಿಗತಂ ರತಮಸ್ಯ ವಿಷಯಸೇವಾಯಾಮಿತಿ ವಿರತಃ . VS(396)ದಮಃ - ದಮೋಽಸ್ಯಾಸ್ತೀತಿ ದಮಃ . ನಿಗೃಹೀತೇಂದ್ರಿಯಗ್ರಾಮ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . ಆತ್ಮಾರಾಮತ್ವಾತ್. “ನ ಹಿ ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮಾರಾಮಂ ವಿಷಯಮೃಗತ್ವಷ್ಟಾ ಭ್ರಮಯತಿ” ಇತಿ ಶಿವರಹಸ್ಯೇ . “ನೀಲಕಂಠಂ ಪ್ರಶಾಂತಮಿ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(578). Thus Manmatha was

no match to Shiva. He totally lost himself in the presence of Shiva. This is said to be the destruction of Manmatha. Shiva's anger was a flash and disappeared soon after as is wont with noble souls ಸಧೂನಾಂ ಕ್ಷಣಿಕೋ ಕೋಪಃ . The punishment was a token. Shiva yielded to Rati's pleadings and brought Manmatha back to life as he has a role to play in the creation

ಈಶಂ - The lord or master, one who is in complete control. Relating to the preceding episode of Manmatha this epithet fits Shiva perfectly as He conquered him who was famed to be invincible in all the three worlds. He made Manmatha feel small and acknowledge Shiva's overwhelming superiority

ಕಾಲಕಂಠಂ - ಕಾಲ = black or dark-blue colour ಕಂಠಃ = throat. This means one whose throat has a dark colour. It refers to Shiva whose throat has a bluish hue. This is said to have happened after he swallowed the poison that was given out by the serpent Vasuki when the ocean was churned by the devas and asuras. Like Manmatha in the episode narrated above, the poison also lost its virulence and became impotent in Shiva's presence. So Shiva has the following names

ನೀಲಕಂಠಃ - ನೀಲಃ ಕಂಠೇ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ನೀಲಕಂಠಃ . ಶಿವಸ್ಯ ಕಂಠೇ ನೈಲ್ಯಂ ವಿಷ್ಣ್ವಾದಿ-ಸಕಲಪ್ರಾಣ್ಯಾರ್ತಿಕರ-ಹಲಾಹಲ-ವಿಷಧಾರಣಪ್ರಯುಕ್ತಂ.— “ನೀಲಕಂಠಂ ಪ್ರಶಾಂತಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(5). The name ನೀಲಗ್ರೀವಃ for Shiva appears in several places in Shri Rudram. Also: ಶ್ರೀಕಂಠಃ - ಶ್ರೀಃ ಕಾಲಕೂಟಜನಿತಾ ಶೋಭಾ. ತದ್ವಾನ್ಕಂಠೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ . ತಥಾ ಕಾಲಕೂಟ-ಜನಿತ-ಮಾಲಿನ್ಯಮಪಿ ಶೋಭೈವ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಸ್ಯ. “ವಿಕಾರೋಽಪಿ ಶ್ಲಾಘ್ಯೋ ಭುವನಭಯಭಂಗ-ವ್ಯಸನಿನ” ಇತಿ ನ್ಯಾಯಾತ್. ಅಥವಾ ಶ್ರೀಃ ವಿಷಮೇವ, “ಶ್ರೀವೇಷರಚನಾ ಶೋಭಾ ಸಂಪತ್ಸರಲಶಾಖಿಷು.ವಾಣೀಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಲವಂಗೇಷು ವಿಷೇ ಬಿಲ್ವೇಽಪಿ”ತಿ ನಾನಾರ್ತರತ್ನಮಾಲಾ. ತದ್ವಾನ್ಕಂಠೋ ಯಸ್ಯೇತಿ. SS(118) and SA(16). This says that even the dark patch generated by the poison added to the beauty of Shiva's throat. This is said in the following verse in the Shivamahimna Stotram also

ಅಕಾಂಡಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಂಡಕ್ಷಯಚಕಿತದೇವಾಸುರಕೃಪಾ-
ವಿಧೇಯಸ್ಯಾಽಽಸೀದ್ ಯಸ್ತಿನಯನ ವಿಷಂ ಸಂಹೃತವತಃ .
ಸ ಕಲ್ಮಾಷಃ ಕಂಠೇ ತವ ನ ಕುರುತೇ ನ ಶ್ರಿಯಮಹೋ
ವಿಕಾರೋಽಪಿ ಶ್ಲಾಘ್ಯೋ ಭುವನಭಯಭಂಗವ್ಯಸನಿನಃ ..14.

The following names of Shiva are based on this incident. ಕಾಲಕೂಟವಿಷಾದೀ - ಹಾಲಾಹಲ-ವಿಷಪಾನಕರ್ತಾ ಕಾಲಕೂಟವಿಷಾದೀ . ಸ್ಯಾಂದೇ ಸನತ್ಕುಮಾರಸಂಹಿತಾಯಾಂ

ಕಾಶಿಕಾವನಮಾಹಾತ್ಮ್ಯೇ ವಿಷ್ಣ್ವಾ ದಿನಾ ಸಮುದ್ರಮಥನಂ, ತದಾನೀಂ ವಾಸುಕಿಮುಖಾತ್ಕಾಲ
ತೇನ ಗ್ಲಾನಿಃ, ತದನು ತೈರ್ವಿಷನಿಗ್ರಹಾರ್ತಂ ಶಿವಂ ಪ್ರತಿ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನಾ, ತದನು
ಶಿವಪ್ರೇರೀತೇನ—ನಾಮ್ನಾ ಹಸ್ತೇನ ವಿಷಮಾಹೃತ್ಯ ಚ ಶಿವಹಸ್ತೇ ಜಂಬೂಫಲವತ್ಸಮರ್ಪಣಂ
ತದನು- “ಗೃಹೀತ್ವಾ ಭುಕ್ತವಾಂಛಂಭುಃ ಕಂಠೇ ನೀಲೋಽಭವತ್ತದಾ. ತದಾಪ್ರಭೃತಿ
ತತ್ಸ್ಥಾನಂ ಹಾಲಾಶನಮಿತಿ ಸ್ಮೃತಂ. ಶಿವೋಽಭೂತ್ಕಾಲಭುಜ್ಜಾಮ್ನಾ ಕಾಲಕ್ಲ್ಯಾ ಖ್ಯುಕೋಽಭವ

SS(203). The story of churning of the ocean is mentioned in the puranas. It appears in 8th
book of Shrimad Bhagavatam. Some verses from this are given for reference
ನಿರ್ಮಘ್ಯಮಾನಾದುದಧೇರಭೂದ್ ವಿಷಂ ಮಹೋಲ್ಬಣಂ ಹಾಲಾಹಲಾಹ್ವಮಗ್ರತಃ

ಸಂಭ್ರಾಂತಮೀನೋನ್ಮಕರಾಹಿಕಚ್ಚಪಾತ್ ತಿಮಿದ್ವಿಪಗ್ರಾಹತಿಮಿಂಗಿಲಾಕುಲಾತ್ ..
ತಮುಗ್ರವೇಗಂ ದಿಶಿ ದಿಶ್ಯುಪರ್ಯಧೋ ವಿಸರ್ಪದುತ್ಸರ್ಪದಸಹ್ಯಮಪ್ರತಿ .
ಭೀತಾಃ ಪ್ರಜಾ ದುದ್ರವುರಂಗ ಸೇಶ್ವರಾ ಅರಕ್ಷ್ಯಮಾಣಾಃ ಶರಣಂ ಸದಾಶಿವಂ ..

“Seeing that effervescent, unbearable and irresistible poison possessing tremendous force
and spreading in all quarters, as well as above and below, and finding no protection
(anywhere), living beings along with their leaders got much frightened and flew for
protection to Lord Sadasiva (the ever-auspicious one).” They prayed to Shiva to protect
them. They said

ದೇವ ದೇವ ಮಹಾದೇವ ಭೂತಾತ್ಮನ್ ಭೂತಭಾವನ .
ತ್ರಾಹಿ ನಃ ಶರಣಾಪನ್ನಾಂಸ್ತ್ರೈಲೋಕ್ಯದಹನಾತ್ ವಿಷಾತ್ ..

“O god of gods! O supreme deity! the protector, nay, the very self of all created beings!
save us who have sought refuge in You, from this poison that is burning all the three
worlds.” Shiva saw their plight ತದ್ ವೀಕ್ಷ್ಯ ವ್ಯಸನಂ ತಾಸಾಂ ಕೃಪಯಾ ಭೃಶಪೀಡಿತಃ
. ಸರ್ವಭೂತಸುಹೃದ್ ದೇವ ಇದಮಾಹ ಸತೀಂ ಪ್ರಿಯಾಂ. Shiva who was the
embodiment of mercy was very much affected by their plight and told His consort Sati
this

ಅಹೋ ಬತ ಭವಾನ್ಯೇತತ್ ಪ್ರಜಾನಾಂ ಪಶ್ಯ ವೈಶಸಂ .
ಕ್ಷೀರೋದಮಥನೋದ್ಭೂತಾತ್ ಕಾಲಕೂಟಾದುಪಸ್ಥಿತಂ ..

“How distressing it is, O Bhavani, this calamity that has come up on these people from the
poison Kalakuta that had appeared during the churning of the ocean of milk.”

ಆಸಾಂ ಪ್ರಾಣಪರೀಪ್ಸೂನಾಂ ವಿಧೇಯಮಭಯಂ ಹಿ ಮೇ. ಏತಾವಾನ್ ಹಿ
ಪ್ರಭೋರರ್ಥೋ ಯದ್ ದೀನಪರಿಪಾಲನಂ.

“Protection must be given by me to these people who are concerned about their lives. To protect the afflicted is the main concern of the great (who is endowed with power).” Saying this Shiva swallowed the poison He had gathered in His hand

ನಿಶಮ್ಯ ಕರ್ಮ ತಚ್ಚಂಭೋಃ ದೇವದೇವಸ್ಯ ಮೀಡುಷಃ .
ಪ್ರಜಾ ದಕ್ಷಾಯಣೀ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾ ವೈಕುಂಠಶ್ಚ ಶಶಂಸಿರೇ.

Observing the benevolent act of Lord Shiva those who approached Him, Sati, Brahma and Lord Vishnu praised it.

Referring to this episode of Shiva swallowing the poison and the wearing Ganga on His head, the author Shri Dikshita says that the Lord performed these acts not because the poison was tasty or Ganga has purifying power : but only to save the world and because of extreme compassion. And these two acts could not have been performed by anyone else

ಗಂಗಾ ಧೃತಾ ನ ಭವತಾ ಶಿವ ಪಾವನೀತಿ ನಾಸ್ವಾದಿತೋ ಮಧುರ ಇತ್ಯಪಿ
ಕಾಲಕೂಟಃ . ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಯ ಜಗತಾಂ ಕರುಣಾತಿರೇಕಾ-ತ್ಯರ್ಮದ್ವಯಂ ಕಲಿತ-
ಮೇತದ-ನನ್ಯಸಾಧ್ಯಂ. (Brahmatarkastavam) ಮಹೇಶಂ - ಮಹಾ is a substitute
for ಮಹತ್ meaning big or great ಈಶಃ is synonymous with ಈಶ್ವರಃ and
means lord or master ಮಹೇಶಃ is the name of Shiva ಮಹಾಂಶ್ಚಾಸಾವೀಶಶ್ಚ
ಮಹೇಶಃ . “ಯಃ ಪರಃ ಸ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಃ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(26)ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಃ -
ಸ್ವರ್ಗಾದಿಯತ್ಕಿಂಚಿದೀಶಿತೃತ್ವಯೋಗಾದೀಶ್ವರತ್ವಂ ಹಿ ಇಂದ್ರಾದೀನಮಪ್ಯಸ್ತಿಃ
ಯದಾದಾಯ ಷಡ್ವಿಂಶಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇ ಉತ್ಪಾತಶಾಂತಿ ಪ್ರಕರಣೇ ಇಂದ್ರಯಮಾದಿಷು
“ಈಶ್ವರಾಯ ಸ್ವಾಹಾ” ಇತಿ ಮಂತ್ರಃ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಃ ಶಿವಸ್ತು ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಃ ತೇಷಾಮಪೀಶ್ವರತ್ವಾತ್,
“ಧೈಯಃ ಸರ್ವೈಶ್ವರ್ಯಸಂಪನ್ನಃ ಸರ್ವೇಶ್ವರಃ ಶಂಭುರಾಕಾಶಮಧ್ಯೇ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ;
“ಸೇಂದ್ರಾದಿಷು ಚ ದೇವೇಷು ತಸ್ಯ ತ್ವೈಶ್ವರ್ಯಮುಚ್ಯತೇ” ಇತಿ ಭಾರತವಚನಾಚ್ಚ,
ಏತದಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಮೇವ ಚ “ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಶ್ಚ ಭೂತಾನಾಂ ಮಹತಾಮೀಶ್ವರಶ್ಚ ಸಃ” ಇತಿ
ಭಾರತವಚನಂ. ಮಹತಃ ಪ್ರಣಿನ ಇಂದ್ರಾದೀನ್ಪ್ರತ್ಯಪಿ ಯದಸ್ಯೇಶಿತೃತ್ವಂ ವರ್ತತೇ,
ಇದಮೇವ ಏತದೀಯೇಶಿತೃತ್ವಸ್ಯ ಮಹತ್ವಮಿತಿ Indra and other gods like Yama may
be lords of their respective quarters and have powers but the Shiva is their Lord also. Their
lordships and powers were given by Him only. And it is to Him only they all rush for
protection when they see a danger to all, as happened in the story just narrated. Later on it
is said ಅತಃ ಇತರದೇವತಾಸಾಧ್ಯಕಾರ್ಯಪ್ರವರ್ತಕತಯಾ ಸರ್ವತ್ರಾಪ್ರತಿಹತತ್ವಾತ್
ಮಹದೀಶಿತೃತ್ವಮಸ್ಯೇತಿ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರ ಇತಿ ಸ್ಮೃಉತಃ ಇತಿ. ಇದಂ ಚ ಶ್ರುತಿಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ
ನಾಮ, “ಮಾಯಿನಂ ತು ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಂ”, “ತಮೀಶ್ವರಾಣಾಂ ಪರಮಂ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಂ”,
“ಯಃ ಪರಃ ಸ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಃ” ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . SA(2)

ಮಹಾವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಂ - ಮಹತ್ = great or big ವ್ಯೋಮನ್ = sky, atmosphere
 ವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಃ is an epithet of Shiva ವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಃ ಗಂಗಾಧಾರಣಸಮಯೇ
 ವ್ಯೋಮವದ್ವಿಶಾಲಜಟಾವಲಯರೂಪಃ ಕೇಶಃ ಅಸ್ಯೇತಿ ವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಃ . SS(96)
 and SA(75). While receiving the Ganga when she was coming down from the heavens,
 Shiva spread out His hair which appeared to cover the sky. Hence the name. It is also one
 of Lalita's name ವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶೀ - ವ್ಯೋಮೈವ ಕೇಶಾ ಯಸ್ಯಾ ವಿರಾಡ್ರೂಪತಯಾಃ .
 ವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಸ್ಯ ಶಿವಸ್ಯ ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ವಾ. ವ್ಯೋಮೈವಾಲ್ಪಂ ಸದ್ವ್ಯೋಮಕಂ. ಅಲ್ಪಾರ್ಥೇ
 ಕಪ್ತತ್ರಯಃ . ತಸ್ಯೇಶೀ ತತೋಽಪಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಿಕಾ ವಾ LS(941). Her (universal form) is
 larger than the sky. This is an additional meaning given for the name and is applicable to
 Shiva also. Because the sky was first created and came from Him only. Then other things
 were created from the sky. Thus Ganga came from the same source from which the entire
 creation started and so the river occupies a lofty position in our esteem. Besides it has an
 unique sacredness attached to it that is not attached to any other river or even to the rain
 water that falls from the sky. In fact the rain water is considered to be ordinary. It stays
 for a short time and is lost: but Ganga's flow is perennial and is symbolic of His grace.
 Ganga came from the heaven. Her waters came in a big torrent. Because the water fell
 from a great height the stream got scattered into fine spray and came down as an immense
 cloud. Shiva spread out His hair to cover the sky so that the cloud of spray got in and was
 trapped. Ganga lost her way and could not come out. This was done to curb her pride. She
 was released again when Bagiratha prayed to Shiva. The use of the adjective ಮಹಾ in
 the word ಮಹಾವ್ಯೋಮಕೇಶಂ meaning great or big is significant ಮಹಾವ್ಯೋಮ
 meaning "the big or the great sky" is said to distinguish it from the "small sky" that
 is mentioned in the Upanishads. ಅಥ ಯದಿದ-ಮಸ್ಮಿನ್ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಪುರೇ ದಹರಂ
 ಪುಂಡರೀಕಂ ವೇಶ್ಮ ದಹರೋಽಸ್ಮಿನ್ನಂತರಾಕಾಶ-ಸ್ತಸ್ಮಿನ್ ಯದಂತ-ಸ್ತದನ್ವೇಷ್ಟವ್ಯಂ
 ತದ್ವವ ವಿಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸಿತವ್ಯಮಿತಿ. Chandogyopanishad.(8-1-1). What is mentioned here is
 known as Dahara Vidya. Ordinarily people may find it to visualise brahman that
 is described to be without a form, name or any other attributes. It may appear to be
 something like a vacuum. It is the intention of Dahara Vidya to provide them something
 gross on which they can meditate upon. Daharam means small (ದಹರಂ ಅಲ್ಪಂ) and
 ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಪುರಂ is our body. Briefly stated this says that there is a small space within the
 heart in the body in which one can visualise brahman and get all his desires fulfilled. The
 upanishad says that this is because the space that is inside the heart encompasses all that is

there outside.

ಕುಂದಾಭದಂತಂ - ಕುಂದಂ = jasmine flower ಆಭಃ = likeness, resemblance ದಂತಃ tooth. Shiva's teeth are white and have the luster or the soft glow like the jasmine flower. They are uniform and packed closely like the petals of a jasmine flower. They are specifically mentioned as they are in the mouth of the Lord that is the birthplace of all sounds, grammar and the vedas. It is said that the vedas are the very breath of the Lord.

Shiva has several names based on this fact. Some are given here

ವಾಗ್ವಿಶುದ್ಧಃ - ವಾಚೋ ವಾಣ್ಯೋ ವಿಶುದ್ಧಾ ಋಗ್ವೇದಾದಯೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ವಾಗ್ವಿಶುದ್ಧಃ . "ಅಸ್ಯ ಮಹತೋ ಭೂತಸ್ಯ ನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಮೇತದೃಗ್ವೇದೋಯಜುರ್ವೇದ"

ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. ಉಕ್ತಂ ಚ ಸೂತ್ರಕಾರೇಣ- ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಯೋನಿತ್ವಾದಿತಿ. ವಿವೃತಂ ಚ ಭಾಷ್ಯಕಾರೇಣ ಮಹತಃ ಋಗ್ವೇದಾದೇಃ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಸ್ಯ ಯೋನಿಃ ಕಾರಣಮಿತಿ. SS(318)

ಕೃತಾಗಮಃ - ಕೃತಾ ರಚಿತಾ ಮುಖಪಂಚಕಾದ್ವಿನಿರ್ಗತಾ ಆಗಮಾಃ ಪ್ರಣವಾದಿಮಹಾಮಂತ್ರಾಃ ಋಗಾದಿ ಸರ್ವವೇದಾಃ, ಪ್ರೋಥೀತಾದಿ ಅಷ್ಟಾವಿಂಶತಿಸಂಖ್ಯಾಕಾ ಆಗಮಾಶ್ಚ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ಕೃತಾಗಮಃ . "ಅಸ್ಯ ಮಹತೋ ಭೂತಸ್ಯ ನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಮೇತದೃಗ್ವೇದಃ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ" ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(444)

ವೇದನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಃ - ವೇದಾ ಋಗ್ವೇದಾದಯಃ ನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಮಿವ ಯಥಾಪ್ರಯತ್ನೇನ ಪುರುಷನಿಶ್ವಾಸೋ ಭವತಿ ಏವಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸ ವೇದನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಃ . "ಅಸ್ಯ ಮಹತೋ ಭೂತಸ್ಯ ನಿಶ್ವಸಿತಮೇವೈತದೃಗ್ವೇದ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(733)

ವೇದಕಾರಃ - ವಿದ್ಯೇತೇ ಧರ್ಮಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣೇ ಏಭಿರಿತಿ ವೇದಾಃ ಆಮ್ನಾಯಾಃ ತಾನ್ ಕರೋತಿ ನಿಶ್ವಸಿತರೂಪತಯಾ ಉಚ್ಚಾರಯತಿ ಇತಿ ವೇದಕಾರಃ . "ಅಸ್ಯ ಮಹತೋ ಭೂತಸ್ಯೇತ್ಯಾ"ದಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(887). Thus the sacred vedas in the form of His breath

are always wafting in His mouth and are in constant touch with His teeth making them very pure and endowing them with unique sacredness. For these reasons the comparison of the teeth with the jasmine flower is to be found often in the compositions of the saints and devotees. Some examples are given here. Shri Narayana Theertha addresses Krishna as ಕುಂದರದನ and ಕುಂದಸುಂದರರದನ in his Krishna Leela Tarangini. (ರದಃ = tooth.) This description of Devi's teeth is in Shyamala Dandakam.

ಕುಂದಪುಷ್ಪದ್ಯುತಿಸ್ನಿಗ್ಧದಂತಾವಲೀನಿರ್ಮಲಾಲೋಲಕಲ್ಲೋಲಸಂಮೇಲನಸ್ಮೇರಶೋಣಾದ

ಸುರೇಶಂ - ಸುರಃ = god or deity. Shiva is the lord of gods like Indra, Brahma. He could ward off Yama also. Thus all the gods could not assess and understand His greatness and glory. That is why they were naive enough to plan and send Manmatha on that infamous mission. He was also worshipped by asuras like Ravana who subjugated

the devas. He could crush Ravana and make him realise his helplessness and finally surrender to Him. There is none equal to Him or greater than Him. So Shri Suka salutes Him saying this ನಿರಸ್ತಸಾಮ್ಯಾತಿಶಯೇನ ರಾಧಸಾ ಸ್ವಧಾಮನಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಿ ರಂಸ್ಯತೇ ನಮಃ . BH(2-4-14)ನಿರಸ್ತಂ ಸಾಂಯಮತಿಶಯಶ್ಚ ಯಸ್ಯ ಯದಪೇಕ್ಷಯಾ ಅನೃಸ್ಯ ಸಾಮ್ಯಮತಿಶಯಶ್ಚ ನಾಸ್ತಿ ತೇನ ರಾಧಸಾ ಐಶ್ವರ್ಯೇಣ ಸ್ವಧಾಮನಿ ಸ್ವಸ್ವರೂಪೇ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಿ ರಮಮಾಣಾಯ (Shridhara's commentary). Shri Sadasiva Brahmendra bows to Him saying (in Navaratnamala- 12) ನಿಸ್ತುಲಮಹಿಮಾನಮಾನತೋಽಸ್ಮಿ ಶಿವಂ. ತುಲನಂ = comparison. So he says "I salute Shiva of incomparable glory."

ಕೋಟಿಸೂರ್ಯಪ್ರಕಾಶಂ - ಕೋಟಿ = 10 millions ಪ್ರಕಾಶ brilliant, bright, shining. The Lord shines like a million (infinite) suns. There are so many suns and stars in the universe. The Lord gives them their brightness and He also shines because of His own glory without depending on anyone else. So He has these names ಸೂರ್ಯಕೋಟಿಪ್ರತೀಕಾಶಃ - ಸೂರ್ಯಕೋಟೀನಂ ಪ್ರಕಾಶ ಇವ ಪ್ರಕಾಶೋ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ತಥಾ. ಇಯಂ ಚ ಅಭೂತೋಪಮಾ. ಅಧಿಕದೀಪ್ತಿಮಾನಿತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . "ನಮೋ ದೀಪ್ತಾಯ ದೀಪ್ತಿರೂಪಿಣ" ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(502) ಸುದೀಪ್ತಃ - ಸರ್ವಪ್ರಕಾಶಕತ್ವೇನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಂ ವಿನಾ ಸರ್ವದಾ ದೀಪ್ತ ಇತಿ ಸುದೀಪ್ತಃ . "ದೀಪ್ತಾಯ ದೀಪ್ತರೂಪಿಣ" ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(633) ಮಹಾದ್ಯುತಿಃ - ಮಹತೀ ದ್ಯುತಿರ್ಬಾಹ್ಯಾಭ್ಯಂತರಾ ಚ ಅಸ್ಯೇತಿ ಮಹಾದ್ಯುತಿಃ; "ಸ್ವಯಂಜ್ಯೋತಿಃ" (ಬೃ-ಉ-4-3-9), "ಜ್ಯೋತಿಷಾಂ ಜ್ಯೋತಿಃ" (ಬೃ-ಉ-4-4-16) ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS (176) ಮರೀಚಿಃ - ತೇಜಸ್ವಿನಾಮಪಿ ತೇಜಸ್ವಾತ್ ಮರೀಚಿಃ, "ತೇಜಸ್ತೇಜಸ್ವಿನಾಮಹಂ", (ಗೀತಾ 10-36) ಇತಿ ಭಗವದ್ವಚನಾತ್ VS(189) ಜ್ಯೋತಿಃ - ಸ್ವತ ಏವ ದ್ಯೋತಯತ ಇತಿ ಜ್ಯೋತಿಃ; "ನರಯಣಪರೋ ಜ್ಯೋತಿರತ್ಮಾ", (ನಾ-ಉ-13-1) ಇತಿ ಮಂತ್ರವರ್ಣಾತ್ VS(877). Thus the Lord who is brighter than a million suns, who is eternal and never failing is the most dependable one to light our way. Let us pray to Him and seek His grace. So ಭಜೇ = I worship ಮರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ = the Lord Margabandhu. I worship Lord Margabandhu who removed Manmatha's pride, who has kept poison in His neck, the great Lord who is more extensive than the space, whose teeth have the sheen of the jasmine flower, who is the Lord of the gods and who shines like millions of suns.

5. ಮಂದಾರಭೂತೇರುದಾರಂ ಮಂದರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಸಾರಂ ಮಹಾಗೌರ್ಯದೂರಂ .
ಸಿಂದೂರದೂರಪ್ರಚಾರಂ ಸಿಂಧುರಾಜಾತಿಧೀರಂ ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ .

ಶಂಭೋ ..

This is the fifth and the last verse in the stotram to be followed by the ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ , a verse that states the benefit of reciting the stotram. The preceding verses referred to some incidents to be found in the puranas. These incidents were used to highlight some qualities of Shiva. They also mentioned some aspects of His form, like the moon and Ganga on His head. Of course the references are to His ಸಗುಣ aspect or aspect with name and form as Shiva. In His ನಿರ್ಗುಣ aspect He is without name, form and qualities. These references brought out the greatness of the Lord like His compassion, readiness to come to the help of the distressed etc.. Thus, He destroyed Manmatha because he committed a serious offence. But when entreated by Rati (Manmatha's wife) He readily granted his life back. This shows His infinite compassion. Whatever be the name or form by which we choose to address Him, be it Shiva or Rama or Hari, we find that His qualities are endearing and draw one to Him. Shri Kulasekara states this in this popular verse in his Mukundamala (No:18) as follows

ವಾತ್ಸಲ್ಯ-ದಭಯಪ್ರದಾನಸಮಯಾ-ದಾರ್ತಾರ್ಥ-ನಿರ್ವಾಪಣಾತ್
ಔದಾರ್ಯಾ-ದಘಶೋಷಣಾ-ದಗಣಿತ-ಶ್ರೀಯಃಪದಪ್ರಾಪಣಾತ್ .

ಸೇವ್ಯಃ ಶ್ರೀಪತಿರೀಕ ಏವ ಸತತಂ ಸಂತ್ಯಕ್ತ ಷಟ್ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಣಃ

ಪ್ರಹ್ಲಾದಶ್ಚ ವಿಭೀಷಣಶ್ಚ ಕರಿರಾಟ್ ಪಾಂಚಾಲ್ಯಹಲ್ಯಾ ಧ್ರುವಃ ..

ಮಂದಾರಭೂತೇರುದಾರಂ - ಮಂದಾರಃ = It is the name of one of the five trees in Indira's paradise. It is said to be capable of granting one's desires like the famed Kalpa tree, also of the paradise ಭೂತಿಃ = grandeur, dignity, riches ಉದಾರಂ = generous, liberal. So the word ಮಂದಾರಭೂತೇರುದಾರಂ means that Lord Shiva is more generous in granting one's wishes than the Mandara tree. So He is known as ಕಾಮಪ್ರದಃ - ಭಕ್ತೇಭ್ಯಃ ಕಾಮಾನ್ ಪ್ರಕರ್ಷೇಣ ದದಾತೀತಿ ಕಾಮಪ್ರದಃ . VS(298). He gives all that His devotees may need in abundance. Shri Vedanta Desika cites the case of Kuchela as an example and says ಧಾನಾಮುಷ್ಟಿಮುಚೇ ಕುಚೇಲಮುನಯೇ ದತ್ತೇ ಚ ವಿತ್ತೇಶತಾಂ . meaning that He made His devotee Kuchela rich as Kubera in return for a handful of pounded rice he offered Him. He is also known as ವರದಃ - ಅಭಿಮತಾನ್ ವರಾನ್ ದದಾತೀತಿ ವರದಃ . VS(330). He grants boons desired from Him. Also ವರದಃ ಭಕ್ತಾನಾಮಿಷ್ಟಪ್ರದಃ . “ವರದಂ ದೇವಮೀಡ್ಯ” ಮಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(107). And ಉದಾರಃ - ಭಕ್ತಾಭೀಷ್ಟದಃ ಸರ್ವೋತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟ ಉದಾರಃ . “ಆಪ್ತತಮಮುತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟತಮ” ಮಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(315). Saint Sadasiva Brahmendra calls Him as ನತಮಂದಾರ - “the wishing

tree of heaven” in his song ಭಜ ರೇ ಗೋಪಾಲಂ - Bhaja re Gopalam. Again he calls Him as ಸೇವಕಜನಮಂದಿರಮಂದಾರ - “the Mandara tree planted in the residential quarters of His devotees” in the song ಮಾನಸ ಸಂಚರ ರೇ - Manasa sanchara re. We find the mantra ನಮೋ ವೃಕ್ಷೇಭ್ಯೋ ಹರಿಕೇಶೇಭ್ಯಃ in the eighth anuvaka of Shri Rudram. The explanation states that Rudra, who can take any form, has assumed the form of trees to help the world. He stands in the form of Palasa, Bilwa, Peepal and other holy trees which can be used in sacrifices for gaining heaven and the form of heavenly trees like Kalpaka, Mandara, Parijata etc., which grant all wishes. So He gets the following names ಪಾರಿಜಾತಃ - ಪಾರಮಸ್ಯಾಸ್ತೀತಿ ಪಾರಿ, ಸಮುದ್ರಃ, ತಸ್ಮಾಜ್ಜಾತಃ ಪಾರಿಜಾತಃ ದೇವವೃಕ್ಷಃ, ತದ್ರೂಪತ್ವಾದ್ದೇವೋಽಪಿ ಪಾರಿಜಾತಃ, ಭಕ್ತಜನೇಷ್ಟದ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . SS(264) and ವೃಕ್ಷಾಣಾಂ ಪತಿಃ - ವೃಕ್ಷಾ ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾದಯಃ, ತೇಷಾಂ ಪತಿಃ ಸ್ವಾಮೀ . “ವೃಕ್ಷಾಣಾಂ ಪತಯೇ ನಮ ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(692). The tree is one of the creations. May be it is in the heaven and so has some special features unlike those found here in this world. But places like the heaven are only finite. Gods like Indra who rule there are also finite though they may be known as ಅಮರಾಃ . The tree Mandara also has a limited life. Since it has only a limited life, whatever it can give will also have limited life and perish eventually giving cause for unhappiness or sorrow. In view of this Krishna names those who seek petty favours (which are finite only) from Mandara and even gods like Indra, Brahma etc., as men of small intellect. He says ಅಂತವತ್ತು ಫಲಂ ತೇಷಾಂ ತದ್ಭವತ್ಯಲ್ಪಮೇಧಸಾಂ . BG(7-23). Sankaracharya, in his commentary, points out that ಏವಂ ಸಮಾನೇ ಅಪಿ ಆಯಾಸೇ ಮಾಮೇವ ನ ಪ್ರತಿಪದ್ಯಂತೇ ಅನಂತಫಲಾಯ, ಅಹೋ ಖಲು ಕಷ್ಟತರಂ ವರ್ತತೇ, ಇತ್ಯನುಕ್ರೋಶಂ ದರ್ಶಯತಿ ಭಗವಾನ್ . “though there is the same amount of exertion (in the two kinds of worship), people do not resort to Me so that they may attain infinite results. Alas! it is very miserable” -thus the Lord expresses His anguish. This is the reason for calling them as “men of small intellect.” But, unlike the tree, the Lord is ನಿತ್ಯಃ eternal as said in verse No. 3. He is not subject to decay etc., as the tree. So He is capable of granting finite material benefits like good health, wealth etc.. besides liberation or mokSha (i.e.) that is ever lasting or infinite. In fact He is willing to give Himself to His devotee. ಸ್ಮರತಃ ಪಾದಕಮಲ-ಮಾತ್ಮಾನಮಪಿ ಯಚ್ಛತಿ . BH(10-80-11). This idea is repeated by Shri Kulasekara in his Mukundamala (31)ಸೇವ್ಯೇ ಸ್ವಸ್ಯ ಪದಸ್ಯ ದಾತರಿ ಸುರೇ ನಾರಾಯಣೇ ತಿಷ್ಠತಿ . The infinite thing obviously includes the finite things. The true devotees know this and so do not seek benefits that are finite from Him. The Lord is

very dear to them and they are very dear to Him ಪ್ರಿಯೋ ಹಿ ಜ್ಞಾನಿನೋಽತ್ಯರ್ಥಮಹಂ
 ನ ಚ ಮಮ ಪ್ರಿಯಃ . BG(7-17). So He naturally takes care of them. Has not He said
 ತೇಷಾಂ ನಿತ್ಯಾಭಿಯುಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಯೋಗಕ್ಷೇಮಂ ವಹಾಮ್ಯಹಂ ? “To them who are
 ever devout, I secure them gain and safety.” BG(9-22). Here ಯೋಗಃ and ಕ್ಷೇಮಃ “gain
 and safety” is explained by Shri Sankara as ಯೋಗಃ ಅಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಸ್ಯ ಪ್ರಾಪಣಂ, ಕ್ಷೇಮಃ
 ತದ್ರಕ್ಷಣಂ, ತದುಭಯಂ ಪ್ರಾಪಯಾಮಿ ಅಹಂ . . (i.e.) Gain implies securing what is
 not already possessed; and safety means preservation of what is already possessed. Shri
 Sankara adds that while the lesser devotees work themselves for their gain and safety the
 true devotees do not. The Lord alone is their refuge. Wherefore the Lord Himself secures to
 them gain and safety ಕೇವಲಂ ಏವ ಭಗವಚ್ಛರಣಾಃ ತೇ; ಅತ ಭಗವಾನ್ ಏವ ತೇಷಾಂ
 ಯೋಗಕ್ಷೇಮಂ ವಹತೀತಿ . . Thus the true devotees do not lack anything. If their be any
 lack, it is taken care of by the Lord. The safety of their possessions is also taken care of by
 the Lord. What more can one desire? They are carefree and therefore relaxed. The Tamil
 saint Manikkavachakar said that the Lord was more concerned about him than the mother
 of her new born child. He said that He anticipated his needs and fulfilled them. The brahmin
 Kuchela was another such devotee. Outwardly he appeared to be very poor but inwardly he
 was very rich: he was totally contented and never felt any want ಯದೃಚ್ಛಿಷ್ಯಪಪನ್ನೇನ
 ವರ್ತಮಾನೋ ಗೃಹಾಶ್ರಮೀ . BH(10-80-7).

ಮಂದರಾಗೇಂದ್ರಸಾರಂ - ಮಂದರಃ = is the name of a mythical mountain ಅಗಃ
 = mountain. ಇಂದ್ರಃ = the first or the best (of any class of objects). So the word
 ಮಂದರಾಗೇಂದ್ರ means Mandara, the best among the mountains. ಸಾರಂ =
 strength. Mandara was used by the gods and demons to churn the ocean to get
 the nectar. It is said to be situated adjacent to the mountain Meru. ಮಂದರೋ
 ಮೇರುಮಂದರಃ ಸುಪಾರ್ಷ್ವಃ ಕುಮುದ ಇತಿ ಅಯುತಯೋಜನ ವಿಸ್ತಾರೋನ್ನಾಹಾ
 ಮೇರೋಶ್ಚತುರ್ದಿಶಮವಷ್ಟಂಭ ಗಿರಯ ಉಪಕ್ಕಪ್ತಾಃ . Of the four sides of Mount
 Meru stand the Mandara, Merumandara, Suparswa and Kumuda mountains forming its
 buttresses (as it were) and having a length and height of 10,000 yojanas. BH(5-16-10).
 Shiva is said to be as strong as Mandara, the best among the mountains. He is unmovable,
 like a mountain ಸರ್ವಗತಃ ಸ್ಥಾಣುಃ ಅಚಲಃ - ಸರ್ವಗತತ್ವಾತ್ ಸ್ಥಾಣುಃ ಇವ ಸ್ಥಿರಃ
 ಇತ್ಯೇತತ್ . ಸ್ಥಿರತ್ವಾತ್ ಅಚಲಃ ಅಯಂ ಆತ್ಮಾ . Because He is all pervading, He is
 stable like a pillar. Because He is stable He is firm. BG(2-24). The proof is that the mighty
 Ravana tried to lift His abode Kailasa and was crushed. But His unlimited strength is

not demoniac but it is mellowed with kindness: so when Ravana realised his mistake and pleaded, He pardoned him and let him go. So He is known as ಮಹಾಬಲಃ- ಬಲಿನಾಮಪಿ ಬಲವತ್ತ್ವಾತ್ ಮಹಾಬಲಃ . He is stronger than those who are said to possess great strength. VS(172)

ಮಹಾಬಲಪರಃ- ಮಹದ್ಬಲಂ ಶಾರೀರಂ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯಂ ಸೈನ್ಯರೂಪಂ ವಾ ಯೇಷಾಂ ತೇ ಮಹಾಬಲಾಃ, ಇಂದ್ರೋಪೇಂದ್ರಪ್ರಭೃತಯಃ ತೇಷಾಂ ಪರಃ ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠಃ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಃ . “ತಮೀಶ್ವರಾಣಾಂ ಪರಮಂ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರ”ಮಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(604). In fact He is known as ಅದ್ವಿಃ- ಅದ್ವಿವದಪ್ರಕಂಪ್ಯಃ, ಪರೈರಚಲ ಇತಿ ಯಾವತ್ . “ತಂ ಶಾಂತಮಚಲ”ಮಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . ಯದ್ವಾ ಶ್ರೀಶೈಲಾರುಣಾಚಲಾದಿವರ್ವತರೂಪತ್ವಾದದ್ವಿಃ . ಶ್ರೀಶೈಲಶಿಖರಂ ದೃಷ್ಟ್ವಾ ಪುನರ್ಜನ್ಮ ನ ವಿದ್ಯತೇ ಇತಿ, ಕಾಶ್ಯಾಂ ತು ಮರಣಾನುಕ್ತೆಃ, ಸ್ಮರಣಾದರುಣಾಚಲಮಿತಿ ಚ ಸ್ಮರಣಾತ್ .. “ವನಾನಿ ಶಂಭುರ್ಗಿರಯಶ್ಚ ಶಂಭು”ರಿತಿ ಸ್ಯಾಂದೇ . “ಸರ್ವೋ ಹ್ಯೇಷ ರುದ್ರ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(856).

ಮಹೀಧರಃ- ಮಹೀಂ ಗಿರಿರೂಪೇಣ ಧರತೀತಿ ಮಹೀಧರಃ, “ವನಾನಿ ವಿಷ್ಣುರ್ಗಿರಯೋ ದಿಶಶ್ಚ” (ವಿಷ್ಣು-2-12-38) ಇತಿ ಪರಾಶರೋಕ್ತೇಃ . VS(369). He held up Mandara during the churning of the ocean and lifted the Govardana mountain as Krishna. So He gets the name ಮಹಾದ್ರಿದ್ಯುಕ್- ಮಹಾಂತಮದ್ರಿಂ ಗಿರಿಂ ಮಂದರಂ ಗೋವರ್ಧನಂ ಚ ಅಮೃತಮಥನೇ ಗೋರಕ್ಷಣೇ ಚ ಧೃತವಾನಿತಿ ಮಹಾದ್ರಿದ್ಯುಕ್ .. VS(180).

The fact that He is mightier than the mightiest and has compassion makes Him the ideal protector. Shri Vedanta Desika has expressed this idea beautifully in his works ಅಭೀತಿ ಹೇತೋರನುವರ್ತನೀಯಂ ನಾಥ ತ್ವದನ್ಯಂ ನ ವಿಭಾವಯಾಮಿ . ಭಯಂ ಕುತಃ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ತ್ವಯಿ ಸಾನುಕಂಪೇ ರಕ್ಷಾ ಕುತಃ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ತ್ವಯಿ ಜಾತರೋಷೇ .. (Ashtabhujashtakam - 5) ತ್ವಯಿ ರಕ್ಷತಿ ರಕ್ಷಕೈಃ ಕಿಮನ್ಯೈಃ ತ್ವಯಿ ಚಾರಕ್ಷತಿ ರಕ್ಷಕೈಃ ಕಿಮನ್ಯೈಃ . ಇತಿ ನಿಶ್ಚಿತ ಧೀಃ ಶ್ರಯಾಮಿ ನಿತ್ಯಂ ನೃಹರೇ ವೇಗವತೀ ತಟಾಶ್ರಯಂ ತ್ವಾಂ .. (Shri Kamasikashtakam - 8). He asks: “When one is protected by You what use is there of other protectors? Again, when You are angry and decide to punish someone, what use is there of other protectors?” This reminds us of the famous incident of Kakasura in Ramayana. The asura misbehaved with Sita when she was in the forest with Rama. Rama was furious at his conduct and sent an arrow that chased him wherever he went. He ran to Indra, Brahma etc., for protection. But they hurriedly turned him away when they learnt that he had incurred Rama’s wrath and is being hunted by Rama’s arrow. Finally, feeling helpless, he surrendered to Rama Himself who forgave him readily. This incident was mentioned by Sita to Hanuman. She said

ತ್ರೀನ್ ಲೋಕಾನ್ ಸಂಪರಿಕ್ರಮ್ಯ ತಮೇವ ಶರಣಂ ಗತಃ .

ಸ ತಂ ನಿಪತಿತಂ ಭೂಮೌ ಶರಣ್ಯಃ ಶರಣಾಗತಂ .

ವಧಾರ್ಹಮಪಿ ಕಾಕುತ್ಸ್ಥಃ ಕೃಪಯಾಪರ್ಯಪಾಲಯತ್ ..

(Ramayana. Sundara Kanda. 38-32,3).

Great asuras like Ravana obtained wonderful boons from Brahma and other gods. With those powers they could subdue the three worlds. They were very proud of their powers and were convinced they were invincible and safe. But in the end they found themselves helpless when their time was up. Ravana bemoans this fact when he sees his army being decimated in the fight with Rama

ಅಹೋ ಸುಬಲವಾನ್ ರಾಮೋ ಮಹದಸ್ತ್ರಬಲಂ ಚ ವೈ .

ಯಸ್ಯ ವಿಕ್ರಮಮಾಸಾದ್ಯ ರಾಕ್ಷಸಾ ನಿಧನಂ ಗತಾಃ .

ತಂ ಮನ್ಯೇ ರಾಘವಂ ವೀರಂ ನಾರಾಯಣಮನಾಮಯಂ .. (Yuddha kanda 72-10,11).

In contrast young devotees like Prahlada were under His protection. They faced trials and tribulations with the assurance that the Lord will protect them. So no harm could befall them. We also referred to the episode of Markandeya being saved by Shiva from the jaws of death and mentioned that one of His names is ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಃ SS(123) and SA(71). Shri Ramana Maharshi explains how the Lord Mrityunjaya saves His devotees from death.

He puts it in a unique way in his work Sat-darsanam. He says

ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಂ ಮೃತ್ಯುಭಿಯಾಶ್ರಿತಾನಾ-

ಮಹಂಮತಿರ್ಮೃತ್ಯುಮುಪೈತಿ ಪೂರ್ವಂ .

ಅಥ ಸ್ವಭಾವಾದಮೃತೇಷು ತೇಷು

ಕಥಂ ಪುನರ್ಮೃತ್ಯುಧಿಯೋಽವಕಾಶಃ ..

The Maharshi says that when a devotee seeks the protection of the Lord from fear of death He protects him by destroying the individual! This sounds alarming and confusing. But what the Maharshi means is that normally one identifies himself with the body-mind complex and not the Self that is one's true nature. Thus the individual feels separate from the Self which is immortal and not subject to destruction. This separative idea is formed in the individual's mind. As long as one cherishes this mistaken notion one is in the grip of the viscious samsara. He is subject to repeated birth and death. This wrong notion that makes one to identify himself with the body is known as ahamkara or ego. When one surrenders himself to Lord Mrityunjaya who is very much in everyones heart the ahamkara loses itself.

It is only a chimera that thrives as long as one's ignorance of his true nature persists. The Lord's grace confers the wisdom that destroys the ignorance. Consequently the ego gets stripped of all its coverings and ceases to be the ego. Rid of the ego the Self shines in its pristine glory. The individual finds his original nature and thus he goes beyond birth and death. He becomes immortal.

ಮಹಾಗೌರ್ಯದೂರಂ- ಮಹಾ = great ಗೌರೀ = is the name of Parvati ಮಹಾಗೌರೀ means great or glorious Gauri ಅದೂರಂ = close by, not far away ದೂರ = distant or far off. Gauri or Parvati is the consort of Shiva and is said to take up half of His body. In view of this it is said here that She is not far off from Him. So Shiva is known as ಅರ್ಧನಾರೀಶ್ವರಃ- ನಾರ್ಯಾ ಅರ್ಧಂ ಅರ್ಧನಾರೀ, ಅರ್ಧನಾರೀಮಿಲಿತ ಈಶ್ವರಃ ಅರ್ಧನಾರೀಶ್ವರಃ . ನಾರ್ಯಂಶೋರ್ಧಮೀಶ್ವರಾಂಶಶ್ಚಾರ್ಧಮಿತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . ತದುಕ್ತಮಾಚಾರ್ಯೈಃ- “ಪ್ರವಾಲಪ್ರವಾಹಪ್ರಭಾಶೋಭಮರ್ಧಂ ಮರುತ್ವನ್ಮಣಿಶ್ರೀಮಹಶ್ಚ್ಯಾಮಮರ್ಧಂ . ಗುಣಸ್ಯೂತಮೇಕಂ ವಪುಃಶೈವಮಂತಃ ಸ್ಮರಾಮಿ ಸ್ಮರಾಪತ್ತಿಸಂಪತ್ತಿಹೇತುಃ” ಇತಿ .. “ಪುರುಷಂ ಕೃಷ್ಣಪಿಂಗಲಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(437) ದೇಹಾರ್ಧಕಾಂತಃ- ದೇಹಸ್ಯ ಅರ್ಧಂ ವಾಮಭಾಗಃ, ಕಾಂತಾತ್ಮಕಃ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ ದೇಹಾರ್ಧಕಾಂತಃ . ಭವಿಷ್ಯೋತ್ತರಪುರಾಣೇ- “ಅರ್ಧಂ ಪ್ರವಾಲರುಚಿರಂ ಹರಿನೀಲಮರ್ಧಂ ನಾಗಾಜಿನಾಂಬರಮತೋ ವರವಸ್ತ್ರಮರ್ಧಂ . ಕಾಂತಾಳಕಾರ್ಧಮಥ ದೀಪ್ತಜಟಾಲಮರ್ಧಂ ದಿವ್ಯಂ ಮಹಃ ಸತತಮದ್ಯ ತವಾಶ್ರಯೇಹಂ” ಇತಿ .. “ದರಿದ್ರನ್ನೀಲಲೋಹೋತ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(568).

Krishna has said ಪಿತಾಹಮಸ್ಯ ಜಗತೋ ಮಾತಾ ಧಾತಾ ಪಿತಾಮಹಃ . BG(9-17). “I am the father of this world, the mother, the dispenser of the fruits of action and the grandsire.” That He is both the father and the mother is symbolised by the Ardhanari form. Kalidasa says this in the invocatory verse to his great poem Raghuvamsam ವಾಗರ್ಧಾವಿವ ಸಂಪೃಕ್ತೌ ವಾಗರ್ಧಪ್ರತಿಪತ್ತಯೇ . ಜಗತಃ ಪಿತೌ ವಂದೇ ಪಾರ್ವತೀಪರಮೇಶ್ವರೌ ..

“I salute Parvati and Parameswara who are the parents of the universe and who are inseparably united like the speech and the sense, for obtaining the correct knowledge of the words and their meaning.” Thus Krishna says that He is both the intelligent cause and the material cause of the creation. He is ಕತ್ರಾ - ಕ್ರಿಯತ ಇತಿ ಕರ್ಮ ಜಗತ್ತಸ್ಯ ಕರ್ತಾ, “ಯೋ ವೈ ಬಾಲಾಕ ಏತೇಷಾಂ ಪುರುಷಾಣಂ ಕರ್ತಾ ಯಸ್ಯ ವೈ ತತ್ ಕರ್ಮ ಸ ವೇದಿತವ್ಯಃ .” ಕೌ-ಉ-4-14 ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(316). ಕರಣಂ - ಜಗದುತ್ಪತ್ತೌ ಸಾಧಕಂ ಕರಣಂ . VS(378) ಕಾರಣಂ - ಉಪಾದಾನಂ ನಿಮಿತ್ತಂ

ಚ ಕಾರಣಂ . VS(379) ವಿಕರ್ತಾ - ವಿವಿಧಂ ಭುವನಂ ಕ್ರಿಯತೇ ಇತಿ ವಿಕರ್ತಾ ಸ ಏವ ಭಗವಾನ್ ವಿಷ್ಣುಃ . VS(381). The material cause is also known as prakriti which Krishna called as His inferior aspect in BG Chapter 7. Prakriti is also called maya that deluding power of Iswara ಮಾಯಾಂ ತು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಂ ವಿದ್ಯಾನ್ಮಾಯಿನಂ ತು ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಂ . SVU(4-10). Prakriti is maya and the Lord Maheswara is in control of it. Krishna says that His maya is very powerful and very hard to overcome ದೈವೀ ಹ್ಯೇಷಾ ಗುಣಮಯೀ ಮಮ ಮಾಯಾ ದುರತ್ಯಯಾ . BG(7-14). “This divine illusion of Mine, made up of gunas, is hard to surmount.” So He is known as ಮಹಾಮಾಯಃ - ಮಾಯಾವಿನಾಮಪಿ ಮಾಯಾಕಾರಿತ್ವಾತ್ ಮಹಾಮಾಯಃ, “ಮಮ ಮಾಯಾ ದುರತ್ಯಯಾ” ಇತಿ ಭಗವದ್ವಚನಾತ್ . VS(170). Krishna says that in fact He is both: the intelligent cause and the material cause called prakriti. Thus ಮೂಲಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ is one of His names ಮೂಲಭೂತಾ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ ಮೂಲಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ, ಜಗದಾದಿಕಾರಣಂ, ತನ್ನಿಮಿತ್ತೋಪಾದಾನತ್ವಕಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮೇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . “ತದೈಕ್ಷತ, ಬಹುಸ್ಯಾಂ ಪ್ರಜಾಯೇತಿ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. ಐಕ್ಷತೇತಿ ಈಕ್ಷಣಕರ್ತೃತ್ವಾನ್ನಿಮಿತ್ತಕಾರಣತ್ವಂ, ಬಹುಸ್ಯಾಮಿತಿ ಬಹುಭವನಹೇತುತ್ವಾದುಪಾದಾನತ್ವಂ .. SS(411). Also ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ - ಜಗದುಪಾದಾನಭೂತಃ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಃ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ . ಅಯಮರ್ಥಃ ಸೂತ್ರಕಾರೇಣ ನಿಶ್ಚಿತಃ . ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಶ್ಚ ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞಾ, ದೃಷ್ಟಾಂತಾನುಪರೋಧಾದಿತ್ಯಾದಿಸೂತ್ರಪಂಚಕೇನ . ವಿವೃತಂ ಚೇದಂ ಭಾಷ್ಯಕಾರೇಣ ಸಂಶಯಪೂರ್ವಪಕ್ಷಪ್ರದರ್ಶನಪೂರ್ವಕಂ .. SS(570) ಮಾಯಾಬೀಜಃ - ಮಾಯಾಯಾ ಬೀಜಂ ಕಾರಣಮಧಿಷ್ಠಾನಮಿತಿ ಯಾವತ್ . ಏವಂ ಚ ಮಾಯಾಯಾ ಅಧ್ಯಸ್ತತ್ವೇನ ವಾಸ್ತವತಾಽಭಾವಾತ್ ಶಕ್ತಿತ್ವೇನ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯಾ ಭಾವಾಚ್ಚ ಜಗತ ಈಶ್ವರೈಕೈಬೀಜತ್ವಮುಪಪದ್ಯತೇ . “ದೇವಾತ್ಮಶಕ್ತಿಂ ಸ್ವಗುಣೈರ್ನಿಗೂಢಾಮಿ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(557). The prakriti mentioned as the mother is symbolised as the Lord’s consort and is variously called as Parvati, Ambika, Gauri, Bhavani, LakShmi etc.. ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ, ವಿಷ್ಣುಪತ್ನೀ, ನಾರಾಯಣಸಮಾಶ್ರಿತಾ are names of LakShmi to be seen in LakShmi Ashtottarashatanama stotram. Thus the Lord as brahman is one but, as Iswara and Devi appears as two. This is stated beautifully in the ಉಮಾಮಹೇಶ್ವರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ (Umamaheswara stotram) as follows ನಮಃ ಶಿವಾಭ್ಯಾಂ ನವಯೌವನಾಭ್ಯಾಂ ಪರಸ್ಪರಾಶ್ಲಿಷ್ಟವಪುರ್ಧರಾಭ್ಯಾಂ . I salute the two Shivas who are eternally young and whose bodies are entwined with each other. Krishna also adds that we the created beings are in the clutches of prakriti and go through the cycle of birth and death till wisdom dawns on us but He is beyond it and maya, however powerful it may be has no influence on Him. So He is known as ಮಾಯಾತೀತಃ - ಮಾಯಾಯಾ ಅತೀತಃ - ಮಾಯಯಾ

ವಾ ಅತೀತಃ . ಸತ್ವಾದಿ-ಗುಣ-ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರೂಪ-ಪ್ರಕೃತಿವಿವರ್ಜಿತ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ .
 “ಅತಮಸ್ಕಮಮಾಯಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(41). and ನಿರ್ಮಾಯಃ - ಮಾಯಾಯಾ
 ನಿರ್ಗತಃ ನಿರ್ಮಾಯಃ . ಯದ್ಯಪಿ “ಮಾಯಾಂ ತು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಂ ವಿದ್ಯಾನ್ಮಾಯಿನಂ ತು
 ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಂ” ಇತಿ ಮಾಯಾಸಂಬಂಧಃ ಶ್ರುತಿಷು ದೃಶ್ಯತೇ, ತಥಾಪಿ ಮಾಯಾಯಾಃ
 ಕಲ್ಪಿತತ್ವೇನ ವಾಸ್ತವಸಂಬಂಧಾಭಾವಾತ್ ಕಲ್ಪಿತಸಂಬಂಧಪರೇಯಂ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .
 ಅತ ಏವ, ವ್ಯಕ್ತಾತ್ಪುರುಷಃ ಪರಃ, ಅಕ್ಷರಾತ್ಪರತರಃ, ಅವಿದ್ಯಾಕಾರ್ಯಹೀನಃ .
 “ಅತಮಸ್ಕಮಮಾಯಮಿ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(693). Bartruhari states the fact that the
 Lord is not in the clutches of maya in his own way in his Vairagyasatakam.(17)

ಏಕೋ ರಾಗಿಷು ರಾಜತೇ ಪ್ರಿಯತಮಾದೇಹಾರ್ಥಹಾರೀ ಹರೋ
 ನೀರಾಗೇಷು ಜನೋ ವಿಮುಕ್ತಲಲನಾಸಂಗೋ ನ ಯಸ್ಮಾತ್ ಪರಃ .

He says that among sensual persons Shiva is unique sharing half His body with His beloved.
 It appears from this that as though He cannot bear separation from her even for a second.
 But, he adds, that again among the dispassionate there is none superior to Him, unattached
 to the company of women.

The prakriti is subservient to Him. This is depicted in our puranas by showing Parvati and
 LakShmi as serving the Lord with great dedication. For example, Devahuti, the daughter of
 Manu, is said to have served her husband, sage Kardama, with the same delight as Goddess
 Parvati looks after Her consort, Lord Shiva ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಪರ್ಯಚರತ್ ಪ್ರೀತ್ಯಾ ಭವಾನೀವ
 ಭವಂ ಪ್ರಭುಂ . BH(2-23-1). The following names are thus derived from the facts stated
 above

ವಾರ್ವತೀಪತಿಃ - ಪರ್ವತಃ ಹಿಮವಾನ್ ತಸ್ಯ ಪುತ್ರೀ ಪಾರ್ವತೀ . ತನ್ಯಾಃ ಪತಿಃ
 . ತದುಕ್ತಂ ಸೂತಸಂಹಿತಾಯಂ- “ ಸಾ ಶಿವಾ ಕರುಣಾಮೂರ್ತಿರ್ಜಗನ್ಮಾತಾ
 ತ್ರಯೀಮಯೀ . ಶಿವಾಭಿನ್ನಾ ಪರಾನಂದಾ ಶಂಕರಸ್ಯಾಪಿ ಶಂಕರೀ” ಸ್ವೇಚ್ಛಯಾ
 ಹಿಮಪುತ್ರೀ ಸ್ವಭಕ್ತಜನವತ್ಸಲಾ, ತನ್ಯಾಃ ಪತಿಃ ಪ್ರಿಯಃ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಃ ..
 “ಅಂಬಿಕಾಪತಯ ಉಮಾಪತಯೇ ನಮೋ ನಮಃ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(24) and
 ಅಂಬಿಕಾಪತಿಃ - ಪಾರ್ವತ್ಯಾಃ ಪ್ರಿಯಃ ಅಂಬಿಕಾಪತಿಃ . “ಹಿರಣ್ಯಪತಯೇಽಮ್ಬಿಕಪತಯ”
 ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(429). Also SA(15) ಗೌರೀಶಃ - ಗೌರೀಶೋಽಮ್ಬಿಕಾಪತಿಃ .. SS(121)
 ಶ್ರೀಪತಿಃ - ಅಮೃತಮಥನೇ ಸರ್ವಾನ್ ಸುರಾಸುರಾದೀನ್ ವಿಹಾಯ ಶ್ರೀರೇನಂ
 ಪತಿತ್ವೇನ ವರಯಾಮಾಸೇತಿ ಶ್ರೀಪತಿಃ . ಶ್ರೀಃ ಪರ ಶಕ್ತಿಃ, ತನ್ಯಾಃ ಪತಿರಿತಿ ವಾ,
 “ಪರಾಸ್ಯ ಶಕ್ತಿರ್ವಿದ್ಯೈವ ಶ್ರುಯತೇ” (ಶ್ವೇ-ಉ-8) ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . VS(603). ಶ್ರೀಶಃ -
 ಶ್ರಿಯ ಈಶಃ ಶ್ರೀಶಃ . VS(606) ಜಗತ್ತಿತಾ - ಜಗನ್ನಿರ್ಮಾತಾ- “ಇದಂ ಸರ್ವಮಸೃಜತೇ”
 ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(36) ವಿಶ್ವಮಾತಾ - ವಿಶ್ವಸ್ಯ ಮಾತಾ ವ್ಯಾಪೀ ಜ್ಞಾತಾ ವಾ . SS(85)

ಜಗದ್ಧಾತಾ - ಜಗತಾಂ ಧಾತಾ ಕರ್ತಾ . SS(86) ಮಾತಾಮಹಃ - ಮಾತುಃ ಪಿತಾ ಮಾತಾಮಹಃ, ಚತುರ್ವಿಧಭೂತಗ್ರಾಮಸ್ಯ ಪಾರ್ಥಿವಸ್ಯ ಮಾತ ಪೃಥಿವೀ, ತಸ್ಯಾಃ ಪಿತಾ ಮಾತಾಮಹಃ . “ಸ ಭೂಮಿಮಸ್ಯಜತೇ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . ಪೃಥಿವ್ಯಾ ಮಾತೃತ್ವೇ “ಇಯಂ ವೈ ಮಾತೇ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(615). Devi Gauri is called ಮಹಾ or great or glorious because of Her greatness. But one has to remember that She is dependant on Him for Her greatness. Shiva’s greatness is revealed by the fact that He married Her though She was only the daughter of the mountain Himavan. This marriage conferred greatness on Parvati and Himavan also. Similarly as Vishnu He married LakShmi, the daughter of the ocean, and conferred honour on LakShmi and the ocean also. This is stated symbolically in our puranas. For example, DakShayani wanted to attend and participate in the sacrifice organised by Her father DakSha. Shiva told Her not to go and warned that if She disregarded His advice and went to the function She will meet with humiliation. But She went to the function overriding His advice only to be met with a barrage of insults in the assembly. Unable to bear the insult, She sacrificed Her body and was reborn as Parvati. She had to perform severe penance to please Shiva and married Him again. A similar incidence is narrated in Ramayana also. Sita spent happy days with Rama in the forest till She saw the the golden deer and became infatuated with it. She sent Him away from Her to capture it. This invited trouble for Her. The moment Rama turned His back on Her, Ravana appeared on the scene and carried Her away to Lanka. She was incarcerated for a long time and suffered greatly ಸಿಂದೂರದೂರಪ್ರಚಾರಂ - ಸಿಂದೂರಂ = red lead ದೂರ = distant, far off ಪ್ರಚಾರಂ = going away. That is, Shiva’s complexion is very red and it outshines the colour of the red lead. Shri Rudram says ಅಸೌ ಯಸ್ತಾಮ್ರೋ ಅರುಣ ಉತ ಬಭ್ರುಃ ಸುಮಂಗಲಃ . This says that Rudra is ತಾಮ್ರಃ = copper coloured, ಅರುಣಃ = rosy, ಬಭ್ರುಃ = golden yellow, ಸುಮಂಗಲಃ = highly auspicious and beneficent. Only a few can understand and worship the avyakta or impersonal God. A larger number can contemplate Rudra as residing on Kailasa. For the benefit of the others, who form the majority of mankind, He stands in the form of the sun. The sandhya vandana mantra says ಸೂರ್ಯ ಆತ್ಮಾ ಜಗತಃ ತಸ್ಥುಷಶ್ಚ = the sun is the self of the world, movable and immovable. The sun is the most acclaimed and worshipped power of nature. It is said that ಅಸೌ ಯಸ್ತಾಮ್ರೋ ಇತ್ಯನೇನ ಆದಿತ್ಯಮುಪತಿಷ್ಟತೇ . The votary should praise and worship the sun by means of the rik ಅಸೌ ಯಸ್ತಾಮ್ರೋ in the Rudram. So ತಾಮ್ರಃ - ಅತ್ಯಂತ-ರಕ್ತಸ್ತಾಮ್ರಃ . “ನಮಸ್ತಾಮ್ರಾಯ ಚೇ” ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ

.. SS(572) is one of His names. Also He is compassionate. The quality is represented by the red colour. So His form is suffused with that colour. He is known as ದಯಾಳುಃ - ದಯಾಶೀಲೋ ದಯಾಳುಃ . ಅನೇನ ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಸ್ಯ ಯಾ ಶಾಂತಾ ತನೂ ಸರ್ವಹ್ಲಾದರೂಪಿಣೀ ಸಾ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿತಾ . “ಯಾ ತೇ ರುದ್ರ ಶಿವಾ ತನೂ” ರಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ SS(155) ಸಿಂಧುರಾಜಾತಿಧೀರಂ- ಸಿಂಧುಃ = the sea, ocean ರಾಜನ್ = a king or chief. It is used to qualify something very great or glorious. For example Kalidasa describes the Himalaya as ನಗಾಧಿರಾಜಃ in his Kumarasambhava. ಅತಿ = a prefix used to mean very, too, exceedingly etc ಧೀರಂ = strong minded, wise, resolute. ಸಿಂಧುರಾಜಾ meaning the chief of the oceans : indicates a mighty ocean. The Lord is very resolute, wise and strong minded like a mighty ocean. Kalidasa defines ಧೀರಃ as one who is endowed with a mind that does not waver even when assailed by deleterious forces that are capable of perverting it ವಿಕಾರಹೇತೌ ಸತಿ ವಿಕ್ರಿಯಂತೇ ಯೇಷಾಂ ನ ಚೇತಾಂಸೇ ತ ಏವ ಧೀರಾಃ .. (Kumarasambhava-1-59). Gita and the upanishads use the word to mean a person of wisdom or discrimination.

ದೇಹಿನೋಽಸ್ಮಿನ್ಯತಾ ದೇಹೇ ಕೌಮಾರಂ ಯೌವನಂ ಜರಾ .

ತಥಾ ದೇಹಾಂತರಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿರ್ಧೀರಸ್ತತ್ರ ನ ಮುಹ್ಯತಿ .. BG(2-13).

Just as in this body the Self passes into childhood and youth and old age, so does He pass into another body. The wise man has no delusions in this regard and so is not troubled in the mind. Arjuna had delusion in this regard. He admitted in the end that his delusion had been destroyed as a result of Krishna's teaching. He said ನಷ್ಟೋ ಮೋಹಃ ಸ್ಮೃತಿರ್ಲಭ್ಯಾ ತ್ವತ್ಪ್ರಸಾದಾನ್ಮಯಾಽಚ್ಯುತ . BG(18-73). Again

ಯಂ ಹಿ ನ ವ್ಯತಯಂತ್ಯೇತೇ ಪುರುಷಂ ಪುರುಷರ್ಷಭ .

ಸಮದುಃಖಸುಖಂ ಧೀರಂ ಸೋಽಮೃತತ್ವಾಯ ಕಲ್ಪತೇ .. BG(2-15).

Here Krishna says a wise man who is not afflicted by pleasure and pain is fit for immortality. Such a man of wisdom is called as ಧೀರಃ and also as ಸ್ಥಿತಪ್ರಜ್ಞಃ, ಸ್ಥಿತಧೀಃ etc.. The upanishads use the word ಧೀರಃ to indicate a man of wisdom and realisation. This example is from Kathopanishad ಏಕೋ ವಶೀ ಸರ್ವಭೂತಾಂತರಾತ್ಮ ಏಕಂ ರೂಪಂ ಬಹುಧಾ ಯಃ ಕರೋತಿ . ತಮಾತ್ಮಸ್ಥಂ ಯೇನುಪಶ್ಯಂತಿ ಧೀರಾಃ ತೇಷಾಂ ಸುಖಂ ಶಾಶ್ವತಂ ನೇತರೇಷಾಂ .. KU(2-2-12). “The indwelling Lord of all beings; who is one without the second and has everybody under His control; transforms His one and single entity into multifarious; those wise persons who always observe (meditate upon) that Lord abiding in self; (it is they who) enjoy that eternal bliss; not the others.” One other interpretation

of the word is ಧೀರಃ - ಧಿಯಂ ಈರಯತಿ, ಧಿಯಂ ಪ್ರೇರಯತಿ . ಈರ = to urge, elevate, bring to life. Thus the word ಧೀರಃ means the Lord who is behind the intellect and gives life to it. We worship Him through the Gayatri mantra as ಧಿಯೋ ಯೋ ನಃ ಪ್ರಚೋದಯಾತ್ . Shiva is known as ಗಾಯತ್ರೀವಲ್ಲಭಃ - ಗಾಯತ್ರಾ ವಲ್ಲಭೋ ಗಾಯತ್ರೀವಲ್ಲಭಃ .ಗಾಯತ್ರೀಪ್ರತಿಪಾದ್ಯ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . SS(179). The avaduta sage lists the similarities between a realised man and the ocean in his conversation with the king Yadhu. The story is seen in Shri Bhagavata. He says:

ಮುನಿಃ ಪ್ರಸನ್ನಗಂಭೀರೋ ದುವಿಗಾಹ್ಯೋ ದುರತ್ಯಯಃ .

ಅನಂತಪಾರೋ ಹ್ಯಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯಃ ಸ್ತಿಮಿತೋದ ಇವಾರ್ಣವಃ ..

ಸಮೃದ್ಧಕಾಮೋ ಹೀನೋ ವಾ ನಾರಾಯಣಪರೋ ಮುನಿಃ .

ನೋತ್ಸರ್ಪೇತ ನ ಶುಷ್ಕೇತ ಸರಿಧ್ವರಿವ ಸಾಗರಃ .. BH(11-8-5 and 6).

The conversation is narrated by Krishna in His advice to Uddhava. The avaduta says: The sage should be placid and profound, difficult to fathom and to cross over, illimitable and immovable, like the ocean with its mass of waters at rest. And whether he has an abundance of enjoyable things or he has none, the sage, who has set his heart upon the Lord, neither overflows nor shrinks, like the ocean on account of the waters of the rivers. These verses say that a jnani's mind is clear. He is mature and ಗಂಭೀರಃ deep or profound. Describing the qualities of Rama, Narada tells the sage Valmiki that Rama was profound like the ocean ಸಮುದ್ರ ಇವ ಗಾಂಭೀರ್ಯೇ . (Balakanda-1-17). The sage will appear to be simple, but his depth of knowledge and maturity cannot be measured: ದುವಿಗಾಹ್ಯಃ . Because of his immense wisdom he cannot be overcome or overpowered. He is firm. He is beyond time and space as he has found he is ಅನಂತಃ and ಅಪಾರಃ . . ಅಪಾರಃ means shoreless. A jnani is limitless and all pervading as he has found his true nature ಸ್ವರೂಪಂ . He is unshakeable; this refers to his emotional strength. On this point Krishna says

ದುಃಖೇಷ್ವನುದ್ವಿಗ್ನಮನಾಃ ಸುಖೇಷು ವಿಗತಸ್ಪೃಹಃ .

ವೀತರಾಗಭಯಕ್ರೋಧಃ ಸ್ಥಿತಧೀರ್ಮುನಿರುಚ್ಯತೇ .. BG(2-56).

His heart is not distressed in calamities. It does not long for pleasures. He is free from attachment, fear and anger. He is called a sage, a man of steady knowledge.

The sage is not disturbed by his experiences, be they favourable or unfavourable. King Parikshit was such a person. He was born in the royal family and brought up in the lap of luxury. He was said to be calm and serene like Lord Shiva ಪ್ರಸಾದೇ ಗಿರಿಶೋಪಮಃ . BH(1-12-23). But adversity hit him hard in the form of a curse. He had only seven

days left to live. But though he was initially upset, he gathered his wits and immediately started thinking of what he should do next. He renounced his kingdom, went to the banks of Ganga and sought the advice of sages about what one in his condition should do. The jnani has realised his fulness ಪೂರ್ಣತ್ವಂ . So he has no wants. His sensory experiences are like the rivers: they may bring in flood waters or may dry up. But the ocean does not swell or shrink in size. It retains its fullness. This is with reference to material possessions also. So whether he owns all desirable possessions ಸಮೃದ್ಧಕಾಮಃ or has none, he treats both situations like ನಾರಾಯಣಪರಃ gifts from God. Ramayana gives a fine example in Rama for this. He was to be made the king but this was not to be. He was asked to go to the forest instead. But this sudden change of fortune did not upset Him in the least. Valmiki says: ನ ವನಂ ಗಂತುಕಾಮಸ್ಯ ತ್ಯಜತಶ್ಚ ವಸುಂಧರಾಂ . ಸರ್ವಲೋಕಾತಿಗ್ರಸ್ಯೇವ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯತೇ ಚಿತ್ತವಿಕ್ರಿಯಾ .. (Ayodhya Kanda -19-33). No change of mood was perceived in him,-any more than in a (master) yogi who surpasses all (common) men (because of his having risen above all pairs of opposites),- even though he was ready to retire to woods and was renouncing the sovereignty to the globe. The man of wisdom does not become arrogant or depressed. Rama was said to be like this ಸರ್ವದಾಭಿಗತಃ ಸದ್ಭಿಃ ಸಮುದ್ರ ಇವ ಸಿಂಧುಭಿಃ . Bala (1-16). He was always sought by the righteous even as the ocean by the rivers. The commentators explain that just as the ocean maintains its level even when rivers flow into it, Rama was level-headed even though sadhus were regularly calling on Him. He did not become proud. It emerges then, that in the case of a man of wisdom real possessions are not material possessions and adversity is not poverty. Prosperity for him is remembrance of the Lord and calamity is forgetting Him ಸಂಪದೋ ನೈವ ಸಂಪದಃ ವಿಪದೋ ನೈವ ವಿಪದಃ . ವಿಪದ್ ವಿಸ್ಮರಣಂ ವಿಷ್ಣೋಃ ಸಂಪದ್ ಸಂಸ್ಮರಣಂ ಹರೇಃ .. It is possible that in adversity one's weakness shows up and all thoughts of Lord recede into the background. But this does not happen in the case of a true devotee. He is not daunted by reverses. In fact Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas found from experience that calamities made her think of Him and so she prayed that she should be regularly visited by them!

ವಿಪದಃ ಸಂತು ನಃ ಶಶ್ಚತ್ತತ್ರ ತತ್ರ ಜಗದ್ಗುರೋ .

ಭವತೋ ದರ್ಶನಂ ಯತ್ಸ್ಯಾದಪುನರ್ಭವದರ್ಶನಂ .. BH(1-8-25).

A jnani has realised his oneness with God. So there is no question of his forgetting Him. So, let us pray to the great Lord Margabandhu to show us the way. ಭಜೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ

:- ಭಜೇ = I worship ಮರ್ಗಬಂಧುಂ = the Lord Margabandhu. In this verse the poet uses four similies to glorify Shiva's generous nature, His strength, His complexion and His wisdom. Talking about figures of speech one has to note that they are used by poets to highlight some quality or emphasise some thing. This works all right with the things in the universe (i.e.) with finite things. But when one tries to use similies while talking about God who is not finite but infinite they fail. The desired effect cannot be produced. One cannot find something equal to or greater than Him. Shri DikShita says this in his poem Varadarajastavam

ಯಸ್ಮಿಂಜಹಾತ್ಯಶಿಯೋಕ್ತಿರಲಂಕ್ರಿತಿತ್ವಂ
ನ್ಯೂನೋಪಮಾತ್ವಮುಪಮಾ ಸಮುಪೈತಿ ಸರ್ವಾ
ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಸ್ವಭಾವಕಲನಾಪಿ ಚ ನ ಪ್ರತರ್ಕ್ಯಾ
ತದ್ವರ್ಣಯಾಮಿ ಭವತಃ ಕಥಮಾಭಿರೂಪ್ಯಂ ..

He says that one cannot describe His beauty directly, or by comparing it with a like object or by exaggeration. Describing it directly is not possible because His form is very subtle and cannot be grasped by words. There being none equal to it, one cannot use a simile and offer a comparison. Also one cannot use exaggeration to highlight His form. For example Kalidasa says that King Dilipa was tall like a tree ಸಾಲ ಪ್ರಾಂಸುಃ : Raghuvamsa (1-13). This makes nice reading and sounds definitely better than saying that Raghu was exceptionally tall. But exaggeration will not work when talking about His qualities as nothing can excel them. Still poets resort to the use of the figures of speech as with the worldly objects while praising Him. This is done in their enthusiasm to sing His glory and we accept it in the right spirit. Meaning of the verse. I worship Lord Margabandhu who is more generous than the divine Mandara tree, who is stronger than the Mandara mountain, who is close to the great Gauri, who is of crimson colour and who is more profound than the mighty ocean.

6

6. ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯಯಜ್ಜ್ವೇಂದ್ರ ಗೀತಂ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರರಾಜಂ ಪಠೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಾಣೇ .
ತಸ್ಯಾರ್ಥಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ವಿಧತ್ತೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಮಧ್ಯೇಽಭಯಂ ಚಾಶುತೋಷೋ ಮಹೇಶಃ .
ಶಂಭೋ ...

ಅಪ್ಪಯ್ಯ = the name of the author ಯಜ್ಜ್ವನ್ = performer of sacrifices ಗೀತಂ = sung
ಸ್ತೋತ್ರರಾಜಂ great poem ಪಠೇತ್ = reads ಯಃ = whoever ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ = with devotion

ಪ್ರಯಾಣೇ = during a journey ತಸ್ಯ = for him. ಅರ್ಥ = wish, desire ಸಿದ್ಧಿಃ = fulfilment, complete attainment ವಿಧತ್ತೇ = arranges. ಮಧ್ಯಃ = middle or central part ಮಾರ್ಗಮಧ್ಯೇ on the way ಅಭಯಂ = freedom from fear, security ಆಶು = fast, quick ತೋಷಃ = satisfaction, pleasure, delight. ಆಶುತೋಷಃ means one who is easily pleased ಮಹೇಶಃ = name of Shiva. This verse gives the benefit or the fruit of reciting the poem and is known as ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ . ಫಲಂ means the fruit, the result or the reward. The author says that one who reads the poem with devotion during a journey will be successful and attain his goal or wishes. In addition he will feel secure and be protected by the Lord on the way. What is the nature of the Lord? He is ಮಹೇಶಃ the Lord of the lords like Indra and Brahma. It is to Him that they all rush when they are confronted by fear or serious danger. This name was explained in verse No. 4 where it occurs. But though He is the supreme Lord a devotee can easily please Him by offering items that can be obtained without difficulty. He is known by following names: ಸುಲಭಃ - ಪತ್ರಪುಷ್ಪಫಲಾದಿಭಿ-ರ್ಭಕ್ತಿಮಾತ್ರಸಮರ್ಪಿತೈಃ ಸುಖೀನ ಲಭ್ಯತ ಇತಿ ಸುಲಭಃ . “ಪತ್ರೇಷು ಪುಷ್ಪೇಷು ತೋಯೇಷು ಅಕ್ರೀತಲಭ್ಯೇಷು ಸದೈವ ಸತ್ಸು . ಭಕ್ತ್ಯೇಕ-ಲಭ್ಯೇ ಪುರುಷೇ ಪುರಾಣೇ ಮುಕ್ತ್ಯೈ ಕಥಂ ನ ಕ್ರಿಯತೇ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನೇ ..” ಇತಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತೇ .. VS(817). He is easily pleased by offering some leaves, flowers or fruits. The lowly woman Sabari could please Lord Rama by offering Him some fruits she had gathered in the forest. Krishna accepted with great delight some pounded rice which the poor brahmin Kuchela brought Him. Shri Krishna says that His devotees can attain the highest results by just offering a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water ಪತ್ರಂ ಪುಷ್ಪಂ ಫಲಂ ತೋಯಂ ಯೋ ಮೇ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಚ್ಛತಿ . ತದಹಂ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯುಪಹೃತ-ಮಶ್ವಾಮಿ ಪ್ರಯತಾತ್ಮನಃ .. BG(9-26) Shiva is known as: ಕರವೀರಪ್ರಿಯಃ - ಕರವೀರಪ್ರಿಯತ್ವಂ ಶಿವಸ್ಯ ಪುರಾಣಾದಿಷು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ . “ಏಕೇನ ಕರವೀರೇಣ ಸಿತೇನಾಪ್ಯಸಿತೇನ ವಾ . ಹರಿಂ ಹರಂ ವಾ ಸಂಪೂಜ್ಯ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಭೂಯಾಯ ಕಲ್ಪತೇ” ಇತಿ . ಅನೇನ ಶಿವಪೂಜಸ್ಯಾಂ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಮುಕ್ತಂ . ಶಿವಃ ಪೂಜನೀಯ ಇತಿ ಚ .. SS(326).

ಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಸುಲಭಃ - ಶಿವಪೂಜಾದಿಪರಾಣಾಂ ಸುಲಭಃ, ಶೀಘ್ರಮನುಗ್ರಹಕಃ . ತದರ್ಥಮೇವ ಶಿವಮೂರ್ತಿಗ್ರಹಣಂ .. SS(484). One of Shri Lalita's names also states this fact ಸುಖಾರಾಧ್ಯಾ - ಸುಖೀನ ಉಪವಾಸಾದಿರೂಪಕಾಯಕ್ಲೇಶಂ ಧೈಯಸ್ವರೂಪ-ನಿಯಮನನಿರ್ಬಂಧಾದಿಕಂ ಚಾಂತರೇಣಾಪ್ಯಾರಾಧ್ಯಾ .. LS(680). Prahlada says that it does not need much effort to please Him. One need not strain himself and go on pilgrimages etc., in search of Him ನ ಹ್ಯಚ್ಯುತಂ ಪ್ರೀಣಯತು

ಬಹ್ವಾಯಾಸೋಽಸುರಾತ್ಮಜಾಃ . ಆತ್ಮತ್ವಾತ್ ಸರ್ವಭೂತಾನಾಂ ಸಿದ್ಧತ್ವಾದಿಹ ಸರ್ವತಃ .. BH(6-6-19). He is the very Self of every being and He is available everywhere. There is an apocryphal story that once the author Shri DikShita was preparing to go to a nearby village on some work when he received information that some people who were ill disposed to him were hatching a diabolical plot to attack and kill him on the way. The poet composed this stotram and prayed to the Lord to ensure his safety during the journey. As a result the enemies could not carry out their plan and Shri DikShita could complete his travel in complete safety. We too can recite this stotram and be protected by the Lord in our travels.

It is our tradition to mention the ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ or the fruits of reciting or listening to stotras or puranas or other holy texts. This is usually said in the end of the text but sometimes is mentioned in the beginning of the text or in both places. The purpose of the ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ is to interest one in reading or listening to the composition. The author in this case had lead a religious life. He had built two temples in his native village. He had performed several sacrifices as is expected of a brahmin. So he gets the appellation dikShita appended to his name. He also states this fact by calling himself as ಯಜ್ಞನ್ . The Manusmrithi states that performing sacrifices is one of the duties of a brahmin ಅಧ್ಯಾಪನಮಧ್ಯಯನಂ ಯಜನಂ ಯಾಜನಂ ತಥಾ . ದಾನಂ ಪ್ರತಿಗ್ರಹಂ ಚೈವ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಾನಾಮಕಲ್ಪಯತ್ .. Kalidasa says that the kings of the solar dynasty tended the sacrificial fires by means of offerings and honoured the guests also. ಯಥಾವಿಧಿ ಹುತಾಗ್ನಿನಾಂ ಯಥಾಕಾಮಾರ್ಚಿತಾರ್ಥಿನಾಂ . (Raghuvamsa-1-6). Manu further says that the noble ones should eat only the remains of this yagna as only it is worth eating. One who cooks for himself eats sin

ಅಘಂ ಸ ಕೇವಲಂ ಭುಂಕ್ತೇ ಯಃ ಪಚತ್ಯಾತ್ಮಕಾರಣಾತ್ .

ಯಜ್ಞಶಿಷ್ಟಾಶನಂ ಹ್ಯೇತತ್ಸತಾಮನ್ನಂ ವಿಧೀಯತೇ ..

Krishna talks at length about various kinds of sacrifices in Gita (in chapter IV). He eulogises the performance of sacrifices by saying

ಯಜ್ಞಶಿಷ್ಟಾಮೃತಭೂಜೋ ಯಾಂತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಸನಾತನಂ .

ನಾಯಂ ಲೋಕೋಽಸ್ಯ ಯಜ್ಞಸ್ಯ ಕುತೋಽಸ್ಯಃ ಕುರುಸತ್ತಮ ..

Eating the ambrosia, the remnant of the sacrifice, they go to the eternal brahman. Even this world, which is common to all beings is not for one who does not perform the sacrifices mentioned. How can there be to him another world which can be secured

only by superior means? (BG 4-31). The Lord Himself is called yagna ಯಜ್ಞಃ-ಸರ್ವಯಜ್ಞಸ್ವರೂಪತ್ವಾದ್ ಯಜ್ಞಃ;“ಯಜ್ಞೋ ವೌ ವಿಷ್ಣುಃ” (ತೈ-ಸಂ-1-7-4) ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . VS(445). Also ಯಜ್ಞಃ- ಸರ್ವಯಜ್ಞಸ್ವರೂಪತ್ವಾದ್ಯಜ್ಞಃ . “ತ್ವಂ ಯಜ್ಞಸ್ತ್ವಂ ವಿಷ್ಣು”ರಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(160). The performance of prescribed duties or what is known as karmas is necessary to get purification of the mind. This is the necessary first step in the path of spiritual progress ಚಿತ್ತಸ್ಯ ಶುದ್ಧಯೇ ಕರ್ಮ says Shri Sankaracharya in his Vivekachudamani. He defines such a person who has been regularly performing the sacrifices as noble minded ಮಹಾತ್ಮಾನಃ ಅಕ್ಷುದ್ರಚಿತ್ತಾಃ in his commentary (BG-19-13). Anandagiri elaborates the definition as ಮಹಾನ್ ಪ್ರಕೃಷ್ಟೋ ಯಜ್ಞಾದಿಭಿಃ ಶೋಧಿತ ಆತ್ಮಾ ಸತ್ತ್ವಂ ಯೇಷಾಂ - those whose minds have been purified by sacrifice etc.. Such a person who is sincere, performs the duties expected of him and is broad minded is known as ಆಪ್ತಃ - ಆಪ್ತಃ ಯಥಾರ್ತವಕ್ತಾ . - a credible, trustworthy person. Such persons speak from experience. So we need not question their sincerity but accept what they say as the truth with complete faith. Thus our tradition says ಆಪ್ತವಾಕ್ಯಂ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಂ . Great men act and speak for the good of the world only. They have no axes to grind. King Parikshit mentions this point when he greets the great sages who had come to see him in his last days ಸಮಾಗತಾಃ ಸರ್ವತಃ ಏವ ಸರ್ವೇ ವೇದಾ ಯಥಾ ಮೂರ್ತಿಧರಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಪೃಷ್ಠೇ . ನೇಹಾಧವಾಮುತ್ರ ಚ ಕಶ್ಚನಾರ್ಥ ಋತೇ ಪರಾನುಗ್ರಹಮಾತ್ಮಶೀಲಂ .. The king said “shining like the vedas you have all come together from every quarter. You have no purpose of your own in this world (to achieve) in this world or in the next, except doing good to others , which is your innate disposition.” BH(1-19-23). Shri Sankaracharya also talks about this trait of great men:

ಶಾಂತಾ ಮಹಾಂತೋ ನಿವಸಂತಿ ಸಂತೋ ವಸಂತವಲ್ಲೋಕಹಿತಂ ಚರಂತಃ .
ತೀರ್ಣಾಃ ಸ್ವಯಂ ಭೀಮಭವಾಣವಂ ಜನಾನಹೇತುನಾನ್ಯಾನಪಿ ತಾರಯಂತಃ ..
(Vivekachudamani).

There are good souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who, having crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever ಗೀತಂ = sung, chanted. The poet says that he had sung the poem. Does it mean he had not composed it? For example, one of the definitions of the word ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತಾ is that it was sung or chanted by Krishna: ಶ್ರೀಮತಾ ಭಗವತಾ ಗೀತಾ . This implies that He was not the author of the work (ನ ಕೃತಾ) but was merely repeating what had been said by someone else earlier. Krishna Himself told Arjuna that He

had imparted the same teaching long back to the Sun (Vivasvat) at the commencement of evolution by Him. This was then handed down in regular succession among the royal sages (men who were at once kings and sages). Thus it was an ancient teaching. The text may be different but the contents are essentially the same. They can be found in the upanishads also. One of the Gita Dhyana states this:

ಸರ್ವೋಪನಿಷದೋ ಗಾವೋ, ದೋಗ್ಧಾ ಗೋಪಾಲನಂದನಃ . ಪಾರ್ಥೋ ವತ್ಸಃ,
ಸುಧೀರ್ಭೋಕ್ತಾ ದುಗ್ಧಂ ಗೀತಾಮೃತಂ ಮಹತ್ ..

The upanishads are like the cows. Gopala is the one who milks them. Partha (Arjuna) forms the calf. The pure minded one is the partaker and the supreme nectar Gita is the milk. In the same manner, in this case also the poet had glorified the Lord by stringing together some of His attributes. These attributes are to be found in the puranas etc., and so were known long back. Also the fact that singing the glories of the Lord will confer great benefits is also known from time immemorial. In the introduction to the Vishnu

Sahasranama Bhishma tells Yudhishtira: I will tell you some of the renowned names of the Lord culled from various sources (such as the vedas and puranas) by great sages. These names will confer all merits ಯಾನಿ ನಾಮಾನಿ ಗೌಣಾನಿ ವಿಖ್ಯಾತಾನಿ ಮಹಾತ್ಮನಃ .

ಋಷಿಭಿಃ ಪರಿಗೀತಾನಿ ತಾನಿ ವಕ್ಷ್ಯಾಮಿ ಭೂತಯೇ .. Thus, the use of the word “sung” (ಗೀತಂ) seems appropriate. Why this piece is called ಸ್ತೋತ್ರ ರಾಜಾ a great or splendid piece of work? In the beginning of Chapter 9 of Gita, Krishna talks of the knowledge of brahman and to glorify the subject He calls it ರಾಜವಿದ್ಯಾ ರಾಜಗುಹ್ಯಂ . “the sovereign science, the sovereign secret.” It is called sovereign because it talks of brahman and not of any lowly subject. It shows the way to wash off one’s sins and attain brahman. Similarly this stotra glorifies the Lord who is brahman, who is limitless and thus supreme. It does not talk of some thing that is inferior or perishable like a monarch or gods like Indra and Brahma who are all in the clutches of time. It says then ಪಠೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಾಣೇ

ತಸ್ಯ ಅರ್ಥಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ವಿಧತ್ತೇ . (i.e.) whoever reads this with devotion during a journey, the mission will be completed successfully. The emphasis is on the word ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ - with devotion. This implies that such great hymns should not be read or chanted mechanically, by rote but with devotion. One should put his heart and mind in it. Bhishma says so in the introduction to Vishnu Sahasranama : “Among the dharmas prescribed the one I am going to say namely, worshipping the Lord by singing His glories with devotion is, I consider the best.” ಏಷ ಮೇ ಸರ್ವಧರ್ಮಾಣಾಂ ಧರ್ಮೋಽಧಿಕತಮೋ ಮತಃ . ಯದ್ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ

ತಸ್ಯ ಅರ್ಥಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ವಿಧತ್ತೇ . (i.e.) whoever reads this with devotion during a journey, the mission will be completed successfully. The emphasis is on the word ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ - with devotion. This implies that such great hymns should not be read or chanted mechanically, by rote but with devotion. One should put his heart and mind in it. Bhishma says so in the introduction to Vishnu Sahasranama : “Among the dharmas prescribed the one I am going to say namely, worshipping the Lord by singing His glories with devotion is, I consider the best.” ಏಷ ಮೇ ಸರ್ವಧರ್ಮಾಣಾಂ ಧರ್ಮೋಽಧಿಕತಮೋ ಮತಃ . ಯದ್ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ

ಪುಂಡರೀಕಾಕ್ಷಂ ಸ್ತವೈರರ್ಚೇನ್ನರಃ ಸದಾ .. This is in reply to King Yudishtira's question to him "which among the dharmas or duties you have mentioned is , according to you the best?"

ಕೋ ಧರ್ಮಃ ಸರ್ವಧರ್ಮಾಣಾಂ ಭವತಃ ಪರಮೋ ಮತಃ?

Bhakti (devotion) while chanting the names of the Lord is mentioned more than once in the end after the stotram also. For example it is said:

ಭಕ್ತಿಮಾನ್ ಯಃ ಸದೋತ್ಥಾಯ ಶುಚಿಸ್ತದ್ಗತಮಾನಸಃ . ಸಹಸ್ರಂ

ವಾಸುದೇವಸ್ಯ ನಾಮ್ನಾಮೇತತ್ ಪ್ರಕೀರ್ತಯೇತ್ ..125.

ಇಮಂ ಸ್ತವಮಧೀಯಾನಃ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಭಕ್ತಿಸಮನ್ವಿತಃ .

ಯುಜ್ಯೇತಾತ್ಮಸುಖಕ್ಷಾಂತಿ-ಶ್ರೀಧೃತಿಸ್ಮೃತಿಕೀರ್ತಿಭಿಃ ..132..

Shri Sankaracharya , in his commentary, says: ಭಕ್ತಿಮಾನಿತ್ಯಾದಿನಾ ಭಕ್ತಿಮತಃ ಶುಚೇಃ ಸತತಮುದ್ಯುಕ್ತಸ್ಯೈಕಾಗ್ರಚಿತ್ತಸ್ಯ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಲೋರ್ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾಧಿಕಾರಿಣಃ ಫಲವಿಶೇಷಂ ದರ್ಶಯತಿ . Thus a great deal of emphasis is laid on devotion and faith. The Lord is

ಅನಿಮಿಷಃ . always awake VS(215) and on the look-out for people who have devotion.

He has innumerable number of ears, eyes, mouths etc.. ಸರ್ವತಃ ಪಾಣಿಪಾದಂ ತತ್

ಸರ್ವತೋಽಕ್ಷಿಶಿರೋರುಹಂ . ಸರ್ವತಃ ಶ್ರುತಿಮಾಲ್ಗೋಕೇ ಸರ್ವಮಾವೃತ್ಯ ತಿಷ್ಠತಿ

.. SU(3-6). His (as Ganesa) ears are big and very sensitive. With them He can hear even

prayers muttered softly. With His long proboscis He can detect even the faintest aroma of

piety. He loves sincere prayers offered by His devotees and blesses them. He has the name:

ಸ್ತವಪ್ರಿಯಃ VS(680). This does not mean that He loves adulation. He has no need for it.

It is we who benefit by singing His glories. It was said ಪಠೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಾಣೇ

ತಸ್ಯ ಅರ್ಥಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ವಿಧತ್ತೇ ಮಾರ್ಗಮಧ್ಯೇಽಭಯಂಚ ಆಶುತೋಷೋ ಮಹೇಶಃ

. (i.e.) whoever reads this with devotion during a journey, the Lord will ensure that the

mission is completed successfully. In addition he will feel secure as he will be protected by

the Lord on the way. We noted that the word ಪ್ರಯಾಣಂ means departure,or journey.

But if we scratch a bit deeper we find that the word also means death or departure from this

world. This latter meaning puts the statement in a different perspective and introduces a

very important topic viz., the last moments of one's life and how it is to be managed. Both

ಪ್ರಯಾಣಕಾಲಃ and ಅಂತಕಾಲಃ mean the same thing. The Bhagavatha Purana is very

relevant in this context as it deals with this subject elaborately. It presents case histories of

the last moments of many people to illustrate the theories that are stated in it. This subject

is introduced by Krishna at the end of chapter 7 of Gita and dealt with in detail in the next

chapter. He says

ಅಂತಕಾಲೇ ಚ ಮಾಮೇವ ಸ್ಮರನ್ಮುಕ್ತಾ ಕಲೇವರಂ .

ಯಃ ಪ್ರಯಾತಿ ಸ ಮದ್ಭಾವಂ ಯಾತಿ ನಾಸ್ತ್ಯತ್ರ ಸಂಶಯಃ ..

Who at the time of death, thinking of me alone, leaves the body and goes forth, he reaches My being; there is no doubt in this. BG(8-5). And;

ಯಂ ಯಂ ವಾಪಿ ಸ್ಮರನ್ನಾವಂ ತ್ಯಜತ್ಯಂತೇ ಕಲೇವರಂ .

ತಂ ತಮೇವೈತಿ ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಸದಾ ತದ್ಭಾವಭಾವಿತಃ . BG(8-6).

Thinking of whatever Being at the end a man leaves the body, Him alone, O son of Kunti, he reaches by whom the thought of that Being has been constantly dwelt upon. The word Being may mean any personal God (ಇಷ್ಟ ದೇವತಾ) (like Shiva or Devi) other than Krishna or any friend or relative or anything else (may be his house or bank balance or even his pet) that had been occupying the person's thought. This is mentioned in the upanishad also.

ಕಾಮಾನ್ಯಃ ಕಾಮಯತೇ ಮನ್ಯಮಾನಃ ಸ ಕಾಮಭಿರ್ಜಾಯತೇ ತತ್ರ ತತ್ರ .

ಪರ್ಯಾಪ್ತಕಾಮಸ್ಯ ಕೃತಾತ್ಮನಸ್ತ್ವಿ ಹೈವ ಸರ್ವೇ ಪ್ರವಿಲೀಯಂತೇ ಕಾಮಾಃ .. MU(3-2-2).

An example is to be found in the story of the sage Bharatha that is familiar to all. This is told in the fifth book of Bhagavatham. The great king ruled over the entire country. It is because of him that the country has come to be known as Bharatam ಅಜನಾಭಂ ನಾಮೈತದ್ವರ್ಷಂ ಭಾರತಮಿತಿ ಯತ ಆರಭ್ಯ ವ್ಯಪದಿಶಂತಿ BH(5-7-3). The king was - ಮಹಾಭಾಗವತಃ a great devotee of the Lord. After ruling the country for a long time he handed over the kingdom to his sons and retired to the forest. There, in the forest, he devoted his time in the worship of the Lord and derived great satisfaction. But he developed an infatuation for a fawn. His mind got diverted from the worship of the Lord. He was engrossed in protecting and caressing the young deer. Even as he was spending his time playing and protecting the deer the hour of death approached him. He died looking on the deer intently.

ತದಾನೀಮಪಿ-ಪಾರ್ಶ್ವವರ್ತಿನಂ ಆತ್ಮಜಮಿವಾನುಶೋಚಂತಂ ಅಭಿವೀಕ್ಷಮಾಣೋ ಮೃಗ ಏವಾಭಿನಿವೇಶಿತಮನಾ ವಿಸೃಜ್ಯ ಲೋಕಮಿಮಂ ಸಹ ಮೃಗೇಣ

ಕಲೇವರಂ ಮೃತಮನು ನ ಮೃತಜನ್ಮಾನುಸ್ಮೃತಿಃ

ಇತರವನ್-ಮೃಗಶರೀರಮವಾಪ .

As a consequence he was reborn as a deer. BH(5-8-27).Shri Suka says in anguish that Bharatha, a great devotee, instead of attaining the supreme goal , died like other common

people and was reborn. A person with unfulfilled desires at the time of death gets the birth suitable to the fulfilment of the desires. So to one who wants to avoid rebirth Krishna says:

ತಸ್ಮಾತ್ಸರ್ವೇಷು ಕಾಲೇಷು ಮಾಮನುಸ್ಮರ ಯುಧ್ಯ ಚ .

ಮಯ್ಯರ್ಪಿತಮನೋಬುದ್ಧಿರ್ಮಾಮೇವೈಷ್ಯಸ್ಯಸಂಶಯಃ .. BG(8-7)

Therefore at all times you meditate on Me and fight; with mind and reason fixed on Me you shall doubtless come to Me alone. . Here “fight” means doing one’s allotted duty. This means that if one thinks of Him in his last moment he will attain Him. “Attaining” means realising Him by knowing His true nature. Krishna says this a bit later in clarification. He says – ಪುರುಷಃ ಸ ಪರಃ ಪಾರ್ಥ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾಲಭ್ಯ-ಸ್ತ್ವನನ್ಯಯಾ . BG(8-22). That Purusha, O Arjuna! within Whom all beings dwell, by Whom all this is pervaded, may be won by means of exclusive devotion. Shri Sankaracharya in his explanation says that “exclusive devotion” means exclusive devotion, characterised by jnana or knowledge of the self. ಸ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಲಭ್ಯಸ್ತು ಜ್ಞಾನಲಕ್ಷಣಯಾ ಅನನ್ಯಯಾ ಆತ್ಮವಿಷಯಯಾ . is to be noted. Why should “devotion” should be characterised by jnana? In answer he refers to what was said earlier (in verse 7-17). The jnani is the best devotee as he is exclusively devoted to Him ತೇಷಾಂ ಜ್ಞಾನೀ ನಿತ್ಯಯುಕ್ತ ಏಕಭಕ್ತಿರ್ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟತೇ Of them (the four types of devotees mentioned in verse No.16) all, the knower, ever steadfast and exclusively devoted excels. Shri Sankaracharya says that the wise man knows the truth and so is steadfast. He is exclusively devoted; for none else is seen deserving of devotion. Attaining Him means liberation from the repeated cycle of birth and death. Bhishma mentions this fact as he lay dying on the bed of arrows. Krishna was present by his side . He prepared to shed his body at the auspicious time since he had the power to do so. He praised Krishna for His kindness to be present by his side at the crucial moments. He says:

ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾಽಽವೇಶ್ಯ ಮನೋ ಯಸ್ಮಿನ್ ವಾಚಾ ಯನ್ನಾಮ ಕೀರ್ತಯನ್ .

ತ್ಯಜನ್ ಕಲೇವರಂ ಯೋಗೀ ಮುಚ್ಯತೇ ಕಾಮಕರ್ಮಭಿಃ .. BH(1-9-23).

A yogi who casts off his body with his thought fixed on Him through devotion and chanting His name with his tongue is rid of all hankerings and released from the bondage of actions. Then Bhishma stopped the wanderings of his senses and praised the Lord ನಿವೃತ್ತಸ್ಯ ವೇಂದ್ರಿಯವೃತ್ತಿವಿಭ್ರಮಸ್ತುಷ್ಟಾವ ಜನ್ಯಂ ವಿಸೃಜನ್ವನಾರ್ದನಂ . BH(1-9-31). The first verse he said in praise of the Lord shows that he had shed his attachments and he was surrendering his pure mind to Him

ಇತಿ ಮತಿರುಪಕಲ್ಪಿತಾ ವಿತ್ಯಷ್ಟಾ ಭಗವತಿ ಸಾತ್ವತಪುಂಗವೇ ವಿಭೂಮ್ನಿ .

ಸ್ವಸುಖಮುಪಗತೇ ಕ್ಷಚಿದ್ ವಿಹರ್ತುಂ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಮುಪೇಯುಷಿ ಯದ್ ಭವಪ್ರವಾಹಃ
.. BH(1-9-32).

He said that on the eve of his departure from this world he offers his mind which is free from all thirst for worldly enjoyment to the Supreme Lord. He begins by saying ಇತಿ - “thus or in this manner.” “In this manner” means “in the manner as advised by You.” Has not Krishna promised earlier that: ” with mind and reason fixed on Me you shall doubtless come to Me alone?” ಮಯ್ಯರ್ಪಿತಮನೋಬುದ್ಧಿ-ಮಾರ್ಗಮೇವೈಷ್ಯಸ್ಯಂಶಯಃ .. Thus Bhishma said that he was offering his mind that was free from all hankering to Him and was thus qualified for liberation. Now, because such attainment of the Lord is the ultimate goal one can desire, saints pray to Him to bless them with His thoughts in their last moments. Thus Lilasuka prayed:

ವ್ಯತ್ಯಸ್ತಪಾದ-ಮವತಂಸಿತ-ಬರ್ಹಿಬರ್ಹಂ,
ಸಾಚೇಕೃತಾನನ-ನಿವೇಶಿತ-ವೇಣುರಂಧ್ರಂ .
ತೇಜಃ ಪರಂ ಪರಮಕಾರುಣಿಕಂ ಪುರಸ್ತಾತ್,
ಪ್ರಾಣಪ್ರಯಾಣ-ಸಮಯೇ ಮಮ ಸನ್ನಿಧತ್ತಾಂ ..

He prays that he should be blessed with the vision of his favourite God Krishna that is at once bewitching and radiant, and a picture of kindness, standing with His legs crossed, decorated with a peacock feather tucked in His hair, playing the flute with His slightly inclined head, in his dying moments. Now, Krishna says that by thinking of Him in one’s last moments one can escape death and get relief. So can one be “smart” and think of Him only in his last moments but after leading a wayward or a “busy” life that had left him no time to think of the world to come? “No,” say our scriptures and saints. The reason is that the last moments can be very traumatic for a variety of reasons. As one grows old and infirm his will power becomes steadily weaker. His subconscious is saturated with numerous thoughts. These thoughts will take over and his free will will not be able to function. If a person had laboured hard chasing “success” in life, accumulating wealth and all the appurtenances that go with it then he would have developed strong bonds with all of them. The thought of having to leave all those hard earned possessions behind will be hovering in his mind and be very painful. Thus he will die thinking of his money and perhaps worrying how all that is going to be managed in his absence. Or one may be very attached to his family members. The thought that he will soon be whisked away from them can be very excruciating and occupy his mind at that critical moment. Or it is possible that one may live long but may

be overcome by debility and sickness in the old age. The suffering can be so intense that any other thought is rendered impossible. Further no one can predict precisely when the end will come. So it is not possible to plan and work on thinking of the Lord in the last moments. Thus, there can be many reasons for not being able to think of Him. So one should practise thinking of Him right from young age and at all the time possible. In this way the mind, slowly but steadily, gets saturated with the thought of God. Then there is a good chance of the thought surfacing at the right time. The words ಅಂತಕಾಲೇ ಚ literally mean “in the final moments also.” The “also” means, not only the final moments, but also the time preceding the crucial moments - “all through the life” as then only one can expect to be blessed with the thought of the Lord. The devotee Kulasekara prays

ಕೃಷ್ಣ ತ್ವದೀಯ-ಪದ-ಪಂಕಜಪಂಜರಾಂತಃ, ಅದ್ಯೈವ ಮೇ ವಿಶತು
ಮಾನಸ-ರಾಜಹಂಸಃ .

ಪ್ರಾಣಪ್ರಯಾಣಸಮಯೇ ಕಫ-ವಾತ-ಪಿತ್ತೈಃ, ಕಂಠಾವರೋಧನವಿಧೌ
ಸ್ಮರಣಂ ಕುತಸ್ತೇ ..

He prays to Krishna that his mind should now itself surrender to Him. He asks how it will be possible to think of Him in the final moments when the throat will be choked with phlegm etc.. and consequently there will be acute suffering. The celebrated vaishnavite saint Periazhwar makes a similar request. He says that the last moments will be painful. His physical strength will be depleted. His faculties will not be functioning properly. In such a situation he will not be able to think of Him. Because of these reasons he says that he is surrendering to the Lord now itself when the body has strength and mind is functioning properly. Then what happens to the atheist who keeps himself busy earning for himself, his family with no thought of the hereafter and perhaps leads a sybaritic life? It is a sad situation, say our scriptures. Lord Kapila in His advice to His mother Devahuti gives a graphical, albeit terrifying picture of the last moments of such a person. He says:

ವಾಯುನೋತ್ಪ್ರಮತೋತ್ತಾರಃ ಕಫಸಂರುದ್ಧನಾಡಿಕಃ .

ಕಾಸಶ್ವಾಸಕೃತಾಯಾಸಃ ಕಂಠೇ ಘುಘುರಾಯತೇ ..

(At the approach of death) his eye-balls are shot out by the action of the life-breath trying to find an exit: his wind-pipe gets choked with phlegm, coughing and breathing cause him exertion and death-rattle is heard from his throat.

ಶಯಾನಃ ಪರಿಶೋಚದ್ಭಿಃ ಪರಿವೀತಃ ಸ್ವಬಂಧುಭಿಃ .

ವಾಚ್ಯಮಾನೋಽಪಿ ನ ಬ್ರೂತೇ ಕಾಲಪಾಶವಶಂ ಗತಃ ..

Lying (in his bed) surrounded by his sorrowing relations and caught in the noose of Death, he cannot utter a word even when addressed.

ಏವಂ ಕುಟುಂಬಭರಣೇ ವ್ಯಾಪೃತತ್ಮಾಜಿತೇಂದ್ರಿಯಃ .

ಮ್ರಿಯತೇ ರುದತಾಂ ಸ್ವನಾಮುರುವೇದನಯಾಸ್ತಧೀಃ ..

Thus a man of uncontrolled senses, who is absorbed exclusively in worldly concerns, dies with a mind afflicted and stupified, and with his relatives standing by, crying with grief.

Further it is said that in the case of such person the memory of the present life slowly fades.

The ಪ್ರಾರಬ್ಧಂ pertaining to the next birth is ready to take over and the person gets a vision of the next birth to come. In addition, Sage Kapila says that, the person will also have a vision of the messengers of Death who have come to lead him away from this world.

ಯಮದೂತೌ ತದಾ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತೌ ಭೀಮೌ ಸರಭಸೇಕ್ಷಣೌ .

ಸ ದೃಷ್ಟ್ವಾ ತ್ರಸ್ತಹೃದಯಃ ಶಕೃನ್ಮೂತ್ರಂ ವಿಮುಂಚತಿ ..

He then sees before him two emissaries of Yama, huge in size and menacing with their terrific eyes. The sight makes him shudder and evacuate in fear. BH(3-30. 16 to 19). Kapila says further:

ಏವಂ ಕುಟುಂಬಂ ಬಿಭ್ರಾಣ ಉದರಂಬರ ಏವ ವಾ .

ವಿಸೃಜ್ಯೇಹೋಭಯಂ ಪ್ರೇತ್ಯ ಭುಂಕ್ತೇ ತತ್ಪಲಮೀದೃಶಂ ..

Thus a man who lives his life entirely for the pleasure of his body and for the support of his family is wrenched away from both and subjected to the sufferings of purgatory. BH(3-30-30).

ಏಕಃ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯತೇ ಧ್ವಾಂತಂ ಹಿತ್ವೇದಂ ಸ್ವಕಲೇವರಂ .

ಕುಶಲೇತರಪಾಥೇಯೋ ಭೂತದ್ರೋಹೇಣ ಯದ್ ಭೃತಂ ..

The body which a man has nourished by exploiting and inflicting cruelty on other creatures, he will have to abandon here and go alone to hell with the wages of his sins as his sole asset. BH(3-30-31).

ಕೇವಲೇನ ಹ್ಯಧರ್ಮೇಣ ಕುಟುಂಬಭರಣೋತ್ಸುಕಃ .

ಯಾತಿ ಜೀವೋಽನ್ಧತಾಮಿಶ್ರಂ ಚರಮಂ ಪದಂ ..

A man who lives in this world merely for supporting himself and his family by thoroughly unrighteous means will certainly reach Andhatamisra, the hell of utter darkness. BH(3-30-33).

ಅಧಸ್ತಾನ್ನರಲೋಕಸ್ಯ ಯಾವತೀರ್ಯಾತನಾಧಯಃ .

ಕ್ರಮಶಃ ಸಮನುಕ್ರಮ್ಯ ಪುನರತ್ರಾವ್ರಜೇಚ್ಛುಚಿಃ ..

Then attaining again to this world, he passes through various animal bodies one after another as part of his punishment until, having paid for his sins, he is purified. He is then born again as a man. BH(3-30-34). Now, let us hear the same thing from the horse's mouth. Yama the god of death told the boy Nachiketa:

ನ ಸಾಂಪರಾಯಃ ಪ್ರತಿಭಾತಿ ಬಾಲಂ, ಪ್ರಮಾದ್ಯಂತಂ ವಿತ್ತಮೋಹೇನ ಮೂಢಂ .
ಅಯಂ ಲೋಕೋ ನಾಸ್ತಿ ಪರ ಇತಿ ಮಾನೀ, ಪುನಃ ಪುನರ್ವಶಮಾಪದ್ಯತೇ ಮೇ ..
KU(1-2-6).

Hypnotised by the attraction of wealth he fails to take notice of the other world. For him the visible world is everything, and there is nothing like the other world (heaven or hell). Such a person comes within my clutches again and again. Having gone through the above material about the "last moments" let us seek the answers to the following questions:

- 1- why does one fear death?
- 2- when do the "last moments" begin?
- 3- how should one prepare himself for the "last moments?" and
- 4- how much time the preparations will require?

We will try to answer the questions here.

1- why does one fear death?

One can be expected to fear or abhor or shun some experience if he had had previously tasted it and found it unpleasant or painful. But death can not be such an event. One could not have experienced death earlier in this very life and carry on the experience of it in the same life. We find that even insects try to avoid death. Because of this reason our scriptures say that this fear is inherited from previous births. The sage Patanjali mentions this in his Yogasutras and calls the fear ಅಭಿನಿವೇಶಃ . He says that the fear affects the wise people also.

ಸ್ವರಸವಾಹೀ ವಿದುಷೋಽಪಿ ತಥಾರೂಢೋಽಭಿನಿವೇಶಃ . ಸಾಧನಪಾದಃ-9.

ಸ್ವಸ್ಯ ರಸೇನ ಸಂಸ್ಕಾರೇಣೈವ ವಹತೀತಿ ಸ್ವರಸವಾಹೀ .

ಅಪಿಶಬ್ದಸಮುಚ್ಚಿತಮವಿದ್ವಾಂಸಂ ತಥೇತಿ ತಚ್ಚಬ್ಧಃ

ಪರಾಮೃಶತಿ .

ರೂಢಃ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಃ . ತಥಾಚ ಯಥಾವಿದುಷಃ ತಥಾ ವಿದುಷೋಽಪಿ

ಸ್ವರಸವಾಹಿತ್ವಹೇತುನಾ ಯಜ್ಞಾತೀಯಃ ಯತ್ಕ್ಲೇಶೋ ಭಯಾಖ್ಯಃ

ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧೋಽಸ್ತಿ ಸೋಽಭಿನಿವೇಶ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . ವಿದುಷಾಮಪಿ

ಮರಣತ್ರಾಸಕೃತಂ ಭಯಮಸ್ತೀತಿ ಭಾಷ್ಯಕೃತೋಕ್ತಂ .

ಪೂರ್ವಪೂರ್ವಜನ್ಮಸು

ಮರಣಕಾಲೇ ಯತ್ರಾಸೋ ಜಾತೋ “ಮಾ ನ ಭೂವಂ ಭೂಯಾಸಂ”
ಇತ್ಯುತ್ಕಂಠಾರೂಪೋ ಭಯನಾಮಾ ತಜ್ಜನಿತ-ಸಂಸ್ಕರಮಾತ್ರಾ-
ದವಿದುಷಾಮಿವಾ- ತ್ಮವಿದಾಮಪಿ ಸ ಜಾಯತೇ, ನ ತತ್ರಾವಿದ್ಯಾದಿಕಂ
ಕಾರಣಮಿತಿ .

2- When do the “last moments” begin?

Suppose a person plans to go on a long trip, say, to Kasi and he had never been there earlier. One can easily imagine the excitement that wells up in his mind. He will start running around, gathering all the information about the place. He will start looking for people who can provide the information, the train fare and numerous other details. All these activities will be occupying his mind constantly as there will be some associated tension also. He may be physically present in his home town but his mind has already gone to the other place. So we may say that the journey begins the moment it is conceived of. The actual travel is also there and will follow. Similarly our journey begins the moment we start thinking of the other world. The pilgrimage to Kasi may come through or not; but this journey we are talking about has to be undertaken by everyone. The details are plunged in mystery. So it is incumbent on everyone to start knowing the complete details about the travel and making the preparations. All these are to be done now and without delaying it any further. It is said that death takes birth along with our birth. BH(10-1-38). Vasudeva points this out to Kamsa. ಮೃತ್ಯುಃ ಜನ್ಮವತಾಂ ವೀರ ದೇಹೇನ ಸಹ ಜಾಯತೇ . ಅದ್ಯ ವಾ ಅಭ್ಯಶತಾಂತೇ ವಾ ಮೃತ್ಯುವೈ ಪ್ರಾಣಿನಾಂ ಧ್ರುವಂ .. From that moment it never leaves us even for a moment. Rama says this to Bharata when the latter meets him in Chitrakoota. Bharata is inconsolable at all the tragic events that had happened in his absence. His father had died leaving his three mothers widowed, Ayodhya was plunged in grief and to cap it all his dear brother Rama had been expelled from the kingdom. Rama consoles him and points out that death is inevitable. There is no use in grieving over the dead as every one is inexorably moving towards his own end. So Rama advises him to stop crying over the king who is gone and instead to grieve for himself. ಅಹೋ ರಾತ್ರಾಣಿ ಗಚ್ಛಂತಿ ಸರ್ವೇಷಾಂ ಪ್ರಾಣಿನಾಮಿಹ . ಆಯಾಂಷಿ ಕ್ಷಪಯಂತ್ಯಾಶು ಗ್ರೀಷ್ಮೇ ಜಲಮಿವಾಂಶವಃ .. Passing days and nights quickly end the life-span of all living beings in this world, (even) as sunbeams suck up the water in summer. ಆತ್ಮಾನಮನುಶೋಚ ತ್ವಂ ಕಿಮನ್ಯಮನುಶೋಚಸಿ .

ಆಯುಸ್ತು ಹೀಯತೇ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸ್ಥಿತಸ್ಯಾಸ್ಯ ಗತಸ್ಯ ಚ ..

Grieve for yourself (alone), why do you grieve for another? In fact, the life-span of each and every creature, whether staying (at home) or departed (for another place), gets shortened (every moment).

ಸಹೈವ ಮೃತ್ಯುವ್ರಜತಿ ಸಹ ಮೃತ್ಯುರ್ನಿಷೀದತಿ .

ಗತ್ವಾ ಸುದೀರ್ಘಮಧ್ವಾನಂ ಸಹ ಮೃತ್ಯುರ್ನಿವರ್ತತೇ ..

Death ever walks with us (when we are walking) and remains seated with us (while we are sitting). (Nay,) having travelled a very long distance (with us) death returns with us (on our return). (Ayodhya Kanda -105-20, 21 and 22). Thus, one has to be alive to the fact that death is shadowing us. Because of this reason there has to be a sense of urgency and every moment has to be considered as the last moment. This is where the glory of Shrimad Bhagavatham becomes evident. If Ramayana teaches us the art of living then Shrimad Bhagavatham becomes an excellent treatise on the art of dying. This is because this purana gives in detail the answer to the third question: 3- How should one prepare himself for the "last moments?" This is one of the two questions asked by the king Parikshit to the sage Suka as the king is left with just a week to live. He asks:

ಅತಃ ಪೃಚ್ಛಾಮಿ ಸಂಸಿದ್ಧಿಂ ಯೋಗಿನಾಂ ಪರಮಂ ಗುರುಂ .

ಪುರುಷಸ್ಯೇಹ ಯತ್ ಕಾರ್ಯಂ ಮ್ರಿಯಮಾಣಸ್ಯ ಸರ್ವಥಾ ..

"I enquire of you, the greatest preceptor of the Yogis, the character and the means of the highest realisation. What should be done under all circumstances by a man who is on the verge of death?" BH(1-12-37). The answer to the questions is given in the Book II of Bhagavatam and has been elaborated in the further Books also. This is similar to what is said in chapter 8 of Gita. We have seen that those who are soaked in samsara and lead a Bohemian life get inferior births. Those who perform their duties and rituals with desires ಸಕಾಮ ಕರ್ಮಾ get births suitable for the fulfilment of the desires. Those who perform desireless karmas ನಿಷ್ಕಾಮ ಕರ್ಮಾ and also upasana (which includes offering prayers, worship of the Lord in any particular form etc.) form the next higher category. Krishna advises that such people should, at the time of departure, cut off all attachments. Then they should concentrate on the Lord in His cosmic form as Virat Purusha or Viswarupa Iswara and leave the body. They attain liberation in stages called ಕ್ರಮಮುಕ್ತಿಃ .

ಪ್ರಯಾಣ ಕಾಲೇ ಮನಸಾಽಚಲೇನ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಯುಕ್ತೋ ಯೋಗಬಲೇನ ಜೈವ .

ಭುವೋರ್ಮಧ್ಯೇ ಪ್ರಾಣಮಾವೇಶ್ಯ ಸಮ್ಯಕ್ ಸ ತಂ ಪರಂ ಪುರುಷಾಮುಪೈತಿ ದಿವ್ಯಂ .. BG(8-10) .

But a person of wisdom - jnani- who has realised his true nature does not worry about death as it is meaningless to him. He is free and liberated - ಮುಕ್ತಃ . He is totally detached from the body. The celebrated Tamil saint Pattinaththar presents this matter in his own unique rather blunt way. The body by itself is inert only. It is the presence of the consciousness in it that keeps it alive. Thus the only difference between a living body and the dead one is the presence of the animating life in the living body. And sooner or later the living body will also become dead or a corpse. So the saint, who was the personification of detachment, calls it as the “will-soon-be-dead” corpse! Or to put it in his language one is a dead corpse and the other a “will-soon-be-dead corpse” only. If one accepts this truth then one need not grieve over death. This is a well known fact only, but comes as a rude revelation. He is amused at the sight of a group of people surrounding a dead body and crying over it. He asks Lord Shiva at the famous Kanchipuram temple “O Lord! whence is this confusion; some will-soon-be -dead corpses falling and crying over a dead-corpse?” A pregnant, though a very disturbing one, statement that leaves us much to ponder.

4- How much time the preparations will require?

The “preparation” is for escaping death and it is meaningful only for one for whom “death” has meaning. As pointed out earlier “death” is irrelevant for a person who has gained wisdom. “One can escape death only by knowing Him. There is no other way to escape death.” So assert the shahtras. ತಮೇವ ವಿದಿತ್ವಾತಿಮೃತ್ಯುಮೇತಿ ನಾನ್ಯಃ ಪಂಥಾ ವಿದ್ಯತೇಽಯನಾಯ .. SU(3-8). Thus the one who has gained wisdom is clear that death can destroy only the body and not him. So he has no fear of death. Yama-the Lord of death says this to the boy Nachiketa who sought wisdom from him:

ಅಶರೀರೈಶರೀರೇಷು ಅನವಸ್ಥೇಷ್ವವಸ್ಥಿತಂ .

ಮಹಾಂತಂ ವಿಭುಮಾತ್ಮಾನಂ ಮತ್ವಾ ಧೀರೋ ನ ಶೋಚತಿ ..

The wise person does not grieve. He knows that the all-pervading, the greatest Supreme Self is present without body among all the perishable bodies. KU(1-2-22). Thus the preparation is relevant only to others who are in various stages of spiritual progress. They have to gain wisdom first to be able to reject death. This is illustrated by the story of Markandeya. He was a devout worshipper of Lord Shiva. He knew death was imminent. When the hour of death approached he embraced Shiva (who is the very embodiment of knowledge) implying

he got wisdom and with the wisdom rejected death and as a result he became immortal. The question now becomes how long does it take to gain wisdom about ourselves. Unfortunately Krishna says it is a very long process and may involve many births ಬಹೂನಾಂ ಜನ್ಮನಾ-ಮಂತೇ ಜ್ಞಾನವಾನ್ ಮಾಂ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯತೇ . ವಾಸುದೇವಃ ಸರ್ವಮಿತಿ ಸ ಮಹಾತ್ಮಾ ಸುದುರ್ಲಭಃ .. BG(7-19). At the end of many births, the man of wisdom comes to Me, (realising) that Vasudeva is the all: he is the noble-souled, very hard to find. Shri Sankaracharya explains in his commentary that these many births are required to gain the mental maturity to make him fit enough to acquire and assimilate the supreme wisdom that liberates him. ಬಹೂನಾಂ ಜನ್ಮನಾಂ ಜ್ಞಾನಾರ್ಥಸಂಸ್ಕಾರಾಶ್ರಯಾಣಾಂ ಅಂತೇ ಸಮಾಪ್ತೌ ಜ್ಞಾನವಾನ್ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಪರಿಪಾಕಜ್ಞಾನಃ ಮಾಂ ವಾಸುದೇವಂ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಗಾತ್ಮಾನಂ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷತಃ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯತೇ . He then realises the goal to be reached is Vasudeva who is the inner self of all. Why such a person is extremely rare to find? Krishna had said earlier: ಮನುಷ್ಯಾಣಾಂ ಸಹಸ್ರೇಷು ಕಶ್ಚಿದ್ಭೃತತಿ ಸಿದ್ಧಯೇ . ಯತತಾಮಪಿ ಸಿದ್ಧಾನಾಂ ಕಶ್ಚಿನ್ಮಾಂ ವೇತ್ತಿ ತತ್ತ್ವತಃ .. BG(7-3). Just one man among thousands strives to win the knowledge: among those who know and strive, only one comes to know Me in truth. What is the reason for this unfortunate situation? Why are people not interested in the path of knowledge that assures them liberation? The reasons can be many. One is that we have tenanted the body in innumerable births and have become attached to it. The attachment is so great that we have come to take the body to be ourselves. It sounds preposterous to hear that we are not the body, but something occupying it. It is naturally difficult, almost impossible to shake off the attachment that we have so assiduously nourished over such a long time. Secondly all the talk about the other world and liberation etc., sounds very theoretical. Things like heaven and God appear nebulous and remote. What they are said to offer is not certain. So one tends to prefer the bird in the hand and not the promised land. We do not come across any who had been there and could narrate their experiences. All that we hear about is only culled from various books. Thus it is very difficult to get a lively interest in the subject. Then there are enough discussions on other mundane topics that can veer us away from the subject. The influences of the media, the alien religions, the many incidents that happen around us and some of our own experiences add to the scepticism and help to slacken what little interest one might have developed in the subject. Then the preparatory steps that one is expected to go through to become a qualified student for taking up the study of vedanta can be daunting. They too can put

off one from taking serious interest in the subject. Because the steps known as ಸಾಧನ ಚತುಷ್ಟಯಸಂಪತ್ತಿಃ or the four fold qualifications include things such as control of the mind to curb its wandering tendencies so that it becomes focussed on a subject, control of the sense organs so that they become disciplined, detachment to the pleasures of the world. Thus the reasons why people are not interested in the topic of liberation can be many. One is busy during the active part of the life. The general tendency is to put off religion for the post retirement period. But then it may be too late! Old age will bring with it its own problems. So Shri Sankaracharya wails: ಬಾಲಸ್ತಾವತ್ ಕ್ರೀಡಾಸಕ್ತಃ ತರುಣಸ್ತಾವತ್ ತರುಣೇಸಕ್ತಃ . ವೃದ್ಧಸ್ತಾವಚ್ಚಿಂತಾಸಕ್ತಃ ಪರೇಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಿ ಕೋಽಪಿ ನ ಸಕ್ತಃ .. So our scriptures advise one to start the practices early in life before one gets sucked into the whirlpool of life. Prahlada tenders this considered advice to his friends: ಕೌಮಾರ ಆಚರೇತ್ಪ್ರಾಚ್ಛೋ ಧರ್ಮಾನ್ ಭಾಗವತಾನಿಹ . BH(7-6-1). When young the mind is fresh, receptive to advices and is not yet polluted by the pulls and pushes of the world. Kalidasa mentions that the kings of the solar dynasty, about whom he writes in his great work Raghuvamsam, acquainted with this subject even when young. He says ಶೈಶವೇಽಭ್ಯಸ್ತವಿದ್ಯಾನಾಂ (1-7). Our tradition says that only that learning that leads to liberation can be called education. ಸಾ ವಿದ್ಯಾ ಯಾ ವಿಮುಕ್ತಯೇ . Shri Sankaracharya also defines education as ಆತ್ಮನೋ ಬೋಧಃ while commenting on the popular verse beginning ವಿದ್ಯಾ ವಿನಯಸಂಪನ್ನೇ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇ ಗವಿ ಹಸ್ತಿನಿ . BG(5-18). It is knowing about Self. Thus Devi (LakShmi, Lalita) is called Vidya ವಿದ್ಯಾ . The commentator's explanation is: ಮೋಕ್ಷಪ್ರದಜ್ಞಾನಸ್ವರೂಪತ್ವಾದ್ವಿದ್ಯಾ . (Lalita Sahasranamam. No 549). Other subjects are learnt only to eke out a living. They will not be useful beyond a point of time. Thus they are inferior. So a wise person will not fail to give utmost importance to this subject. This is said in our upanishads

ದ್ವೇ ವಿದ್ಯೇ ವೇದಿತವ್ಯೇ ಇತಿ ಹ ಸ್ಮ ಯದ್ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಿದೋ ವದಂತಿ ಪರಾ ಚೈವಾಪರಾ ಚ

ತತ್ರಾಪರಾ ಋಗ್ವೇದೋ ಯಜುರ್ವೇದಃ ಸಾಮವೇದೋಽಥರ್ವವೇದಃ ಶಿಕ್ಷಾ ಕಲ್ಪೋ ವ್ಯಾಕರಣಂ

ನಿರುಕ್ತಂ ಛಂದೋ ಜ್ಯೋತಿಷಮಿತಿ . ಅಥ ಪರಾ ಯಯಾ ತದಕ್ಷರಮಧಿಗಮ್ಯತೇ .. MU(1-4 and 5).

These mantras say that there are two Vidyas worth knowing to men - Para and Aparā. Out of these two; the vedas, and all their branches through which one can gain the worldly and

otherworldly enjoyments is the inferior one and is called Aparā Vidya. Para or the superior one is that through which the imperishable brahman is known. Yama also tells this to his student Nachiketa: ಶ್ರೇಯಶ್ಚ ಪ್ರೇಯಶ್ಚ ಮನುಷ್ಯಮೇತಸ್ಮೌ ಸಂಪರೀತ್ಯ ವಿವಿನಕ್ತಿ ಧೀರಃ . KU(1-2-2). He says that two paths present themselves before every one. One is called sreyas i.e., the one that offers release from all miseries for ever and the other is called preyas i.e., the means of obtaining the pleasures of this world. The wise person prefers the former viz., sreyas in comparison to preyas. The Tamil saint Tiruvalluvar also points this out in his great work Tirukkural. He asks what profit have those derived from learning if it does not lead to the worship of the Lord who is possessed of pure knowledge? But generally all these warnings and advices fall on deaf ears. Consequently we have to take the long path for salvation. The story of Gajendra, the elephant narrated in the eighth book of Bhagavata illustrates this point. The elephant symbolises one covered with ignorance. The elephant has a large family comprising of she elephants and baby elephants - a typical samsari. He was “enjoying” the life. He was afflicted with the heat and entered a lake full of fragrant waters. The fragrant waters represent the vAsanAs or the latent tendencies accumulated in previous births. He enjoyed a refreshing bath, sprayed the cool waters on the female elephants as well as their young ones and made them also drink. This he did out of attachment to his own herd. Shri Suka adds - like a householder ಯಥಾಗೃಹೀ . Such a one steeped in samsara normally does not imagine there can be trouble around the corner. Thus the elephant could not foresee the imminent problem - ನಾಚಷ್ಟ ಕೃಚ್ಛಂ ಕೃಪಣೋಽಜಮಾಯಯಾ . . A crocodile - representing kala - caught hold of the elephant. The elephant struggled hard to free himself but did not succeed. The gods looked on the struggle without coming forward to help. The struggle went on for thousands of years. This long time represents the numerous births one wrapped in ignorance has to take. The elephant found that his family members left him one by one . He was left alone, drained of energy and helpless. At this point the distraught animal cried to the Lord for help. Indra, Brahma and similar gods did not respond as they too are in the grip of time. The appearance of the Lord shows the dawn of wisdom. He killed the crocodile and released the elephant meaning that with the gaining of wisdom one is released from samsara or the cycle of birth and death.

Shri Suka gives another example of the king Khatwanga of the solar dynasty. He was very powerful and on several occasions had helped the gods in their fights against the asuras. Once, after such a fight the devas wanted to offer a favour in return for the help they have

received from the king. The only favour the king wanted was to know the duration of life remaining. Much against their will the devas had to inform him that he had only about an hour to left to live. The king at once rushed back to earth, renounced every thing, meditated on the Lord in that brief period of time and got liberation

ಖಡ್ವಾಂಗೋ ನಾಮ ರಾಜರ್ಷಿಃ ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವೇಯತ್ತಾಮಿಹಾಯುಷಾಃ .

ಮುಹೂರ್ತಾತ್ ಸರ್ವಮುತ್ಸೃಜ್ಯ ಗತವಾನಭ್ಯಂ ಹರಿಂ .. BH(2-1-13).

Most appropriately Shri Suka calls the king ರಾಜರ್ಷಿಃ or royal sage, a saint like king. How can this be possible when Krishna had said that one can get liberated only after repeated births? The answer lies in the fact that one has to take several births before coming to the path of devotion: but having stepped into the right path he will get births suitable for his spiritual progress

ತತ್ರ ತಂ ಬುದ್ಧಿ-ಸಂಯೋಗಂ ಲಭತೇ ಪೌರ್ವದೇಹಿಕಂ .

ಯತತೇ ಚ ತತೋ ಭೂಯಃ ಸಂಸಿದ್ಧೌ ಕುರುನಂದನ .. BG(6-43).

Krishna says that in his new birth he gains touch with the knowledge that was acquired in the former body. He strives with greater vigour than that with which he strove before for perfection. Thus the progress continues and does not stop till one gains wisdom mentioned in our shastras. At that stage one's preparations are over. Thus the king too was making progress. He got birth in the right environment i.e., the solar dynasty. He got the right education even as a child just like Kalidasa said of the kings of the solar dynasty ಶೈಶವೇಽಭ್ಯಸ್ತವಿದ್ಯಾನಾಂ . The story of Khatwanga is told in book nine of Bhagavatha. The king, on being informed of the short span of life left did not panic or get agitated: but was smart enough to take appropriate steps without delay. He said that even as a child he knew what was reality and was not attached to sense pleasures offered by his vast kingdom. Thus, thanks to the right education he had received in his early days he had wisdom. He could renounce his kingdom etc., without hesitation and sit in meditation. These characteristics were also typical of the kings of solar dynasty i.e., ಯಥಾಕಾಲಪ್ರಬೋಧಿನಾಂ they were alert at all times when vigilance was called for and then at the end (of their lives) they abandoned their bodies by means of meditation ಯೋಗೇನಾಂತೇ ತನುತ್ಯಜಾಂ . This is mentioned by Kalidasa in his Raghuvamsam. No wonder, then the king got the result he wanted in a short time. Shri Suka gives the example

of a great monarch to king Parikshit: not that of an ordinary person or a sanyasi so that

Parikshit will get confidence that even a king like himself who had lived in the lap of luxury could work and get liberated in a short time. But in his case Parikshit had one full week to get freedom. So Shri Suka advises him to shed fear first as there was ample time. Then it was said that the one who reads the stotram with devotion will feel secure as he will be protected by the Lord on the way. ಮಾರ್ಗಮಧ್ಯೇಽಭಯಂಚ ಆಶುತೋಷೋ ಮಹೇಶಃ . It was stated earlier that our journey has already started and so we are on the way. The question, now, is how can reading the stotram with devotion confer security on the way? This becomes more relevant as the upanishads say ಆನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣೋ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ . ನ ಬಿಭೇತಿ ಕದಾಚನೇತಿ . the person having experienced the bliss of brahman ever fears not. (TU-II-4-1) that only by realising the Self one can shed his fears. We are long way from realising brahman. We very much seek security. We have the constant fear that the things that we consider as contributing to our security may get damaged or destroyed or leave us. Thus we worry about sickness, loss of money, friends or relatives etc.. The remedy for this feeling of insecurity is to realise that all these listed above can not last for ever. Either they will leave us or we will have to leave them some day. Everyone knows this but wants them to last for ever. Thus we want the body to be youthful and last for ever. One is unwilling to grow old and end one's days. Being insecure themselves nothing on the earth can confer security. This is a fact and has to be accepted howsoever bitter this may be. But strangely no one is prepared to accept this. Acceptance requires wisdom and it is not got in a day. It is a difficult process. The recital of the stotrams and other texts like the puranas pave the way for gaining the knowledge. They describe the endearing qualities of the Lord in a manner that will make our heart turn to Him. Once He gains entry into our heart He clears the accumulated sins and brings in the wisdom. Krishna has given this assurance in Gita (10-10) ತೇಷಾಂ ಸತತ-ಯುಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಭಜತಾಂ ಪ್ರೀತಿ-ಪೂರ್ವಕಂ . ದದಾಮಿ ಬುದ್ಧಿ-ಯೋಗಂ ತಂ ಯೇನ ಮಾಮುಪಯಾಂತಿ ತೇ .. “To these, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give that devotion of knowledge by which they come to Me.” Thus devotion develops where even the seed of it was absent earlier. This is the power of listening to His glories

ಯಸ್ಯಾಂ ವೈ ಶ್ರೂಯಮಾಣಾಯಾಂ ಕೃಷ್ಣೇ ಪರಮಪೂರುಷೇ .

ಭಕ್ತಿರುತ್ಪದ್ಯತೇ ಪುಂಸಃ ಶೋಕಮೋಹಭಯಾಪಹಾ .. BH(1-7-7).

Such devotion dispels grief, infatuation and fear. Shri Suka lays stress on the fact that this happens even one decides to listen to the Lord's stories (ಶ್ರೂಯಮಾಣಾಯಾಂ) leaving

us to imagine what benefits it can confer when one actually takes to listening to them. Shri Vedanta Desika states this clearly in his poem Abhitistavam (5).

He says:

ಭವಂತಮಿಹ ಯಃ ಸ್ವಧೀನಿಯತಚೇತನಾಚೇತನಂ
ಪನಾಯತಿ ನಮಸ್ಯತಿ ಸ್ಮರತಿ ವಕ್ತಿ ಪರ್ಯೇತಿ ವಾ .
ಗುಣಂ ಕಮಪಿ ವೇತ್ತಿ ವಾ ತವ ಗುಣೇಶ ಗೋಪಾಯಿತುಃ
ಕದಾಚನ ಕುತಶ್ಚನ ಕ್ಷಚನ ತಸ್ಯ ನ ಸ್ಯಾದ್ಭಯಂ ..

He says that one who praises the Lord or salutes Him or remembers Him or recites hymns about Him or circumambulates Him or knows about at least one of His attributes does not encounter fear of any kind at any time from anyone at any place. This is repeatedly stated towards the end of Vishnu Sahasranama stotram in the ಫಲಶ್ರುತಿಃ . It is said ನ ಭಯಂ ಕ್ವಚಿದಾಪ್ನೋತಿ ವೀರ್ಯಂ ತೇಜಶ್ಚ ವಿಂದತಿ and ಭಯಾನ್ಮುಚ್ಯೇತ ಭೀತಸ್ತು ಮುಚ್ಯೇತಾಪನ್ನ ಆಪದಃ . and ಜನ್ಮಮೃತ್ಯುಜರಾವ್ಯಾಧಿಭಯಂ ನೈವೋಪಜಾಯತೇ . . This was what happened to the king Parikshit when he listened to Shri Bhagavatham.

The experience totally transformed him. He shed the fear of death, gained wisdom and got release. God grants us the wisdom that removes the fear. So he is called ಭಯಾಪಹಃ - ಭಯಂ ಸಂಸಾರಜಂ ಪುಂಸಾಮಪಘ್ನನ್ ಭಯಾಪಹಃ . VS(935).

But there may be fear from foes and elements etc.. God removes them also. Shiva is known as ಸಹಾಯಃ - ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾದೀನಾಮಪ್ಯಾಪತ್ಕಾಲೇ ರಕ್ಷಕ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . SS(762). He protects even gods like Brahma in times of danger. Lalita is called ಭಯಾಪಹಾ

- ಭಯಾನಿ ಜಲಸ್ಥಲಾದಿಪ್ರಯುಕ್ತಾದೀನಿ ಸರ್ವಾಣ್ಯಪಹಂತೀತಿ ಭಯಾಪಹಾ . “ಆನಂದಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣೋ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ನ ಬಿಭೇತಿ ಕುತಶ್ಚನೇತಿ” ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . ತಥಾ ಚ ವಾಯುಪುರಾಣೇ “ಅರಣ್ಯೇ ಪ್ರಾಂತರೇ ವಾಪಿ ಜಲೇ ವಾಪಿ ಸ್ಥಲೇಽಪಿ ವಾ . ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಕುಂಭೀರಚೋರೇಭ್ಯೋ ಭಯಸ್ಥಾನೇ ವಿಶೇಷತಃ . ಅಧಿಷ್ಟಪಿ ಚ ಸರ್ವೇಷು ದೇವೀನಾಮಾನಿ ಕೀರ್ತಯೇ”ದಿತಿ . We do not realise the fact that He is never away from us even for a moment. We are used to looking out for security and not within. The devout Pandavas knew that they could get His help readily whenever it was needed. Kunti,

the mother of Pandavas, acknowledged this fact gratefully. She said:

ವಿಷಾನ್ಮಹಾಗ್ನೀಃ ಪುರುಷಾದದರ್ಸಾದಸತ್ಪಭಾಯಾ ವನವಾಸಕೃಚ್ಛತಃ .
ಮೃಧೇ ಮೃಧೇಽನೇಕಮಹಾರಥಾಸ್ತ್ರತೋ ದ್ರಾಣ್ಯಸ್ತ್ರತಶ್ಚಾಸ್ಮ ಹರೇಽಭಿರಕ್ಷಿತಾಃ ..
BH(1-8-24).

She said that Krishna protected them from poison, from a conflagration, from the look of

man-eating demons, from the assembly of evil people (Duryodhana and his associates), from the many perils met during their stay in the forest, from the missiles of many great warriors (like Bhishma, Drona etc..) in every battle and lastly from the missile discharged by Aswatthama (the son of Dronacharya). The gopis also stated that Krishna saved them time and again from death from poisonous water, demons in various disguises, showers, storm and lightning and other perils

ವಿಷಜಲಾಪ್ಯಯಾದ್ ವ್ಯಾಲರಾಕ್ಷಸಾದ್ ವರ್ಷಮಾರುತಾದ್ ವೈದ್ಯತಾನಲಾತ್ .
ವೃಷಮಯಾತ್ಮಜಾದ್ ವಿಶ್ವತೋಭಯಾದೃಷಭ ತೇ ವಯಂ ರಕ್ಷಿತಾ ಮುಹುಃ ..
BH(10-31-3).

Thus the truly devout people never miss Him and are , therefore do not feel insecure on the way. The “way” or ಮಾರ್ಗಃ may be viewed allegorically also. Our scriptures talk of many ways to worship Him. These are meant for people with differing tastes based on their temperaments. The Shiva-Mahimna Stotram says this:

ತ್ರಯೇ ಸಾಂಖ್ಯಂ ಯೋಗಃ ಪಶುಪತಿಮತಂ ವೈಷ್ಣವಮಿತಿ
ಪ್ರಭಿನ್ನೇ ಪ್ರಸ್ಥಾನೇ ಪರಮಿದಮದಃ ಪಥ್ಯಮಿತಿ ಚ .
ರುಚೀನಾಂ ವೈಚಿತ್ರ್ಯಾದೃಜು-ಕುಟಿಲ-ನಾನಾಪಥಜುಷಾಂ
ನೃಣಾಮೇಕೋ ಗಮ್ಯಸ್ತ್ವಮಸಿ ಪಯಸಾಮರ್ಣವಮಿವ .. (7).

There are different paths (of realisation) as enjoined by the three vedas, Samkhya, Yoga, Pasupatha doctrine and Vaishnava shastras. People follow different paths and each considers some particular path to be the proper one. This is because of the difference in their temperaments. But ultimately they all reach You only just as the rivers enter the ocean. Krishna says that all paths of worship lead to Him only and It is He who rewards them, just in the way they seek Him

ಯೇ ಯಥಾ ಮಾಂ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯಂತೇ ತಾಂಸ್ತಥೈವ ಭಜಾಮ್ಯಹಂ . ಮಮ
ವತ್ಮಾನುವರ್ತಂತೇ ಮನುಷ್ಯಾಃ ಪಾರ್ಥಸ್ಸರ್ವಶಃ .. BG(4-11).

Shri Rudram salutes Lord Shiva who is in the form of various paths. It says - ಪಥೀನಾಂ ಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ . ಪಥೀನಾಂ = ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೋಕ್ತ ದಕ್ಷಿಣೋತ್ತರ- ತೃತೀಯ-ಮಾರ್ಗಾಣಾಂ ಪತಿಃ . This says that Rudra is the protector of the three paths described in the sastras. Later It again says: ನಮಃ ಸ್ತುತ್ಯಾಯ ಚ ಪಥ್ಯಾಯ ಚ . salutation to Him who is in the narrow foot paths and in the broad highways ಸ್ತುತಿಃ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪೋ ದೇವಲೋಕಮಾರ್ಗಃ, ಪಂಥಾ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಲೋಕಮಾರ್ಗಃ . The narrow path indicates tortuous religious beliefs and practices. Krishna talks about this

ಮೂಢಗ್ರಾಹೇಣಾತ್ಮನೋ ಯತ್ಪೀಡ್ಯ ಕ್ರಿಯತೇ ತಪಃ .


ಪರಸ್ಯೋತ್ಸಾದನಾರ್ತಂ ವಾ ತತ್ತಾಮಸಮುದಾಹೃತಂ .. BG(17-19).

The penance which is performed obstinately, with self-torture, or for the purpose of ruining another is declared to be Tamasic. The broad and firm ways represent the beliefs and practices inculcated by the great teachers. They are the safe ways and are intended to be trodden by the common people ಮಹಾಜನಾನಾಂ ಯೇನಗತಃ ಸ ಪಂಥಾಃ says Mahabharatha. Saint Thiagaraja talks about this in his famous song “Sakkani raja margamu undaga.” He asks “when there is the well-laid king’s highway of devotion to God, why do foolish people stray into hard, tortuous and thorny footpaths and suffer?” Saint Manickavachagar has stated the same idea in his Tiruvachagam. He says “I was straying in the company of fools who did not know the path to liberation. The Lord pointed out to me the path of devotion and how to shake myself free from my past acts. He flushed out the impurities in my mind. He made me Shivam or the auspicious one and ruled me with grace. Oh! who had received in full measure the bounty God has showered on me? I mistook the wrong paths to be the right ones. He prevented me from following the small pathways and showed me the broad ones for obtaining His divine grace.” Again Shri Rudra says ನಮ ಇರಿಣ್ಯಾಯ ಚ ಪ್ರಪಥ್ಯಾಯ ಚ . Salutation to Him who abides in saline tracts and in trodden pathways.


ಇರಿಣ್ಯಾಯ Irinyaya: signifies arid tracts and has a refernce to samsara. ಪ್ರಪಥ್ಯಾಃ ಬಹುಭಿಹಿ ಸೇವಿತೋ ಮಾರ್ಗಃ ಪ್ರಪಥಃ, ತತ್ರ ಭವಃ ಪ್ರಪಥ್ಯಃ . “ನಮ ಇರಿಣ್ಯಾಯ ಚಪ್ರಪಥ್ಯಾಯ ಚೇ”ತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ SS(346). Prapathyaya: pathway trodden or resorted to by many. The Lord helps all who seek Him by following various paths. He says: ಮಚ್ಚೈತಃ ಸರ್ವದುರ್ಗಾಣಿ ಮತ್ಪ್ರಸಾದಾತ್ತರಿಷ್ಯಸಿ . Fix your heart in Me. You shall, by My grace, cross over all difficulties. So let us latch on to Him and win His grace.

Thus we have come to the end of this gem of a poem. Quotations from various sources have been given to stress the point that the Lord is one but known by various names and forms. We can find that though this is a small piece of work it condenses in itself the gist of vedantic truth and is very suitable for regular recitation. I submit this commentary of mine at the feet of my preceptor Shri Vedanta Desikachariar Swami. He literally flodded me with ideas on this poem But my bird brain could retain only an iota of what he communicated to me. I trust this work will receive the approval of the readers. Namaste. Om Tat Sat.

Translation and commentary is written by N. Balasubramanian (Copyright)

——
mArgabandhustotram by Appayya Dixita

pdf was typeset on February 2, 2024

——
Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com

