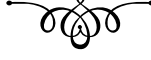


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prAtaHsmaraNam

ప్రాతఃస్మరణమ్

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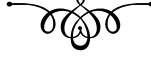
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ప్రాతఃస్మరణమ్



The Pratasmaranam consists of some verses that are to be recited in the morning soon after waking up from the bed. ప్రాతః = at dawn, and స్మరణమ్ = remembering. They may be recited sitting in the bed itself before getting out of it. They are an aid to remembering many venerable people and auspicious things in the creation, and through them the Lord. There are many versions of this poem containing less number of verses or more. One well known version is that of Sri Sankaracharya and this consists of just four verses. These verses are highly significant as they contain thoughts about the godhead residing within us. These four can be easily memorised and are a pleasure to recite if one knows the meaning. The text of the verses is given below to help those who are interested in reciting them. Then each verse is given with its meaning. They are also followed by some comments.

॥ ప్రాతఃస్మరణమ్ ॥

కరాగ్రే వసతే లక్ష్మీః కరమధ్యే సరస్వతీ ।

కరమాలే తు గౌరీ చ ప్రభాతే కరదర్శనమ్ ॥ ౧ ॥

సముద్రవసనే దేవీ పర్వతస్తనమణ్డలే ।

విష్ణుపత్ని నమస్తుభ్యం పాదస్పర్శం క్షమస్య మే ॥ ౨ ॥

నమోఽస్తు ప్రియదత్తాయై తుభ్యం దేవి వసున్ధరే ।

త్వం మాతా సర్వలోకానాం పాదన్యాసం క్షమస్య మే ॥ ౩ ॥

బ్రహ్మీ మురారిస్త్రిపురాన్తకారీ భానుః శశీ భూమిసుతో బుధశ్చ ।

గురుశ్చ శుక్రః శని-రాహు-కేతవః కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ ॥ ౪ ॥

ససత్కుమారః సనకః సనన్దనః సనాతనో-ఽప్యాసురి-పిఙ్గలౌ చ ।

సప్తస్వరాః సప్త రసాతలాని కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ ॥ ౫ ॥

సప్తార్ణవాః సప్త-కులాచలాశ్చ సప్తర్షయో ద్వీప-వనాని సప్త |  
 భూరాదికృత్వా భువనాని సప్త కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ || ౬ ||  
 పృథ్వీ సగన్ధా సరసాస్తథాపః స్పర్శీ చ వాయుర్జ్వలనం చ తేజః |  
 సభః సశబ్దం మహతా సహైవ కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ || ౭ ||  
 మహేన్ద్రో మలయః సహో దేవతాత్మా హిమాలయః |  
 ధ్యేయో రైవతకో విన్ద్యో గిరిశ్చారావలి-స్తథా || ౮ ||  
 గంగా సిన్ధుశ్చ కావేరీ యమునా చ సరస్వతీ |  
 రేవా మహానదీ గోదా బ్రహ్మపుత్రా పునాతు మమ్ || ౯ ||  
 అయోధ్యా మథురా మాయా కాశీ కాఞ్చీ అవన్తికా |  
 పురీ ద్వారావతీ చైవ సప్తైతా మోక్షదాయికాః || ౧౦ ||  
 ప్రయాగా పాటలీపుత్రం విజయానగరం పురీమ్ |  
 ఇన్ద్రప్రస్థం గయాం చైవ ప్రత్యూషే ప్రత్యహం స్మరేత్ || ౧౧ ||  
 అరున్ధత్యనుసూయా చ సావిత్రి జానకీ సతీ |  
 తేజస్వినీష చ పాఞ్చాలీ వన్దనీయా నిరన్తరమ్ || ౧౨ ||  
 వైన్యం పృథుం హైహయమర్జునం చ  
 శాకున్తలేయం భరతం నలం చ |  
 రామం చ యో వై స్మరతి ప్రభాతే  
 తస్యార్థలభో విజయశ్చ హస్తే || ౧౩ ||  
 దధ్యజ్ మనుర్భుగురసౌ హరిపూర్వచన్ద్రో  
 భీష్మార్జున-ద్రువ-వశిష్ట-శుకాదయశ్చ |  
 ప్రహ్లాద-నారద-భగీరథ-విశ్వకర్మ-  
 వాల్మీకయోత్ర చిరచిన్త్యశుభాభిధానాః || ౧౪ ||  
 అశ్వత్థామా బలిర్యావస్యో హనూమాంశ్చ విభీషణః |  
 కృపః పరశురామశ్చ సప్తైతే చిరజీవినః || ౧౫ ||  
 సప్తైతాన్ సంస్మరేన్నిత్యం మార్కణ్డేయమథాష్టమమ్ |  
 జీవేత్ వర్షశతం సాగ్రమపమృత్యువివర్జితః || ౧౬ ||  
 పుణ్యశ్లోకో నలో రాజా పుణ్యశ్లోకో యుధిష్ఠిరః |  
 పుణ్యశ్లోకో విదేహశ్చ పుణ్యశ్లోకో జనార్దనః || ౧౭ ||

॥ ఫలశ్రుతిః ॥

ఇత్యం ప్రభాతే పరమం పవిత్రం

పఠేత్ స్మరేద్వా శృణుయాచ్చ తద్వత్ ।

దుఃస్వప్ననాశస్త్రీహ సుప్రభాతం

భవేచ్చ నిత్యం భగవత్ప్రసాదాత్ ॥ ౧౮ ॥

INTRODUCTION:- The following abbreviations are used in the notes.

- 1- VS - Sri Vishnu Sahasranama with Sri Sankaracharya's commentary.
- 2 - SS - Sri Siva Sahasranama (from Padma Purana) known as Vedasara Sahasram with the commentary of HH Sri Paramasivendra Saraswathi.
- 3 - LS - Sri Lalita Sahasranamam with the commentary of Sri Bhaskararaya.
- 4 - BG - Srimad Bhagavadgita with Sri Sankaracharya's commentary.
- 5 - BH - Srimad Bhagavatam.
- 6 - MU - Mundakopanishad

The Pratasmaranam is a stotram స్తోత్రమ్ or hymn. A stotram is defined as గుణ సజ్కీర్తనమ్ । (VS) or stating the attributes. The Pratasmaranam may be taken as extolling the glory విభూతిః of the Lord. The glory that is extolled is His omnipresence: that He is every where and as every thing. The Upanishad says this clearly: that whatever is seen or heard of in this universe is permeated by the Lord, in and out.

యచ్చ కించిత్తగత్యస్మిన్ దృశ్యతే శ్రూయతేఽపి వా ।

అన్తర్బహిశ్చ తత్ సర్వం వ్యాప్య నారాయణః స్థితః ॥ (Taittiriyananyaka, 10-II-4-6)

More on this subject is discussed later on in this article. THE MORNING

TIME:- The morning time, just before the sun rise and the evening time just before the sunset are recommended for prayer because the mind is calm and fresh at these times. So, they are ideal for prayer and meditation. The practice of meditating and praying at these times have been in vogue since time immemorial. The vedas say that one should meditate on the Sun as the Supreme Being at both these times . Doing so, one will be blessed with all good things in life and attain liberation..

ఉద్యంతమస్తం యన్తమాదిత్యమభిధ్యాయన్, కుర్వన్,

బ్రాహ్మణో విద్యాన్సకలం భద్రమశ్నుతే

అసావాదిత్యో బ్రహ్మేతి, బ్రహ్మైవ సన్-బ్రహ్మేష్టి, య ఏవం వేద ।

Our scriptures also say that one should use this time only for meditating on the Lord and add that one who does not, but sleeps at this time, that sleep eats into his stock of punya (result of doing good deeds).

బ్రాహ్మే ముహూర్తే యా నిద్రా సా పుణ్యక్షయకారిణీ । In addition to losing punya the person incurs sin. This is said by Bharata in Ramayana. He states that he who had any part in making Rama abdicate the kingdom and go to the forests should incur the sin of a person who sleeps at either of the junctions (of the day and night). Valmiki Ramayana (2-75-44).

ఉభే సన్ధ్యే శయానస్య యత్ పాపం పరికల్పతే । తచ్చ

పాపం భవేత్ తస్య యస్యార్యోఽనుమతో గతః ॥

Later on, when Bharata met Rama at Chitrakoot, Rama enquired about the welfare of his father and others. He then gave instructions in judicature. One of the questions he put to Bharata was I hope you do not fall a prey to excess of sleep and wake up early in the morning. కచ్చిన్నిద్రావశం నైషి కచ్చిత్ కాలేఽవబుధ్యసే । (2-100-17).

The junction of the day and night, (i.e) the time of sun rise and the sun set (the twilight hour) is known as సన్ధ్యా (sandhya). There are two sandhyas ; the morning one and the evening one. They are known as the ప్రాతః సన్ధ్యా and the సాయం సన్ధ్యా. We have to dedicate the sandhya time for prayers only and not for any other activity like eating and, much less for sleeping.

బ్రాహ్మే ముహూర్తే ఉత్థాయ చిన్తయేదాత్మనో హితమ్ ।

గురుం విష్ణుం నమస్కృత్య మాతరం పితరం తథా ।

One should wake up before sunrise and think of his own welfare. He should salute his guru, Lord Vishnu, mother and father. We may recall that Rama and Lakshmana accompanied the sage Viswamitra to the forests and rested for the night on the bank of the Sarayu river. Just when the day was about to break, the sage woke them up saying that the twilight సన్ధ్యా has set in and it is time for prayer.

కౌసల్యా సుప్రజా రామ పూర్వా సంధ్యా ప్రవర్తతే ।

ఉత్తిష్ట నరశార్దూల కర్తవ్యం దైవమాన్వికమ్ ॥

This verse is from Ramayana (1-23-2) and is very popular. It is recited as part of the Suprabhatam. We learn that Sri Krishna too used to get up very early in the morning and meditate on the Supreme Being. Then, He had bath and performed sandhya vandanam. He silently chanted the Gayatri mantra. BH(10-70-4,6).

బ్రాహ్మే ముహూర్త ఉత్థాయ వార్యుపస్పృశ్య మాధవః ।

దధౌస్య ప్రసన్న కరణ ఆత్మానం తమసః పరమ్ ॥

అథాష్టతోఽమృత్యుమలే యథావిధి క్రియాకలాపం పరిధాయ వాససీ ।

చకార సంధ్యోపగమాది సత్తమో హుతానలో బ్రహ్మ జజాప వాగ్యతః ॥

These facts establish the importance of praying at the sandhya times. Why should we recite such verses as the first thing in the morning instead of going about our routine morning ablution? If we study our life we will find that it was not all smooth, but it had some stretches of happiness and also of sorrow. What is happiness and gives us joy and what is sorrow and causes pain and grief depends on time, place and circumstances. Thus there is no uniform definition of joy and sorrow. But our aim is to avoid sorrow in any form as much as possible and have happiness and happiness only. The question is whether such a condition is possible? It seems to be a dream like situation. Though the condition appears to be fanciful and impractical to achieve, our scriptures assert that such a life which is full of pure, unalloyed joy is achievable. The way to achieve to attain such a life is through devotion or bhakti. Sorrow is the result of the doing (prohibited) sinful actions and failing to do prescribed duties we have committed in this and earlier human births. Sage Yagnavalkya says this:

విహితస్యాననుష్ఠానాత్ నిన్దితస్య చ సేవనాత్ ।

అనిగ్రహోచ్ఛేన్ద్రియాణాం నరః పతనమృచ్ఛతి ॥

The big bundle of sins we

have accumulated in so many births is to be expended by experiences in

the form of sorrow and pain by us. Sorrow afflicts the mind and pain affects the body. Since the stock of sins is huge, this one birth may not suffice to work it out. So one has to go through painful experiences in this birth and in addition, one may have to be born again and again many times to clear off the debt. The way out of this dreadful situation is to resort to bhakti. In the introduction to Shri Vishnusahasranamam the king Yudhishtira asks Bhishma the easiest way for one to get rid of sorrows and attain happiness. Bhishma replies that the way is to chant the glories of the Lord.

అనాదినిధనం విష్ణుం సర్వలోకమహేశ్వరమ్ ।

లోకాధ్యక్షం స్తువన్నిత్యం సర్వదుఃఖాదిగో భవేత్ ।

So, the Lord has the names పుణ్యః - స్మృతిమాత్రేణ

కల్మషాణి క్షపయతీతి పుణ్యః । VS(687). He removes the sins of those

who just think of Him. and హరిః - స్మృతిమాత్రేణ పుంసాం పాపం

సంసారం వా హరతీతి హరిః । VS(359) and SS(542). పాపనాశకరః -

లౌకికవైదికనామభిః కీర్తితః, తథా లౌకికవైదికైః స్తోత్రైః స్తుతః.

తథా పంచాక్షరాదిభిర్ఘ్టైః పూజితశ్చ ఉమాసహాయత్వాదిరూపేణ స్మృతో

ధ్యానేన వా పాపనాశకరః । SS(355). He destroys the sins of those

who repeat His holy names or chant hymns or chant mantras such as the panchakShara.

As children, we were taught to worship God in pictures and idols in the home and in temples. This is necessary to get the mind fixed on the Lord. This form of worship is relevant to the beginners and also all through the life and is very important. One cannot view this as mere idol worship. In addition, we also listened to stories from puranas. We were told that God created the world. He first created Brahma who then created the world. He resides in places like Vaikunta and Kailas; but will come to rescue His devotees as He did in the case of Prahlada and Gajendra. Listening to such stories made us know more about God and His qualities. In this way listening draws our minds to Him and sows the seeds of bhakti or devotion. It is said that bhakti wells up

in the heart of one who listens to the exposition of sacred texts like Bhagavatam. Such devotion dispels grief and fear. BH(1-7-7)

యస్యాం వై శ్రూయమాణాయాం కృష్ణే పరమపూరుషే ।  
భక్తిరుత్పద్యతే పుంసాం శోకమోహభయాపహా ॥

Please note the usage of

the word భక్తిరుత్పద్యతే meaning that devotion springs up in the hearts of people. This implies that devotion sprouts up in the hearts even where the seeds are absent earlier. Such is the glory of listening to the holy texts. Because of this fact chanting and listening to the glories of the Lord is highly recommended. The many hymns available to us are of great help to us in this matter. They elaborately describe the glorious attributes of the Lord. Since one has his own duties to perform throughout the day our tradition has introduced the practice of prayers at different times of the day, like the Pratasmaranam right from the time one wakes up in the morning till one retires to bed. This helps us to keep remembering the Lord. Our minds will not stray away from Him and so will remain pure and calm. Just as we take food at regular intervals to remain healthy and ward off pangs of hunger, similarly by indulging in small doses of bhakti at regular intervals in between our activities we can mitigate the adverse effects of past karma. This will cushion our journey through life. GOD'S NATURE:- If we want to think more of God we would like to know more of His form and nature. The question, then, is what is His form and nature? Is His nature the ones stated above, namely those available in the idols and pictures and available in Vaikunta and Kailasa? The answer to this is discussed in detail in chapters 7 to 11 of Bhagavat Gita. God has two aspects. In His higher nature He is without form or any other attributes. He is therefore known as నిర్గుణః । VS(840).

ISHVARA:- In His other aspect He is known as Ishvara and is accompanied by His power of maya. As Ishvara He is the cause of the universe. This is the topic of discussion in this article. The universe which is the effect



or product is born or made of Him - the cause. It is like saying the ornaments are made of gold - the cause. One may say that that to make the ornaments out of gold we require two causes - a goldsmith to fashion the ornaments. Thus we have the gold - the material cause and the goldsmith - the intelligent cause (the one who provides the expertise necessary to make the ornament using the gold). But in the case of the universe God is both the material and the efficient cause. He is known as కారణమ్ - ఉపాదానం నిమిత్తం చ కారణమ్ | VS(379). He does not need the help of any external agency in this process. We have the example of the humble spider which is able to spin the thread from its mouth and withdraw it back into itself without any external help. యథోర్ణనాభిః సృజతే గృణ్ణతే చ | . MU (1-1-7) We may ask one question here. When we say that an ornament, say bangle, is made of gold - the cause, what is bangle? Is it something different from the gold? The answer is No. We can say that gold is bangle. This is because of the fact that what we call bangle is only the name given to a particular form of gold. If we take the gold away from the bangle by melting it, we will be left with gold and no bangle. Such a thing that seems to exist, but does not indeed exist separately is called మిథ్యా or unreal. We have the familiar example of the mirage. In these mithya cases we should note that gold only is seen as bangle and sand as water. Vedanta texts give the example of one seeing a snake in a rope and getting frightened at the snake. Thus the mithya objects can produce effects: but they do not exist. Things like the rope or gold that support the appearance of mithya objects like the snake and ornaments are known as అధిష్ఠానమ్ | or substratum. For this reason, God, who is the substratum of the mithya universe has the name అధిష్ఠానమ్ - అధితిష్ఠన్తి భూతాని ఉపాధానకారణత్వేన బ్రహ్మేతి అధిష్ఠానమ్, మత్స్యాని సర్వభూతాని (గీతా ౯-౪) ఇతి భగవత్వచనాత్ | VS(324). This is said more explicitly by the name మిథ్యాజగదధిష్ఠానా - మిథ్యారూపస్య జగతోఽధిష్ఠానం

భానాధికరణం రజతస్యేవ శుక్తిః । LS(734).

She (Lalitha) is the support of the unreal world, like the shell of silver. A shell shines like silver in the sun light and one may indeed mistake it for silver. Thus the real shell supports the appearance of the unreal silver. We said that God is the cause of the universe. This means that God is only seen as the universe, just as gold is seen as bangle. Thus the Lord has the name:- విశ్వమ్ -

కార్యరూప జగతః కారణత్వేన విశ్వం ఇత్యుచ్యతే బ్రహ్మ ।

He being the cause is seen as the product universe. VS(1).

The ornaments are many and different, but the gold is one and the same.

Gold permeates the ornaments and gives them substance. So also, the whole world made up of numerous objects is permeated by the Lord. He gives them substance Every object is in Him but He is not in them. This is because the objects are only mithya and have no existance apart from the cause - the Lord Krishna says this clearly. BG(9-4).

మయా తతమిదం సర్వం జగ-దవ్యక్త-మూర్తినా ।

మత్థాని సర్వభూతాని న చాహం తేష్వవస్థితః ॥

The fact that the universe is the form of God implies that all objects or products with names and forms, from Brahma the creator to an insignificant insect, are all His forms only. This is expressed in His name విశ్వరూపీ - విశ్వాని సర్వాణి చేతనాచేతనాత్మకాని రూపాణి అస్య సస్త్రితి విశ్వరూపీ He has the forms of all the animate and inanimate objects in the universe. SS(75). Arjuna, with the grace of Krishna, sees this form. The description of this form and Arjuna's reaction to this is described in BG-Ch11. But as is the case with the rope snake, the objects in the world make us believe they are real. We see the cause and the product as separate things. We are beguiled by the forms of the ornaments to such an extent that we overlook the content - gold. In like fashion, we are so thoroughly lost in the world of names and forms that we miss the Lord who is really the substance behind them. This makes us see multiplicity. We see individuals as separate entities and as different

from us. From this arises a variety of emotions such as, likes, dislikes, jealousy, hatred etc. These feelings affect us. We express love for some, dislike for some and so on. We love some items - like wealth, very much because we feel they have some special qualities in them and work very hard to get them. We love our family more than other's family. These actions lead to conflict and strife. The result is sorrow.

**BENEFITS OF THE NEW UNDERSTANDING:** But when we are understand that what all we see is His forms only our outlook changes totally. We do not notice differences among them, but see only the substance God. We cannot hate any thing because every thing is divine. We can have only love for all beings. Further, love takes a special meaning and is replaced by devotion. This idea is impressed in our minds even as we are young by teaching us to respect our mother, father, acharya and the elders who may visit our house as God. The Taittiriopanishad (1-11) instructs us in this matter. మాతృ దేవో భవ | పితృ దేవో భవ | ఆచార్య దేవో భవ | అతిథి దేవో భవ | We wer asked to worship our text books as Sarasvathi, the Goddess of learning. Every thing in the creation, be it animate or inanimate becomes an object of worship, since it is His form only. Thus we have the custom of worshipping trees, rivers, cows, etc., since we see divinity in them.

The great devotee Prahlada had this vision. He said that because the Lord is every where and in the form of every thing it becomes very easy to worship Him. BH(7-6-27).

న హ్యమ్యతం ప్రీణయతో బహ్వయాసోఽసురాత్మజాః |  
ఆత్మత్వాత్ సర్వభూతానాం సిద్ధత్వా-దిహ సర్వతః ||

The seers of ancient India had this wonderful vision. The famous vedic hymn Sri Rudram salutes the Supreme Being as Lord Rudra not by names as in a Sahasranama but as being resident in various objects and beings. It salutes Rudra as being dogs, the lowly outcastes, the cheat, the robber, the trees, the sand dunes and so on. Thus there can be nothing bad in the creation but the Lord only and so they all deserve

our respect. Saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa had such a vision. When some prostitutes were introduced into the room to test his character, he rose and prostrated to them as he saw them as the images of Devi only.

Since everything is divine, we cannot destroy or pollute the environment because it will amount to showing disrespect to the Lord. Naturally, this is a very high stage in spiritual progress. Rarely one will find people who have got such a vision. However we have to understand this fact clearly, take it seriously and try to develop such a vision. But if we fail to do so and confine our worship of God to images and pictures in our houses and temples, we will stagnate. Lord, in His incarnation as Kapila, says this. BH(3-30-21 to 27).

Some select verses are given below.

అహం సర్వేషు భూతేషు భూతాత్మావస్థితః సదా ।  
 తమవజ్ఞాయ మాం మర్త్యః కురుతేఽర్చావిడంబునమ్ ॥ ౨౧ ॥  
 యో మాం సర్వేషు భూతేషు సన్తమాత్మానమీశ్వరమ్ ।  
 హిత్వార్చాం భజతే మాఢ్యాద్భస్మన్యేవ జహోతి సః ॥ ౨౨ ॥

The Lord says that He resides in all beings as their inner soul. Disregarding this fact, people make a show of worshipping Me through images. If one disregards My presence in all, but ignorantly offers worship only to images, such worship is wasteful as the sacrificial offerings poured into ashes. The worship of God in pictures and images is important. It should continue as this is the stepping stone to higher forms of worship. But we should not forget the fact that God is present not only in images but also as all things.

When we understanding the fact that God is in every thing and every where, we find that we can never be alone at any time, but are always surrounded by Him. Krishna makes this very clear. BG(6-30).

యో మాం పశ్యతి సర్వత్ర సర్వం చ మయి పశ్యతి ।  
 తస్యాహం న ప్రణశ్యామి స చ మే న ప్రణశ్యతి ॥

A bird flying in the air is surrounded by air in all directions. Similarly we are surrounded by the Lord who is all pervading. He is before,

behind, to the right, to the left, below and above - manifests Himself in all forms.

బ్రహ్మైవేదమమృతం పురస్తాద్భ్రహ్మ పశ్చాద్భ్రహ్మ దక్షిణతశోఽత్రరేణ ।  
అధశోఽర్ధ్వం చ ప్రసృతం బ్రహ్మైవేదం విశ్వమిదం వరిష్ఠమ్ ॥  
MU (2-2-11).

Because of this reason, we have His company at all times and so we should feel immensely secure .

Though we hear that every thing in the creation is divine, but because our minds are not pure, but are coloured with likes and dislikes we feel some things are pure and holy and some are dirty or lowly. So we are not able to see see Him in such objects. We want a way out of this awkward situation. Arjuna too, who had love towards some and hatred for some, had the same problem and puts the question to Krishna. He asked Him in which forms He can be meditated upon or worshipped. BG(10-17).

కథం విద్యామహం యోగింస్త్వాం సదా పరిచిన్తయన్ ।  
కేషు కేషు చ భావేషు చిన్తోఽసి భగవన్మయా ॥

Krishna understands Arjuna's predicament and gives a list of items in which He may be worshipped or meditated upon. But He makes a significant observation. He says that the list is not exhaustive but whatever there is that has some special glory or strength etc., is part of His manifestation only. BG(11-41).

యద్యద్విభూతిమత్సత్వం శ్రీమదూర్జితమేవ వా ।  
తత్తదేవావగచ్ఛ త్వం మమ తేజోఽంశసంభవమ్ ॥

Uddhava, the friend of Krishna, puts the same question to Krishna and Krishna gives a list of items (BH 11- Chapter 16) in which He may be meditated upon. He concludes with a similar statement saying "Wherever there is power, beauty, fame, prosperity, modesty, sacrifice, agreeableness, luck, strength, fortitude or knowledge, there am I manifested. BH(11-16-40).

తేజః శ్రీః కీర్త్యైశ్వర్యం హ్రీస్త్యగః సౌభగం భగః ।  
వీర్యం తితిషా విజ్ఞానం యత్ర యత్ర స మేంశకః ॥

From this we understand that any special quality or glory, like beauty, strength, talent etc., we observe any where or in any one, really belongs to God only. Because of this reason, whenever we think of an item or person with some special quality or greatness we should realise that we are thinking of a repository of His glory only. The hymn Pratasmaranam mentions a list of such items that have some special glory. These includes a wide assortment including rivers, mountains, kings, sages etc..The greatness we observe in them really belongs to Him only and so we marvel at His glory and feel humble. Therefore by the remembrance of these items we learn to remember the Lord as being inherent in every thing. We can no more ask as to how to see God, because we are seeing Him all the time. It is said that once some one told Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi that he wants to see God and requested Bhagavan to help him. Bhagavan said that he cannot help the visitor in this task since what he is seeing is God only.

Accepting these facts takes us one step higher than worshipping Him in idols and images. With this kind of thinking permeating our mind, we can go out and face our day with confidence. It can only be auspicious. A popular verse says this and asks how can one who has made his heart as the abode of the Lord face failure?

లాభస్తేషాం జయస్తేషాం కుతస్తేషాం పరాభవః ।  
యేషాం హృదిస్థో భగవాన్ మజ్జలాయతనం హరిః ॥

Let us now proceed to the stotram proper. The translations given are not exact, but will help to understand the meaning of the verses. Some comments are also provided. The comments are confined to some items only since many of the names and items mentioned in the stotra will be familiar to all.

కరాగ్రే వసతే లక్ష్మీః కరమధ్యే సరస్వతీ ।  
కరమూలే తు గౌరీ చ ప్రభాతే కరదర్శనమ్ ॥ ౧॥

Meaning:- Laksmi ( the goddess of wealth) resides in the upper part of hands, Sarasvati (the goddess of learning) resides in the middle,

and Gauri (the goddess of valour) in the lower part. Therefore, every morning one should respectfully have a look at one's hands.

Notes:- We have five organs of action - పఞ్చ కర్మేన్ద్రియాణి ।

These are speech, the hands, the legs, the anus and the genitals. వాక్-పాణి-పాద-పాయూపస్థానీతి పఞ్చ కర్మేన్ద్రియాణి ।

(Tattva Bodah). The organs are not the physical ones but the power behind them. Thus one may have his leg in tact, but may be unable to move it about because of some disease and the power is gone. This power resident in the organ is derived from the Lord only. This is said in the scriptures.

శ్రోత్రస్య శ్రోత్రం మనసో మనో యద్వాచో హ వాచం స ఉ ప్రణస్య ప్రాణః ।  
చక్షుషశ్చక్షు-రతిముచ్య ధీరాః ప్రేత్యాస్మాల్లోకా-దమృతా భవన్తి ॥ Kenopanishat (1-2).

The devotee Dhruva said this in praise of the Lord. BH(4-9-6).

యోఽస్తః ప్రవిశ్య మమ వాచమిమాం ప్రసుప్తాం  
సజ్జీవయత్యఖిలశక్తిధరః స్వధామ్నా ।  
అన్యాంశ్చ హస్త-చరణ-శ్రవణ-త్వగాదీన్  
ప్రణాన్ నమో భగవతే పురుషాయ తుభ్యమ్ ॥

He salutes the Lord saying that He had entered into him through His intelligent power and roused his dormant power of speech. Being the Lord of all powers, He had also kindled to activity also all his other organs. Though He is the Lord of all powers, He weilds it through various deities. This is like saying that the President is the head of the country, but he exercises the power through many officers. It is so with the powers resident in the organs of the body. The power in an organ is called the presiding deity or అధిష్ఠాతా దేవతా । Each of the organs have its own presiding deity. Even though all these organs are all equally important for leading an active and happy life, the hands are considered more equal than the other organs. They are needed for performing the obligatory duties known as the five great yagnas పఞ్చ మహా యజ్ఞాని । They include worship of God, the manes, the rishis, the guests and the animals and plants. Because of this reason, the deity

presiding over the hands is Indra. Indra in this case means the Supreme Being. తస్మాద్దిదన్తో నామేదన్తో హ వై నామ తమిదన్ద్రం సన్తమిన్ద్ర ఇత్యాచక్షతే పరోక్షేణ | (Aitareyopanishad 1-14). He is the One who sees all. He helps us to use the hands and do the enjoined duties. He is on the other side accepting them and blesses us with the fruits of these actions. Thus, by discharging our duties we can achieve all the goals of life known as పురుషార్థాః | So, the vedic hymn Sri Rudram says the hands are greatly blessed, in fact more blessed than the other organs. The reason is simple. It has the fortune to come into contact with the auspicious body of the Lord (in the form of idols) during His worship. He is called the universal physician. By worshipping Him one may get rid of his sorrows and achieve all the goals of life including the most prized one - salvation (mokSha) itself.

అయం మే హస్తో భగవాన్, అయం మే భగవత్తరః |

అయం మే విశ్వభేషజోఽయం శివాభిమర్శనః ||

The benefits one may get from the worship of the Lord include knowledge, wealth, stamina etc. These are very essential for living happily and to do our duties, both secular and religious. These are got by the blessings of the Goddesses LakShmi, Sarasvathi and Gauri - who are all the Lord's manifestations only. So all the Devis also said to reside in the hands. Thus, by looking at the hands we get to remember the Lord; and this in turn is equivalent to looking at the three Devis. Here too, we should remember that the Devis are one only. Thus we find the the names LakShmi, Sarasvathi and Gauri in the 1008 names of LakShmi.

సముద్రవసనే దేవీ పర్వతస్తనమణ్ణలే |

విష్ణుపత్ని నమస్తుభ్యం పాదస్పర్శం క్షమస్వ మే || ౨ ||

Meaning:- O Devi! You are wearing the ocean as a clothing on your body. The mountains are your breasts! O Consort of Visnu! I salute you and beg your pardon for having to set foot on your body for my routine activities.

Notes: - This verse is addressed to the goddess of earth, called Bhuvaneswari. She sustains all life on this earth and is verily the mother of



all living beings, including the plants and animals. Like the saree worn by a lady, the oceans cover most of the Goddess Earth. Like the milk flowing from the breasts of a mother provides nourishment to her child, the waters flowing down the mountains provide nourishment to the land and the people. Her glory is sung by the vedic hymn భూ సూక్తమ్ and by many poets. Acharya Vedanta Desika's poem Bhustuti is very popular. In one of the verses he says that the Bhu Devi is very close to the Lord. This is evident from the fact that when we start reciting the Gayatri mantra the word భూః which represents Bhu Devi immediately follows ఓం which represents the Lord. త్వం వ్యాహృతిః ప్రథమతః ప్రణవః ప్రియస్తే సంవేదయత్యఖిల మస్త్ర గణాస్తమేవ । In fact the Lord Himself is in the form of the earth . భూః . VS(437, 942) and మేదిసీరూపీ - మేదిసీ పృథివీ రూపం - స్వరూపం అస్య అస్తీతి మేదిసీరూపీ । యో వై రుద్రస్స భగవాన్ యా చ భూస్తస్మై నమో నమః ఇతి శ్రుతిః ॥ SS(360). So, it is natural that we should hesitate to put our feet on

Her. But we cannot avoid doing so also. So we request Her to pardon our act. She being the embodiment of forbearance will, we may be sure, tolerate and allow it. The following verse is also in praise of Bhu Devi. నమోఽస్తు ప్రియదత్తాయై తుభ్యం దేవి వసున్ధరే । త్వం మాతా సర్వలోకానాం పాదన్యాసం క్షమస్వ మే ॥ 3॥

Meaning:- O Devi! I salute you and beg your pardon for having to set foot on your body for my routine activities. You are the giver of all that is dear to us. You are the mother and repository of all wealth.

Notes:- Earth is called the mother as She bears all like a fond mother bearing her child in her lap. In addition She sustains all living beings by giving food items in many forms like grains, fruits etc., besides water in abundance. These are most needed by all and so dear to us. వసుః = wealth, riches. The mother who gave birth to us may not be with us till our end and look after us, but may leave us any day before it. But the mother Earth bears and sustains us all through our life. Further, we may, without being aware of Her greatness, treat Her lightly. She bears all

the abuses patiently and so is the very embodiment of patience. Narada describes Rama as the counterpart of Mother Earth in forbearance. క్షమయా పృథివీసమః | Ramayana (1-1-18). The question is, how the earth which itself is suspended in space is able to bear all beings and also make plants grow? The Lord says that it is He who is behind the earth and provides the necessary support. BG((15-13).

గామావిశ్వ చ భూతాని ధారయామ్యహమోజసా |

పుష్టామి చౌషధీః సర్వాః సోమో భూత్వా రసాత్కృకః ||

బ్రహ్మ మురారి-స్త్రిపురాస్తకారీ భానుః శశీ భూమిసుతో బుధశ్చ |

గురుశ్చ శుక్రః శని-రాహు-కేతవః కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ || ౪||

Meaning:- Brahma (the Creator), Murari (Visnu), Tripurantakari (Siva, the slayer of Tripuras), the nine planets, Sun, the Moon, Mars the son of Bhumi, Budha (Mercury), Brihaspati (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sani (Saturn), Rahu and Ketu; may all these make the morning auspicious for me.

Notes:- It was pointed out earlier that every thing in the universe that has a name or form is His manifestation only. Because of this reason, He is known as బహురూపః - బ్రహ్మాదీ స్థావరాస్తకారేణ బహురూపః | SS(393). Every object right from Brahma - the creator to a plant is His form only. The Kaivalyopanishad says that He is Brahma, Shiva, Indra, the immovable, the supreme, the Self luminous. He is Vishnu, Prana, the Time, the Fire and the Moon.

స బ్రహ్మో స శివః సేన్ద్రః సోఽక్షరః పరమః స్వరాట్ |

స ఏవ విష్ణుః స ప్రాణః స కాలోఽగ్నిః స చన్ద్రమాః || ౮||

The famous hymn Siva Mahimna Stotram (26) says that those people who consider themselves to be wise hold the opinion that the Lord is the Sun, the Moon, the Fire, the Air, the Water, the Space, the Earth and the Self. But all these opinions are only limiting the Lord. The poet exclaims that one does not know His real nature as He is all pervading.

త్వమర్కస్త్యం సోమస్త్యమసి పవనస్త్యం హుతవహ-

స్త్యమాపస్త్యం వ్యోమ త్వము ధరణీరాత్మా త్వమితి చ |

పరిచ్ఛిన్నమేవం త్వయి పరిణతా బిభ్రతి గిరం

న విద్యస్తత్తత్త్వం వయమిహ తు యత్ త్వం న భవసి ॥

The names mentioned here may be found in the list of names of the Lord. For example, one of His names is బ్రహ్మ - బ్రహ్మత్మనా సర్వం సృజితీతి బ్రహ్మ VS(663). He creates everything as Brahma. He is పురందరః - సురశత్రుణాం పురాణాం దారణాత్ పురందరః । VS(335) SS(45). పురత్రయవిధాతీ - పురత్రయం విహస్తీతి పురత్రయవిధాతీ SS(104). He destroyed the three cities of the asuras. and so on.  
సనత్కుమారః సనకః సనన్దనః సనాతనో-౭ప్యాసురి-పిఙ్గలౌ చ ।  
సప్తస్వరాః సప్త రసాతలాని కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ ॥ ✕॥

Meaning:- Sanatkumara, Sanaka, Sanadana and Sanatana ( whom Brahma, the creator, begot by wish); Rsi Asuri ( a disciple of Rsi Kapila, the founder of the Samkhya system of philosophy), Rsi Pingala ( the author of Hindu Prosody); the Seven Svaras (tones) (i.e. Shadja, Rsabha, Gandhara, Madhyam, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nisada); and the seven nether-worlds (Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talatala, Rasatala, Mahatala and Patala) —may all these make the morning auspicious for me !

Notes:- The four sages Sanatkumara etc., are said to be born of the mind of Brahma in the very beginning of creation. They were not interested in taking to the life of a householder. So, they took to a life of renunciation. They were great devotees and jnanis. They, being the first born, are senior to all, but they remain ever youthful. They move around the worlds unhindered teaching people about devotion and wisdom. Being great devotees they keep uttering the name of the Lord. హరిః శరణమేవం హి నిత్యం తేషాం ముఖే వచః । (Sri Bhagavata mahatmyam.(2-48). We know that sage Narada was the guru of great devotees like Prahlada, Dhruva and sages like Vyasa and Valmiki. But, it seems, that the great Narada himself felt unhappy and missing a feeling of fulfilment. He approached Sanatkumara who taught him the famous Bhuma Vidya. It is said Sanatkumara is the incarnation of Lord Skanda. తఁ స్కన్ద ఇత్యాచక్షతే తఁ స్కన్ద ఇత్యాచక్షతే । Chandogyopanishat. (7-26-2). The story appears in the

Chandogyopanishat. Such is the greatness of the four sages. Krishna says that these four sages are His manifestations only. BG(10-6)

సప్తార్ణవాః సప్త కులాచలాశ్చ సప్తర్షయో ద్వీప-వనాని సప్త |  
భూరాదికృత్వా భువనాని సప్త కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ || ✕ ||

Meaning:- The seven oceans ( Lavanabdhhi, Iksu, Suravarpa, Ajay, Dadhi, Ksira and Svadu-jala); the seven mountains (Mahendra, Malaya, Sahydrī, Suktiman, Rkasavan, Vindhya and Pariyatra): the seven Rsis (Kasyapa, Atri, Bharadvaja, Visvamisra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Vasishtha): the seven dvipas ( Continents) (i.e. Jambu, Plaksa, Salmala, Kusa, Kroncha, Saka and Puskara): the seven vanas (forests) ( i.e. Dandakaranya, Khandaranya, Champakaranya, Vedaranya, Naimisaranya, Brahmaranys and Dharmaranya); and the seven bhuvanas (heavens) (i.e.) Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svah, Mahah, Janah, Traph and Satyam) —may all these make the morning auspicious for me !

Notes:- Rishi is one who has these seven qualifications. (1) long life (2) should have divined mantras (3) power of lordship (4) divine vision (5) senior by personal qualities, wisdom and age (6) who conduct himself strictly according to dharmic ways and thus sets an example to others and (7) who founded a gotra. Vayupurana (61-93,94).

సప్తైతే సప్తభిక్షైవ గుణైః సప్తర్షయః స్మృతాః |  
దీర్ఘాయుషో మన్తకృత ఈశ్వరా దివ్యచక్షుషః |  
వృద్ధాశ్చ ప్రత్యక్షధర్మాణో గోత్రప్రవర్తకాశ్చ యే ||

The rishis whose names are said here are known to us. Atri was the son of Brahma, the creator and is as great as Brahma Himself. జాతస్యాసీత్ సుతో ధాతురత్రిః పితృసమో గుణైః | BH(9-14-2). Soma, the Moon (mentioned in an earlier verse) was born to him. He was the embodiment of nectar. Brahma appointed him as the chief of brahmins, herbs, plants and of the stars. విప్రోషధ్యుడుగణానాం బ్రహ్మణా కల్పితః పతిః | BH(9-14-3). This verse mentions the higher worlds (above our world). The world we reside in is the Bhu loka (భూః). The previous verse mentioned the seven nether worlds (below our world). One reaches these worlds as a result of his deeds. By doing more of good than evil

acts one earns more merit or punyam and goes to the higher worlds.

Similarly by indulging in prohibited acts , one earns papam and goes to the nether regions.BG(15-18).

ఊర్ధ్వం గచ్ఛన్తి సత్వస్థా మధ్యే తిష్ఠన్తి రాజసాః ।  
జఘన్య-గుణ-వృత్తిస్థా అధో గచ్ఛన్తి తామసాః ॥

పృథ్వీ సగన్ధా సరసాస్తథాపః స్పర్శీ చ వాయుర్జ్వలనం చ తేజః ।  
నభః సశబ్దం మహతా సహైవ కుర్వన్తు సర్వే మమ సుప్రభాతమ్ ॥ ౬ ॥

Meaning:- The Earth with its quality of smell , Water with its quality of taste, Air with its quality of touch, Fire with its quality of teja (glow), Akasa (space) with its quality of sabda (sound)— may all these elements along with the element of Buddhi (intellect) make my morning auspicious for me !

Notes:-The five elements are the constituents of the universe and the beings that inhabit them. They are the manifes- tations of the Lord only. He has the name పంచభూతాత్మా - పంచసంఖ్యోకాని భూతాని

ఆకాశాదీని ఆత్మస్వరూపం యస్య స పంచభూతాత్మా । తత్సుష్టావ  
తదేవానుప్రావిశత్ । తదను ప్రవిశ్య । సచ్ఛత్యచ్ఛా భవత్ ఇతి  
శ్రుతేః । SS(352).

మహేన్ద్రో మలయః సహ్యా దేవతాత్మా హిమాలయః ।  
ధ్యేయో రైవతకో విన్ద్యో గిరిశ్చరావలిస్తథా ॥ ౭ ॥

Meaning:- Mahendra (in Orissa), Malaya ( in Mysore) Sahydri ( Western Ghats), Himalaya ( the soul of numerous gods—in Northern India), the adorable Raivataka ( Giranara - in Kathiawad), Vindhyaachala (from Gujarat to Bihar) and Aravali ( in Rajasthan)—al these mountains are to be remembered with veneration. Notes:- The mountais are great as they are the birth place of many rivers. They also have many holy places located in them. Great rivers like the Ganga, Sindhu are born in the Himalaya mountain. Holy places like Amarnath, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Rishikesh and mount Kailas - the abode of Lord Siva, are located in the Himalaya mountain. So it very holy and is దేవతాత్మా. Kalidasa

uses the term in the opening verse in his classic Kumarasambhava to describe the Himalaya. అస్తుత్తరస్యాం దిశి దేవతాత్మా హిమాలయో నామ నగాధిరాజః । He describes the glory of the Himalaya in several verses that follow the opening verse. Similarly the Vindhyaachala is reputed to be the abode of Devi Lalitha. She has the name విన్ధ్యాచలనివాసిని - విన్ధ్యాఖేస్య అచలే పర్వతే నివసతీతి తథా । LS(336). The mountains are also the abode of many sages who perform penance there.

గంగా సింధుశ్చ కావేరీ యమునా చ సరస్వతీ ।

రేవా మహానదీ గోదా బ్రహ్మపుత్రా పునాతు మమ్ ॥ ౮॥

Meaning:- Ganga, Sindhu, Kaveri, Yamuna, Sarasvati, Reva (Narmada)

Mahanadi, Godavari, and Brahmaputra- may all these rivers consecrate me.

Note:- The sacredness of these rivers are well known. So we think of them before taking our daily bath. It is said that thinking of them is enough to wash our sins. We invite their prescence during pujas also. We

recite the following verse and pray to them to be present in the water

to be used in the puja. గణ్ణే చ యమునే వైవ గోదావరీ సరస్వతీ ।

నర్మదే సింధు కావేరీ జలేఽస్మిన్ సన్నిధిం కురు ॥ ఆయాస్తు దేవపూజార్థం దురితక్షయకారకాః ॥

అయోధ్యా మథురా మాయా కాశీ కాఞ్చీ అవంతికా ।

పురీ ద్వారావతీ వైవ సప్తైతా మోక్షదాయికాః ॥ ౯॥

Meaning:- Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Haridwar), Kasi, Kanchi, Avantika

(Ujjain), and Dwarika Puri all these seven puries (cities) bestow moksa

(emancipation) on human beings. Note:- These cities are holy since they are associated with the Lord. Rama was born in Ayodhya and later

He ruled over it. Mathura is linked with Krishna. It is said that the

Lord is ever present there. మథురా భగవాన్ యత్ర నిత్యం సన్నిహితో హరిః ॥ BH(10-1-28).

ప్రయాగా పాటలీపుత్రం విజయానగరం పురీమ్ ।

ఇన్ద్రప్రస్థం గయాం చైవ ప్రత్యూషే ప్రత్యహం స్మరేత్ ॥ ౧౦॥

Meaning:- Prayaga, Pataliputra (Patna), Vijayanagara (Hampi-south)

Jagannathapuri, Indraprastha (Delhi) and Gaya — all these holy places

are to be remembered everyday in the morning

అరున్ధత్యనుసూయా చ సావిత్రి జానకీ సతీ ।

తేజస్వినీజ చ పాశ్చాతీ వన్దనీయా నిరన్తరమ్ ॥ ౧౧॥

Meaning:- Arundhati ( wife of Vasistha), Anusuya (wife of Rsi Atri), Savitri ( wife of Satyvan), Janaki (Sita ji), Sati ( daughter of Daksa, wife of Siva), and the noble - spirited Panchali ( Draupadi) — all these great women deserve our reverence for ever.

వైన్యం పృథుం హైహయమర్జునం చ శాకున్తలేయం భరతం నలం చ ।

రామం చ యో వై స్మరతి ప్రభాతే తస్యార్థలభో విజయశ్చ హస్తే ॥ ౧౨॥

Meaning:- He who remembers Prthu (Son of King Vena), Arjuna of Haihaya dynasty (known as Kartavirya), Bharata (son of Sakuntala), Raja Nala, and the ideal king Sri Rama the morning acquires affluence and always comes out successful in his endeavours. Note:- King Prutu was the son of king Vena - a descendant of the the great devotee Druva (mentioned in the next verse). Prutu was an part incarnation of Lord Hari. యేష విష్ణోః భగవతః కలా । BH(4-15-3) He got the name because soon after his birth sages foretold that he will be the foremost among rulers and will be very famous. BH(4-15-5). The earth got the name Prithvi from him.

అయం తు ప్రతమో రాజ్ఞాం పుమాన్ ప్రథయిథా యశః ।

పృథు-ర్నామ మహారాజో భవిష్యతి పృతుశ్రవాః ॥

Arjuna, also known as Kartavirya was the king of Hehaya. He worshipped Lord Dattatreya and became very powerful and invincible. He acquired immense wealth and supernatural powers etc. He could defeat Ravana and became very proud. He was killed by Parasurama. His story is mentioned in BH(9-15-17 and 18).

హైహయానామధిపతి-రర్జునః క్షత్రియర్షభః ।

దత్తం నారాయణస్యాంసమారాధ్య పరికర్మభిః ॥

బాహూన్ దశశతం తేభే దుర్ధర్షత్వమరాతిషు ।

అవ్యాహతేన్ద్రియాజఃశ్రీ-తేజో-వీర్య-యశో-బలమ్ ॥

దధ్యజ్ మనుర్భుగురసౌ హరిపూర్వచన్ద్రో

భీష్మార్జున-ధ్రువ-వశిష్ట-శుకాదయశ్చ ।

ప్రహ్లాద-నారద-భగీరథ-విశ్వకర్మ-

వాల్మీకయోత్ర చిరచిన్త్యశుభాభిధానాః ॥ ౧౩ ॥

Meaning:- Rsi Dadhichi , Manu, Bhrgu, the truthful King Harischandra, the iron - willed Bhisma, Arjuna (the wielder of the famous bow Gandiva), Bhakta Dhruva, Rsi Vasistha, Sukadeva (son of Vyasa), Bhakta Prahlada, Muni Narada, Bhagiratha (one who brought the Ganga from the Heaven to the Earth), Visvakarma (the first architect), Valmiki (the first poet)—all these sacred names are worth remembering for ever.

అశ్వత్థామా బలిర్వాస్వసో హనూమాంశ్చ విభీషణః ।

కృపః పరశురామశ్చ సప్తైతే చిరజీవినః ॥ ౧౪ ॥

సప్తతాన్ సంస్మరేన్నిత్యం మార్కండేయమథాష్టమమ్ ।

జీవేత్ వర్షశతం సాగ్రమపమృత్యువివర్జితః ॥ ౧౫ ॥

Meaning:- Asvatthama (son of Drona), Raja Bali , Vyasa (the first spiritual preceptor), Hanuman (a devotee of Rama), Vibhisana (a favourite of Rama) Krpacharya and Parasurama –all these seven are immortal beings. He who remembers them everyday along-with Markandeya (a devotee of Siva) will live for a hundred years. He will never meet with an untimely death.

పుణ్యశ్లోకో నలో రాజా పుణ్యశ్లోకో యుధిష్ఠిరః ।

పుణ్యశ్లోకో విదేహశ్చ పుణ్యశ్లోకో జనార్దనః ॥ ౧౬ ॥

కార్కౌటకస్య నాగస్య దమయన్త్యా నళస్య చ ।

ఋతుపర్ణస్య రాజర్షేః కీర్తనం కలినాశనమ్ ॥ ౧౭ ॥

Meaning:-Raja Nala, the truthful Yudhisthira, Janaka the king of Videha, and Janardana (i. e.) Lord Krishna -the very utterance of these names sanctifies the tongue.

Notes:- In this and the preceding verses the names of several great seers and kings are mentioned. Some of them, like king Nala, Harischandra and Rama had gone through severe ordeals. But they did not get despondent and swerve from the path of righteousness. For example, when Rama was told that he would not be made the king but will have to go to the forest his countenance did not show any change, nor was he upset.



న వనం గాన్తుకామస్య త్యజతశ్చ వసుంధరామ్ ।  
సర్వలోకాతిగత్యేవ లక్ష్యతే చిత్తవిక్రియా ॥

Ramayana. (2-19-23). These men were great, because they did not act according to their own likes and dislikes. But they did what they thought was proper. Such an act may produce results that are not pleasant but they were willing to accept it as God's gift. What is proper and not is given in the shastras. What the shastras say is dharma. The shastras are given out by the Lord. The Lord's words are supreme and are to be followed implicitly without consideration of the results. The Lord had said the above clearly. BG(2-47).

కర్మణ్యేవాధికారస్తే మా ఫలేషు కదాచన ।  
మా కర్మఫలహేతుర్భూ-ర్మా తే సజ్గోఽస్త్యకర్మణి ॥

These great men were confident that dharma will protect them and were convinced that one should not stray from the path of dharma under any circumstance. They surrendered to the God's will as expressed in the shastras. It is said in Mahabharata that dharma is eternal and so one should never give that up . On the other hand, joy and sorrow are not lasting. So, one should not give up dharma under any circumstance: from desire, fear, greed or even for the sake of one's life.

న జాతు కామాన్న భయాన్న లోభాద్ ధర్మః త్యజేజ్ఞివితసాపి హేతోః ।  
నిత్యో ధర్మః సుఖదుఃఖే త్వనిత్యే జివో నిత్యో హేతురస్య త్వనిత్యః ॥  
Such people, Krishna says are wise (jnanis) and are qualified to attain immortality (mokSha) BG(2-15).

యం హి న వ్యథయన్త్యేతే పురుషం పురుషర్షభ ।  
సమదుఃఖసుఖం ధీరం సోఽమృతత్వాయ కల్పతే ॥

The kings are known as rajarshis or royal sages. Thus, Valmiki calls king Dasaratha as మహర్షికల్పో రాజర్షిః । (1-6-20) rajarshi, as great as a maharshi. So, showing respect to such persons is equivalent to showing respect to God. Even uttering their names is as good as uttering the names of God and so is purifying as was seen earlier. Because of this reason, we will see that our puranas give in some places a long list of

names of kings who were royal sages in the solar or lunar dynasty. The Brihadaranyopanishat gives a list of names of gurus who were jnanis and transmitted their knowledge to their desciples.

Further, our scriptures say that those who praise, serve and worship the wise person (jnani) get the results of the meritorious actions (punyam) done by the wise man. Those who criticise, hate or cause pain to the jnani get the results of sinful actions (papam) done by the wise man. (Tattva Bodha).

కీఞ్చ యే జ్ఞానినం స్తువన్తి భజన్తి అర్చయన్తి తాన్పృతి

జ్ఞానికృతం ఆగామి పుణ్యం గచ్ఛతి ।

యే జ్ఞానినం నిన్దన్తి ద్విషన్తి దుఃఖప్రాదానం కుర్వన్తి

తాన్పృతి జ్ఞానికృతం సర్వమాగామి

క్రీయమాణం యదవాచ్యం కర్మ పాపాత్మకం తద్గచ్ఛతి ।

సుహృదః పుణ్యకృత్యం, దుర్హృదః పాపకృత్యం గృణ్ణన్తి ।

In view of this, we, by mentioning the names of the great people listed in the above verses with reverence, stand to gain much because we will get a share of the punyam from their account.

As an aside we may take a scene in Ramayana - the one wherein the queen Kausalya, mother of Rama blesses Rama before he departs to the forest. This is narrated in canto 25 of the Ayodhya Kanda. In her blessings she prays that the seven rishis, Indra and the gods subordinate to him, the seasons, the moon god, Brihaspati, the seven principal mountains, the oceans etc., should protect Rama. Some verses forming the prayer are given below. చకార మాతా రామస్య మక్గలాని మనస్వినీ ॥ ౧॥ The high minded mother Kausalya performed the rites conducive to the welfare of Rama (and said as follows).

స్వస్తి సాధ్యాశ్చ విశ్వే చ మరుతశ్చ మహర్షిభిః ।

స్వస్తి ధాతా విధాతా చ స్వస్తి పూషా భగోఽర్యమా ॥ ౨॥

లోకపాలాశ్చ తే సర్వే వాసవప్రముఖాస్తథా ।

ఋతవః షడ్ చ తే సర్వే మాసాః సంవత్సరాః క్షపాః ॥ ౩॥

దినాని చ ముహూర్తాశ్చ స్వస్తి కుర్వన్తు తే సదా ।

శ్రుతిః స్మృతిశ్చ ధర్మశ్చ పాతు త్వాం పుత్ర సర్వతా ॥ ౧౦॥

స్కన్ధశ్చ భగవాన్ దేవః సోమశ్చ సబృహస్పతిః ।

సప్తర్షయో నారదశ్చ తే త్వాం రక్షన్తు సర్వతః ॥ ౧౧॥

తే చాపి సర్వతః సిద్ధా దిశశ్చ సదిగీశ్వరాః ।

స్తుతా మయా వనే తస్మిన్ పాస్తు త్వం పుత్ర నిత్యశః ॥ ౧౨॥

శైలాః సర్వే సముద్రశ్చ రాజా వరుణ ఏవ చ ।

ద్యౌరన్తరిక్షం పృథివీ వాయుశ్చ సచరాచరాః ॥ ౧౩॥

నక్షత్రాణి చ స్వాణి గ్రహాశ్చ సహ దేవతైః ।

అహోరాత్రే తథా సంధ్యే పాస్తు త్వాం వనమాశ్రితమ్ ॥ ౧౪॥

ఋతవశ్వాపి షట్ చాన్యే మాసా సంవత్సరాస్తథా ।

కలాశ్చ కాష్ఠాశ్చ తథా తవ శర్మ దిశన్తు తే ॥ ౧౫॥

ఋషయః సాగరా ద్వీపా వేదా లోకా దిశశ్చ తాః ।

మఙ్గలాని మహాబాహో దిశన్తు శుభమఙ్గలమ్ ॥ ౩౬॥

Kausalya prays to many divine beings and many other things (animate and inanimate) to protect Rama when he is in the forest. Those whom she prays to in the above verses include the following: the Sadhyas and the Viswedevas (two different classes of gods), the wind-gods, eminent rishis, the Cosmic Person, the creator, gods Pusha, Bhaga, Aryama, the guardians of the spheres headed by Indra, the deities presiding over the six seasons, the months, years, nights, days, and hours, the Vedas, the smriti texts, dharma, Lord Skanda, the moon god, sage Brihaspati, the seven rishis, sage Narada, siddhas, the four quarters along with their guardians, the seven principal mountains, the oceans, Varuna the king of the oceans, heaven, earth, the intervening region, the atmosphere, the animate and inanimate creation, the stars, the sun, planets along with their gods, deities presiding over the day and night, morning and evening twilights, deities presiding over the six seasons, the intercalary months and the years containing such months, divisions of time such as minutes and seconds, the rishis, the seven oceans, Dwipas (principal divisions of the globe), the four Vedas, the three spheres

and the four quarters also. What can be Kausalya's idea in praying to so many beings as listed above? If we read the above carefully we may notice that this prayer, sounds similar to the prayer contained in the Pratasmaranam. Evidently Kausalya was aware of the fact that God is present everywhere and in every thing. The sage Valmiki carefully uses the adjective మనస్వినీ meaning wise or jnani to describe her in the first verse above. She knew the fact not only in theory but also from experience. This implies that she knew that Rama, while in forest, will always be surrounded by the Lord in one form or the other and so she prayed to such an omnipresent Lord to offer him protection. The prayer may be diferent but when we look at it from the right perspective appears sensible as emanating from a pious person.

। ఫలశ్రుతిః ।

ఇత్యం ప్రభాతే పరమం పవిత్రం

పఠేత్ స్మరేద్వా శృణుయాచ్చ తద్వత్ ।

దుఃస్వప్ననాశస్తాహ సుప్రభాతం

భవేచ్చ నిత్యం భగవత్ప్రసాదాత్ ॥ ౧౮ ॥

Meaning:- Any one who reads, remembers or hears this superior and purifying Pratasmaranam early in the morning every day, in that manner, will, by God's grace, have an auspicious day and be free from disturbing dreams. Notes: This verse states the fruits of reciting or hearing the Pratasmaranam. ఫలమ్ means fruit. The stotram is said to be superior and purifying because it talks about the glory of the Lord. It gives the benefits stated when it is read or heard with proper understanding of the meaning. So, it is said తద్వత్ (i.e) in the proper manner. Bad dreams are the results of latent tendencies, known as vasanas. Thinking of the Lord destroys these latent tendencies and the bad dreams that come up from them. So, the Lord has the name దుఃస్వప్ననాశనః - భావినోఽనర్థస్య సూచకాన్ దుఃస్వప్నాన్ నాశయతి ధ్యాతః, స్మృతః, కీర్తితః, పూజితశ్చేతి దుఃస్వప్ననాశనః । VS(926). The verses in the Pratasmaranam help to keep alive the thought of the Lord all through the day and as a result there is no place for

vasanas to hide in the mind and disturb our peace.

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*prAtaHsmaraNam*

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