

Shri Vishnupanjaram Agnipuranantargatam

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ஸ்ரீ விஷ்ணுபஞ்சரம் அக்³நிபுராணந்தர்க³தம்

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Document Information



Text title : viShNupanjarastotram from Agnipurana

File name : viShNupanjaraagnipurANasArtha.itx

Category : vishhnu, panjara, vishnu

Location : doc_vishhnu

Transliterated by : N Balasubramanian

Proofread by : N Balasubramanian

Translated by : N Balasubramanian (Commentary)

Latest update : December 4, 2021

Send corrections to : sanskrit@cheerful.com

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December 5, 2021

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ஸ்ரீ விஷ்ணுபஞ்சரம் அக்³நிபுராணந்தர்³தம்



॥ ஸ்ரீ: ॥

புஷ்கர உவாச -

த்ரிபுரம் ஜக்⁴நுஷ: பூர்வம் ப்³ரஹ்மண விஷ்ணுபஞ்சரம் |
ஸங்கரஸ்ய த்³விஜஸ்ரேஷ்ட² ரக்ஷணைய நிரூபிதம் || 1 ||

வாக்³ஸேந ச ஸக்ரஸ்ய ப்³லம் ஹந்தும் ப்ரயாஸ்யத: |
தஸ்ய ஸ்வரூபம் வக்ஷயாமி தத்த்வம் ஸ்ரு³ணு ஜயாதி³மத் || 2 ||

விஷ்ணு: ப்ராச்யாம் ஸ்தி²த-ஸ்சக்ரீ ஹரி-ர்த்³க்ஷிணதோ க³தீ³ |
ப்ரதீச்யாம் ஸார்ங்க³-த்⁴ரு³க்³விஷ்ணு-ர்ஜிஷ்ணு: க²ட்³க்³ மமோத்தரே || 3 ||

ஹ்ரு³ஷீகேஸோ-Sபி கோணேஷு தச்சி²த்³ரேஷு ஜநார்த்³ந: |
க்ரோட்³ரு³ ஹரி-ர்பூ⁴மௌ நரஸிஹ்மோ-Sம்⁴ரே மம || 4 ||

க்ரூராந்தமமலம் சக்ரம் ப்⁴ரமத்யேதத் ஸுத்³ர்ஸநம் |
அஸ்யாம்ஸுமாலா து³ஷ்ப்ரேக்ஷா ஹந்து ப்ரேத-நிஸாசராந் || 5 ||

க³தா³ சேயம் ஸஹஸ்ரார்சி: ப்ரதீ³ப்தா பாவகோஜ்வலா |
ரக்ஷா-பூ⁴த-பிஸாசாநாம் டா³கிநீநாம் ச நாஸிநீ || 6 ||

ஸார்ங்க³விஸ்பூ²ர்ஜிதம் சைவ வாஸுதே³வஸ்ய மத்³நிபூந் |
திர்யக்³மநுஷ்ய கூஷ்மாண்ட³-ப்ரேதாதீ³ந் ஹந்த்வஸேஷத: || 7 ||

க²ட்³க்³-தா⁴ரோஜ்ஜ்வலஜ்யோத்ஸநா நிர்³தா³ யே ஸமாஹிதா: |
தே யாந்து ஸாம்யதாம் ஸத்³யோ க்³ருடே³நேவ பந்நகா: || 8 ||

ஸர்வே ப்⁴வந்து தே ஸௌம்யா: க்ரு³ஷ்ண-ஸங்கர-வாஹதா: |
சித்த-வ்ரு³த்தி-ஹரா யே மே ஜநா: ஸம்ரு³தி-ஹாரகா: || 9 ||

ப்³லௌஜஸாம் ச ஹர்தாரஸ்சாயா-விப்⁴ரம்ஸகாஸ்ச யே |
யேசோபபோ⁴க்³-ஹர்தாரோ யே ச லக்ஷண-நாஸகா: || 10 ||
கூஷ்மாண்டா³ஸ்தே ப்ரணஸ்யந்து விஷ்ணுசக்ர-பராஹதா: |

பு³த³தி⁴ஸ்வாஸ்த்யம் மந:ஸ்வாஸ்த்யம் ஸ்வாஸ்த்யமமைந்த³ரியகம் ததா² || 11 ||

மமாஸ்து தே³வதே³வஸ்ய வாஸுதே³வஸ்ய கீர்தநாத் |

ப்ரு³ஷ்டே² புரஸ்தாந்மம த³க்ஷிணேத்தரே விகோணதஸ்சாஸ்து ஜநார்த³நோ ஹரி: || 12 ||

தமீட்³யமீஸாநமநந்தமச்யுதம் ஜநார்த³நம் ப்ரணிபதிதோ ந ஸீத³தி |

யதா² பரம் ப்³ரஹம் ஹரிஸ்ததா² பரோ ஜக³த்ஸ்வரூபஸ்ச ஸ ஏவ கேஸவ: |

ஸத்யேந தேநாச்யதநாம கீர்தநாத் ப்ரணஸயேத்து த்ரிவிதீம் மமாஸுப⁴ம் || 13 ||

|| இதி அக்³நிபுராணந்தர்³க³தம் ஸ்ரீவிஷ்ணுபஞ்ஜரம் ஸமாப்தம் ||

Commentary by N Balasubramanian

COMMENTS:- The following abbreviations are used in the comments.

BG - Srimad Bhagavadgita.

BH - Srimad Bhagavatam.

SS - Shiva Sahasranamam (Padmapuranam) with the commentary of
Shri Paramasivendra Sarasvati.

VS - Vishnu Sahasranamam with the commentary of Shri Shankaracharya.

LS - Lalitha Sahasranamam with the commentary of Shri Bhaskaracharya.

SA - Shiva 108 namavali with the commentary called Shivatattvarahasyam
by Shri Nilakanta Dikshita; a relative of Shri Appayya Dikshita -
the author of this poem.

பஞ்ஜரம் means a cage. A bird or animal inside a cage is protected and so is secure from enemies. In the above verses the devotee prays to Lord Vishnu to form a protective cage and protect him from enemies from all directions. All living beings face a wide variety of problems from forces, both visible and invisible and crave for security from these forces. These forces may be termed enemies since they cause physical and mental anguish. The visible enemy may be a person, animal etc., who can cause us harm. The invisible enemy may be a disease that lurks inside the body and manifests one day suddenly or sorrow, fear etc. There is also a third type - known as acts of God (ie) problems caused by natural calamities such

as pestilence, earthquakes, droughts, cyclones etc. These are beyond our control. Sage Sushruta classifies the suffering or pain one has to suffer in this world into three categories and calls them தாபத்ரயம் -threefold suffering. They are (1) ஆத்⁴யாத்மிக = caused by the mind and body (pain, sorrow etc), (2) ஆதி⁴தை³விக =caused by fate or acts of God as said above and (3) ஆதி⁴பௌ⁴திக = caused by animals, elements etc. This is said in the last verse (No.23) of the hymn above as த்ரிவித⁴ம் மமாஸூப⁴ம் . The craving for security and freedom from fear and anxiety is instinctive in all living beings and is known as samsara. We all seek freedom from this samsara.

The question that haunts everyone all the time is why do we get these problems? Is there a way to avert them and thus the consequential misery? Our scriptures are very well aware of our concern. They have dealt with the topic in great detail in many places and attempt to help us. Here, we will cite some of the references. First question that arises in one's mind is why do we encounter problems or suffering? We see that some get into problems or sufferings often but not some others. In some cases the problems come in hordes and overpower the individual. As Shakespeare says (in Hamlet), "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions. So do happy events too happen sometimes in a file. So, it is said ஸத்யோ⁵யம் லோகவாத³ஃ, யத்ஸம்பத்ஸம்பத³ம் விபத்³விபத்³ம் அருப³த்நாதி இதி¹ (Kadambari). These are the questions that befuddle everyone of us and we continue to search for answers that seem to elude us. But the topic, as said earlier, has been discussed in our scriptures in extenso and we only have to take the trouble to study them to cull the information. The epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata contain stories that explain the subject in great detail. The heroes in these epics suffered immensely and like all human beings faced with dire circumstances bemoaned their

fate. Even mighty warriors like the Pandavas rued their fate when faced with adversity. Rama who was an incarnation of Lord Himself had to face severe adversity. He showed how to face difficult situations in life. His stories bear weighty lessons for us if only we care to study them carefully and not skim through them. It is said that Lord's incarnation as Rama was mainly to teach lessons to us and not merely for the destruction of demons.

மர்த்யாவதாரஸ்த்விஹ மர்த்ய-ஸிக்ஷணம் ரக்ஷோவதா⁴யைவ ந
கேவலம் விபோ⁴ | BH(5-19-50).

Let us now see what the scriptures say on this matter. Firstly, why do we get to suffer? The scriptures say that when one strays from the path of dharma or righteousness he sows the seeds of trouble. The Yagnavalkya Smriti says

விஹிதஸ்யாநநுஷ்டா²நாத் நிந்தி³தஸ்ய ச ஸேவநாத் |
அநிக்³ரஹாச்சேந்த்³ரியாணம் நர: பதநம்ரு³ச்ச²தி ||

That is, by not doing those duties prescribed by the vedas and doing those prohibited by them and also by succumbing to the wiles of the sense organs one falls. Krishna emphasises this in His advice to Arjuna. BG (16-24,25).

ய: ஸாஸ்த்ரவிதி⁴முத்ஸ்ரு³ஜ்ய வர்ததே காமகாரத: |
ந ஸ ஸித்³தி⁴மாப்நோதி ந ஸுக²ம் ந பராம் க³திம் ||

தஸ்மாச்சா²ஸ்த்ரம் ப்ரமாணம் தே கார்யாகார்யாவ்யவஸ்தி²தௌ |
ஜ்ஞாத்வா ஸாஸ்த்ரவிதா⁴நோக்தம் கர்ம கர்துமிஹார்ஹஸி ||

He says that if one rejects the prescription of the shAstra and lives a life according to his own sweet free will, he will not achieve happiness in this world nor in the other. So, keep shAstra as the guide as regards what should or should not be done and do your work. Dharma is the result of our acts and it paves the way for happiness in this life and the lives that follow. கர்மஜந்ய:

அப்யுத³ய நி:ஸ்ரேய-ஹேது: அபூர்வாக்²ய: ஆத்மகு³ண: த⁴ர்ம: | The
basis for dharma are the vedas. வேதோ³கி²லோ த⁴ர்மமூலம் | Now a

problem arises. That is, one cannot expect us to study the vedas in these days. So, what is the recourse for such people? To complicate matters further, it is said that vedas are vast and subject to different interpretations by scholars. In order to alleviate the problem, the kindly sages have written supplementary texts called smritis, puranas and itihisas like Ramayana and Mahabharata that explain the nuances of dharma. If we say that we cannot or do not have the time or inclination to study and understand even these texts the scripture asks us to study the conduct of great men who adhere to the path of dharma with great fervour and finally our own mental satisfaction. Manu says this as follows.

வேதோ³கி²லோ த⁴ர்ம மூலம் ஸ்ம்ரு³திஸீலே து தத்³விதா³ம் |
ஆசாரஸ்சைவ ஸாதா⁴நாம் ஆத்மநஸ்துஷ்டிரேவ ச ||

Why should vedas be accepted as the guide for one's conduct? What is so great about them- if it is asked. The answer is this. We have to remember that the vedas which prescribe dharma are not of human origin. They were given out by the Lord Himself at the time of creation for the good of the people. They are therefore known as அபௌருஷேய || Purusha Suktam says this as: ரூ³ச: ஸாமாநி ஜ்ஜ்ஞிரே | ச²நதா³:³ஸி ஜ்ஜ்ஞிரே தஸ்மாத் | யஜுஸ்தஸ்மாத³ஜாயத | The Lord withdraws everything (including the vedas) into Himself at the time of dissolution (pralayam) and releases them again at the time of creation. Thus they are eternal.

அவ்யக்தாத்³வ்யக்தய: ஸர்வா: ப்ரப⁴வந்த்யஹராக³மே |
ராதர்யாக³மே ப்ரஸீயந்தே தத்ரைவாவ்யக்த-ஸம்ஜ்ஞுகே || BG(8-18).

The sage Avirhotra said this to King Nimi while talking about Karmayoga. He said that what should be done, and what should not be done, and what is not done but enjoined to be done - these are matters that can be known not from the world but only from the Vedas, that have originated from Lord; even the learned people are perplexed as to the import of such injunctions. (BH-11-3-43).

கர்மாகர்ம-விகர்மேதி வேத³வாதோ³ ந லௌகிக: |

வேத³ஸ்ய சேஸ்வராத்மவாத்தத்ர முஹ்யந்தி ஸூரய: ||

This, then, is the third alternative. What happens if the sadhu himself gets a doubt about how he should act in a particular situation and he cannot find the proper guidance in the scriptures? In such a tight situation he goes by the dictate of his conscience. Here again, we should remember that the devotee who has enshrined the Lord in his heart cannot take a step in the wrong direction. The poet Kalidasa says this in his work Abhijnana Sakuntalam: . ஸதாம் ஹி ஸந்தே³ஹபதே³ஷு வஸ்துஷு ப்ரமாணமந்த:கரணப்ரவ்ருத்தய:| What happens, on the rarest of the rare occasion, if a sadhu himself takes a wrong step? The sage Karabhajana tells King Nimi that the Lord annuls such actions of His devotee! (BH-11-5-42).

ஸ்வபாத³மூலம் ப⁴ஜத: ப்ரியஸ்ய த்யக்தாந்யபா⁴வஸ்ய ஹரி: பரேஸ: |

விகர்ம யச்சோத்பதிதம் கத²ஞ்சித் து⁴நோதி ஸர்வம் ஹ்ரு³தி³ ஸந்நிவிஷ்ட: ||

What is said above will amply stress the need to adhere to the path of dharma. Sage Vyasa says this with great emphasis in his Mahabharata (Swargarohanaparva) :-

ந ஜாது காமாந்ந ப⁴யாந்ந லோபா⁴த்³ த⁴ர்மம் த்யஜே-ஜ்ஜீவிதஸ்யாபி ஹேதோ: |

த⁴ர்மோ நித்ய:, ஸுக²-து:³கே²த்வநித்யே ஜீவோ நித்யோ ஹேதுரஸ்ய-த்வநித்ய: ||

The body that has been got as a means to enjoy sorrow and happiness (ஹேதுரஸ்ய) is impermanent and one cannot take it with him after death. Only the puNyam or merit one earned by faithfully treading on the path of dharma and the sins or pApam earned by doing evil deeds due to lack of faith in dharma follow him. Keeping this fact in mind one should firmly adhere to the path of dharma and scrupulously refrain from indulging in acts that will invite sins. Shri Shankaracharya says this in his Prasnottararatnamalika as :- ஹேயமபி கிம்? அகார்யம்| Then, the next question is that why should a person do something wrong, sometimes knowing well that what he is doing is not right and will beget sin? This question

appears to have been there for long and perturbed the minds of people. Arjuna put this question to Krishna and sought an answer.

அத² கேந ப்ரயுக்தோ⁵யம் பாபம் சரதி பூருஷ: ।

அநிச்²ந்நபி வார்ஷ்ணேய ப³லாதி³வ நியிஜித: ॥ (BG-3-36)..

The Lord replies :

காம ஏஷ க்ரோத⁴ ஏஷ ரஜோக்³ண-ஸமுத்³ப⁴வ: ।

மஹாஸநோ மஹா-பாப்மா வித்³த்⁴யேநமிஹ வைரிணம் ॥ (BG-3-37).

He says that desire and anger impel one to indulge in wrongful acts. The starting point is the desire to get something. When the desire gets strong and does not get fulfilled due to some obstruction, the mind is frustrated and then agitated. This frustration and the craving derails him from the righteous path and makes him take to devious ways. He will be prompted to do acts that are immoral or illegal. This will land him in sin. Accumulated load of sins result in birth or births to expiate for these acts. From the vedantic point of view puNyam resulting from performing good deeds is akin to sin because one has to take birth(s) to enjoy the fruits of puNyam. One is like an iron chain and the other like a golden chain. Both bind. The result of great deal of puNyam will be birth in noble or affluent families or births in higher worlds. In contrast, the consequences of great deal of sin will be births in poor family, sickness or births in inferior worlds or even as animals or plants. Yama tells this to his disiple Nachiketas in Katha Upanishad as:

யோநிமந்யே ப்ரபத்³யந்தே ஸா¹ரத்வாய தே³ஹிந: ।

ஸ்தா²ணுமந்யே⁵நுஸம்யந்தி யதா²கர்ம யதா²ஸ்ருதம் ॥ (2-2-7).

Thus a human birth is the result of a mix of puNyam and pApam. Because of this, one's life will necessarily have smooth and rough patches. The stories in Ramayana and Mahabharatha bear ample testimony to this fact. So, what should one do? We cannot refrain from actions. We cannot remain inactive in our lives. Krishna shows

the way in detail. He asks us to take Him as a partner in our lives and do our duties faithfully and keep Him in our mind all the time . தஸ்மாத்ஸர்வேஷு காலேஷு மாமநுஸ்மர யுத்⁴ய ச | BG(8-7). and hand them over Him as offering. BG(9-27).

யத்கரோஷி யத³ஸ்நாஸி யஜ்ஜுஹோஷி த³தா³ஸி யத் |
யத்தபஸ்யஸி கௌந்தேய தத்குருஷ்வ மத³ர்பணம் ||

He says that whatever you do, eat, sacrifice, offer as gift, perform as austerity - dedicate all of them to Me. What will be the result of doing so? Krishna adds -

ஸுபா⁴ஸுப⁴ப²லரேவம் மோக்ஷயஸே கர்மபி³ந்த⁴நை: |

ஸந்யாஸயோக³யுக்தாத்மா விமுக்தோ மாமுபைஷ்யஸி || BG(9-28).

He says that by doing acts as

offering to Him the resultant puNyam or pApam will not adhere to us and we will be free of the bondage that they can create. This is repeatedly said in puranas like Srimad Bhagavatam. The sage Kavi tells this in answer to a question by King Nimi. (BH-11-2-36).

காயேந வாசா மநஸேந்த³ரியைர்வா பு³த்³யா⁴ஸ⁴தமநா வாநுஸ்ரு³தஸ்வபா⁴வாத் |
கரோதி யத் யத் ஸகலம் பரஸ்மை நாராயணயேதி ஸமர்பயேத்தத் ||

He advises that whatever one does with his body, speech, mind, senses, intellect, or will, or following his natural impulses, he should dedicate all to the Supreme, Lord Narayana. This shows that one should offer to Lord not only what one does as ordained by the shAstrAs but even those which he does according to his latent tendencies. Based on this advice, we have the practice of offering what we do as Sandhyavandanam or any other ritual to the Lord by saying:

காயேந வாசா மநஸேந்த³ரியைர்வா பு³த்³யா⁴ஸ⁴தமநா வா ப்ரக்ரு³தே: ஸ்வபா⁴வாத் |

கரோமி யத் யத் ஸகலம் பரஸ்மை நாராயணயேதி ஸமர்பயாமி ||

By doing so the karma we do becomes karmayoga. Earlier it was said that the the sufferings or pain one has to suffer in this world was classified into three categories by the sage Sushruta. He calls them

தாபத்ரயம் | -threefold suffering. They are

- (1) ஆத்⁴யாத்மிக = caused by the mind, body (pain, sorrow etc),
- (2) ஆதி⁴தை³விக =caused by fate or acts of God as said above and
- (3) ஆதி⁴பௌ⁴திக = caused by animals, elements etc. Sage Narada advises the sage Vyasa that dedicating all actions to the Lord is the certain cure for the three fold afflictions that inevitably bother us. He says:(BH-1-5-32).

ஏதத்ஸம்ஸூசிதம் ப்³ரஹ்மம்ஸ்தாபத்ரய-சிகித்ஸிதம் |
யத்³ஸ்வரே ப⁴க³வதி கர்ம ப்³ரஹ்மணி பா⁴விதம் ||

One may ask as to how actions which

invariably create bondage that leads to suffering can become certain cure for them. Sage Narada provides the answer in the very next two verses. He says that some chemical substance that may cause a disease cannot normally become a cure for that particular ailment. But if it is processed medically it will serve as a cure for the same ailment. (BH-1-5-33, 34).

ஆமயோ யஸ்ச பூ⁴தாநாம் ஜாயதே யேந ஸுவ்ரத |
ததே³வ ஹ்யாமயம் த்³ரவ்யம் ந புநாதி சிகித்ஸிதம் || 33 ||

ஏவம் ந்ரு³ணாம் க்ரியாயோகா:³ ஸர்வே ஸம்ஸ்ரு³தி-ஹேதவ: |
த ஏவாத்ம-விநாஸாய கல்பந்தே கல்பிதா: பரே || 34 ||

In this manner, by involving God in our activities, we become insulated from the deleterious effects of karmas. To sum up: we should first take efforts to learn the injunctions of the scriptures, then diligently do the works enjoined therein. And, most importantly offer the same as worship to the Lord. Shri Sankaracharya gives this important advice in the very first verse of his Sopana Panchakam.

வேதோ³ நித்யமதீ⁴யதாம், தது³தி³தம் கர்ம ஸ்வநுஷ்ட²யதாம்,
தேநேஸஸ்ய விதீ⁴யதாம் அபசிதை:|

In this manner, we are made to think of Him frequently. This process plants the seed of bhakti or devotion in our mind imperceptibly. When devotion takes root our mind will slowly veer away from secular

activities and to the religious side. Our mind will like to read and listen to sacred texts like Ramayana and Gita. All this nurtures thought of God in our mind and flushes away the sins from the mind and along with that the afflictions they can create in our lives. Thus, of Srimad Bhagavatam it is said to be ஸிவத³ம் தாபத்ரயோந்மூலநம் | (BH-1-1-2). It is the bestower of supreme bliss and uproots the threefold agony. Sage Chyavana says that repetition of Lord's name will destroy the three fold agony.

ஸ்ருதி-ஸம்ரு³தி புராணேஷு ராமநாம ஸமீரிதம் |

தந்நாம கீர்தநம் பூ⁴ய: தாபத்ரய விநாஸநம் ||

The lists of 108 and 1008 names of various Gods contain names that refer to this aspect . Some examples are given here.

பாபநாஸந: | கீர்தித: பூஜிதோ த்⁴யாத: ஸம்ரு³த:

பாபராஸிம் நாஸயந் பாபநாஸந: | (VS-992).

ஹரி: | ஹரதி பாபாநிதி ஹரி: SA (96) and (VS-360).

பாபநாஸகர: | லௌகிக-வைதி³க-நாமபி:⁴ கீர்தித:,

ததா² லௌகிக-வைதி³கை: ஸ்தோத்ரைஸ்துதஸ்ததா² பஞ்சாக்ஷராதி³பி⁴ர்ஜப்த:,

பூஜிதஸ்ச, உமாஸஹாயத்வாதி³-ரூபேண

ஸம்ரு³தோ, த்⁴யானேந வா பாபநாஸகர: | (SS -355).

தாபத்ரயாக்³நி-ஸந்தப்த-ஸமாஹ்லாத³ந-சந்த³ரிகா |

- ஆத்⁴யாத்மிகாதி⁴பௌ⁴திகாதி⁴தை³விகாக்²யாநாம் தபாநாம் த்ரயம் யஸ்ய,

தேநாக்³நிநா ஸம்ஸார-லக்ஷணேந ஸம்யக்தப்தாநாம் ஜநாநாம்

ஸம்யகா³ஹ்லாத³நேநாபஹரண-பூர்வகாநந்த³ந-விஷயே சந்த³ரிகேவ || (LS-352).

Lalita Devi is like the cool rays of the moon that offers solace to those who are fried in the fire of threefold sufferings. Keeping this fact in mind, the great acharya Shri Vedanta Desika prays to Laxmi Devi to comfort him as he is scorched by the searing summer heat of threefold suffering. (Shri Stuti-21).

க⁴ர்ம தாபத்ரய விரசிதே கா³ட⁴ தப்தம் க்ஷணம் மாம்

ஆகிஞ்சநய க்³லபிதமநகை⁴ரார்த்³ரயேதா:² கடாகைக:⁴ |

We should note one important point here. The verses in the hymn

above contain names of Lord Vishnu. But these names are also names of other forms of Lord like Shiva. This is because it is the one Supreme Being that appears as Shiva, Vishnu and so on. We should notice that the hymn ends with the name கேஸவ: | .

Shri Shankaracharya defines the word as meaning the Supreme Being in his commentary on Vishnusahasranama as follows.

கேஸவ: - கஸ்ச அஸ்ச ஈஸஸ்ச த்ரிமூர்தய: கேஸா:,

தே யத்³வஸேந வர்தந்தே ஸ கேஸவ: | (VS 23).

ka (क) represents Brahma the creator,

a as in at (अ) represents Vishnu and Isha (ईशः)

stands for Shiva. These three are under the control of the Supreme Being. This explanation is given by sage Vyasa in Harivamsam. Thus whatever be the form one worships it goes to the Supreme Being only. Krishna says this in Gita. BG 7-21.

யோ யோ யாம் யாம் தநும் ப⁴க்த: ஸ்ரத்³த⁴யா⁵ஈ³சிதுமிச்ச²தி |

தஸ்ய தஸ்யாசலாம் ஸ்ரத்³த⁴மீ தாமேவ வித்³த⁴மயஹம் ||

And He adds that the worshipper gets the objects of his desires from Him only through that form of divinity. (BG-7-22).

ஸ தயா ஸ்ரத்³த⁴யா யுக்தஸ்தஸ்யாராத⁴நமீஹதே |

ஸப⁴தே ச தத: காமாந் மயைவ விஹிதாந் ஹிதாந் ||

The message, therefore is that by remembering the Lord, in any of His forms (keeping in mind that the form is His only), and associating Him in all our activities (this is bhakti only) we can, without much difficulty, transcend the effects of action and be free from the threefold sufferings described earlier. Shri Bhishma states this in answer to the question of Yudhishtira in the introduction to Vishnusahasranama. The question of the latter is how can one get free from all sorrows in life. Shri Bhishma says:

லோகாத்⁴யக்ஷம் ஸ்துவந்நித்யம் ஸர்வது: ³கா²திகோ³ ப⁴வேத் | (VS-6).

Shri Sankarachrya defines

ஸர்வது: ³கா²திகோ³ ப⁴வேத் | as ஸர்வாணி ஆத்⁴யாத்மிகாத்³நி
து: ³கா²ந்யத்யதிக³ச்ச²தீதி ஸர்வது: ³கா²திகோ³ ப⁴வேத் ஸ்யாத்

He explains that by the word all sorrows is meant the sorrows caused by the threefold agonies.

We have to note one subtle point while concluding. At the beginning it was said பஞ்ஜரம் means a cage. A bird or animal inside a cage is protected and so is secure from enemies. In these verses, the devotee prays to Lord Vishnu to form a protective cage and protect him in all directions from external enemies. When it is said to form it seems as though that right now Lord Vishnu has not formed a cage around us. Strictly speaking this is not correct. The name Vishnu means omnipresent, all pervading - one not limited by space, time etc.

விஷ்ணு: - வேவேஷ்டி வ்யாப்நோதீதி விஷ்ணு: VS (2), SS (776). So, there is no question of HIS forming a cage around us as He is ever around us. Nor can one gain entry into Him as a cage since we are already in Him. It is like a bird that is not aware of the fact that it is supported by the vast invisible air. One has only to become aware of this fact. It is like a person safely ensconced in his bed and sleeping has a scary dream in which he is chased by a tiger. He is terribly frightened and suffers immensely - all in his dream. In extreme fright, he wakes up with a start and is greatly relieved to realise it has all been only a bad dream and he is safe in his house. In the same manner, we are now not aware of the fact that we are ever in Him safely. But we imagine, just like the dreamer imagining he is being chased by a tiger, we are chased by problems and consequently suffering. We are now covered by spiritual ignorance called avidyA and limited by the power and range of our senses. Because of this we are not able to perceive the divine envelope around us and protecting us. We now feel that the waking state is real and the dream state is not. But our upanishads question this assumption and point out that just like the dream state vanishes in the waking state so does the waking state vanish while we are in the dream state. And both these states do not exist

in the deep sleep state and vice versa. So, all the three states we experience daily are truly transient and unreal as each one of these states does not exist in the other two. In all these three states we are blinded by spiritual ignorance called avidyA and so not able to see the Lord who is ever around us. Krishna said this: மயா ததமித³ம் ஸர்வம் ஜக³த³வ்யக்த-மூர்திநா | (BG-9-4). that the entire universe is pervaded by Him in His unmanifest form that is beyond the range of senses of perception. When we wake up from the spiritual slumber and go beyond these three ephemeral states and transcend this barrier of avidyA, we realise our oneness with the Lord. The upanishad asks us to wake up to this fact. உத்திஷ்ட²த ஜாக³ரத (Katha Upanishad - 1-3-14). and urge us not to rest till this supreme goal is achieved. The way to reach the goal is to be learnt from the wise people who have reached the goal already. ப்ராப்ய வராந்நிபோ³த³த | It is reached by one who has developed a discriminating intellect and has gained control of his mind. The goal is the highest one can reach and it is the very nature of the Supreme Being called Vishnu. (Katha Upanishad - 1-3-9).

விஜ்ஞாந-ஸாரதி²ர்யஸ்து மந: ப்ரக³ரஹவாந்நர: |

ஸோSத³வந: பாரமாப்நோதி தத³விஷ்ணோ: பரமம் பத³ம் ||

The Taittiriya Upanishad says (2-7)

that only when one gets established in this Supreme Being (Vishnu) he gets free from all fear. The moment he sees even a wee bot of difference between himself and the Supreme Being he gets engulfed with fear - however much he may be learned in scriptures.

யதா³ ஹ்யைவேஷ ஏதஸ்மிந்நத³ரு³யேSநாத்மயேSநிலயநே-

Sப³யம் ப்ரதிஷ்டா²ம் விந்³தே | அத² ஸோSப³யம் க³தோ

ப³வதி | யதா³ ஹ்யைவேஷ ஏதஸ்மிந்நத³ர-மந்தரம் குருதே |

அத² தஸ்ய ப³யம் ப³வதி | தத³வேவ ப³யம் விது³ஷோSமந்வாநஸ்ய |

So, it becomes very necessary for one to reach this supreme goal if we want to be totally free from fears and anxieties. One has to remember the important fact that this supreme goal can be attained

only by we humans and not by birds, animals or plants; because they are inferior births meant to work out the heavy load of sins. They cannot do good deeds like do charity, go on pilgrimage to holy places or study scriptures like Gita and earn puNyam. This was mentioned earlier in this article as: the consequences of great deal of sin will be births in poor family, sickness or births in inferior worlds or even as animals or plants. Yama tells this to his disiple Nachiketetas in Katha Upanishad as:

யோநிமந்யே ப்ரபத்³யந்தே ஸரீரத்வாய தே³ஹிந: ।

ஸ்தா²ணுமந்யே⁵ருஸம்யந்தி யதா²கர்ம் யதா²ஸ்ருதம் ॥ (2-2-7).

Thus a human birth is a rare gift from God

obtained by virtue of some good deeds performed by us in earlier births. If we miss out this chance we do not know when we will get a human birth again. Our kindly acharyas implore us to be keenly aware of this fact and urge us to make use of the precious human birth we have got now. So, what should one do now to reach the goal. Krishna says that if one worships Him devotedly He will grant him the wisdom that will show the way to the goal. BG (10-10).

தேஷாம் ஸததயுக்தாநாம் ப⁴ஜதாம் ப்ரீதிபூர்வகம் ।

த³தா³மி பு³த்³தி⁴யோக³ம் தம் யேந மாமுபயாந்தி தே ॥

Krishna mentions two essential qualifications for the devotee here. Firstly he should be uninterruptedly united with Him. That is, the devotion should be constant and not sporadic. Secondly, the devotion should be selfless. The devotee should not serve Him in order to gain some object or material benefit in return for his devotion. This will debase the devotion. For such a devotee, Krishna promises to show the way to freedom. It implies that He will not personally come and guide the devotee. It means that when He, as the Inner Self, finds that the devotee is sincerely yearning for deliverance, He will send a suitable guru to lead the person on the spiritual path. In fact, the scriptures say that He Himself out of immense compassion takes

the form of the guru and appears before the devotee and transmits the wisdom concerning the ultimate truth. This enables the devotee to cross over the ocean of sorrowful samsara.

ஐந்மாநேகஸதை: ஸதா³த³ரயுஜா ப⁴க்த்யா ஸமாராதி⁴தோ
ப⁴க்தைர்வைதி³கலக்ஷணேந விதி⁴நா ஸந்துஷ்ட ஈஸ: ஸ்வயம் |
ஸாக்ஷாத் ஸ்ரீகு³ருருபமேத்ய க்ரு³பயா த்³ரு³க்³கோ³சர: ஸந் ப்ரபு:⁴
தத்த்வம் ஸாது⁴ விபோ³த்⁴ய தாரயதி தாந் ஸம்ஸாரது:³கா²ர்ணவாத் ||

So, let us keep to the path of dharma and pray to Him to grant us unwavering devotion to His feet that will eventually deliver us from sorrows. For, it is said that constant remembering of the Lord puts an end to all evils and increases tranquility of mind. It enhances the purity of the mind. It stimulates devotion to the supreme Being and promotes spiritual enlightenment etc .. BH-(12-12-53)

அவிஸ்மரு³தி: க்ரு³ஷ்ணபதா³ரவிந்த³யோ: க்ஷிணோத்யப்⁴த்³ராணி ஸமம் தநோதி ச
|
ஸத்த்வஸ்ய ஸூத்³தி⁴ம் பர்மாத்மப⁴க்திம் ஜ்ஞாநம் ச விஜ்ஞாநவிராக³யுக்தம் ||
|| ஓ தத்ஸத் ||

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Shri Vishnupanjaram Agnipuranantargatam
pdf was typeset on December 5, 2021
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