

dashashlokI (with introduction and translation)

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ದಶಶ್ಲೋಕೀ ನಿರ್ವಾಣದಶಕಂ ಚ

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Ten Stanzas (on Atman)

by shrImad sha.nkarAchArya

Introduction:

ShrI Shankara sums up the essence of Vedanta in dasashlokI . He states that Only Atman Is while the world of names, form and various manifestations are just maya . He goes on to say that Atman is same as the supreme Brahman . Shankara also emphasises, as do upaniShads that the man who realizes Atma ALONE transcends worldly sorrow (tarati shokaM Atmavit).

After writing a wonderful commentary on Gaudapada's karika on mANDukya upaniShad, and upadesahasri in my humble opinion, the best philosophical work of Shankara, many scholars consider dashashlokI to be the last pronouncement of Shankara on the non-dual nature of Atman . In a very simple way using just 10 verses, Shankara expounds on the nature of Atman – the attributeless Truth, indestructible, and the very basis of supreme bliss and purity.

The words of Swami Gambhirananda sums up the significance of the sloka, 'This text deals with the nature of Atman in the clearest and simplest language . There is not a single word which is superfluous, and the teacher [Shankara] is at this best; the arrow of knowledge is aimed at ignorance and it hits the target directly, destroying the enemy.'

The birth of this Dasasloki is an interesting event. Sri Sankara in imminent danger of death in the jaws of a crocodile in the river Purna in his village Kaladi, takes Sannyasa informally by pronouncing the prescinebd formula. But when the crocodile immediately frees him from its grip, Sri Sankara is

faced with the necessity of seeking a competent teacher who can regularise the Sannyasa and initiate him in the Upanishadic passages. He travelled north and ultimately found such a teacher in Sri Govindapadacharya, who was in deep meditation in a cave on the banks of the Narmada. When fervently implored by Sri Sankara, the Saint woke up and asked Sri Sankara who he was. It was in reponse to this simple question that Sri Sankara burst out in a set of ten pregnant stanzas explaining the real nature of the Self which alone he was. The Saint realising that Sri Sanakara was a realised soul, who had come to him for initiation only to conform to the normal method of entering the Sannyasa Order, immediately accepted him as a disciple.

May Shri Shankara leads us from ignorance to Truth by helping us realize the Atman.

OM tat sat.

ಭುಜಂಗಪ್ರಯಾತ .

.. ಅಥ ದಶಶ್ಲೋಕೀ ..

ನ ಭೂಮಿರ್ನ ತೋಯಂ ನ ತೇಜೋ ನ ವಾಯುಃ

ನ ಖಂ ನೇಂದ್ರಿಯಂ ವಾ ನ ತೇಷಾಂ ಸಮೂಹಃ .

ಅನೇಕಾಂತಿಕತ್ವಾತ್ ಸುಷುಪ್ತೈಕಸಿದ್ಧಃ (ಅನೈಕಾಂತಿಕತ್ವಾತ್)

ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 1..

" I am not the Earth nor Water, neither Fire nor Air, I am not space. Neither am I any of the Faculties nor am I their aggregate. [I am not any of these] as they are all uncertain. I am proved however in the sole experience of deep sleep. That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Only One, am I."

ನ ವರ್ಣಾ ನ ವರ್ಣಾಶ್ರಮಾಚಾರಧರ್ಮಾ

ನ ಮೇ ಧಾರಣಾಧ್ಯಾನಯೋಗಾದಯೋಽಪಿ .

ಅನಾತ್ಮಾಶ್ರಯಾಹಂಮಮಾಧ್ಯಾಸಹಾನಾತ್

ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 2..

" The castes are not for me, nor the observances and duties attached to the castes and the stages of life. Even the

steadying of the mind, concentration, self-communion and other courses are not for me. For the mistaken senses of I and MINE which rested on the Non-Self have been abandoned. That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I.

ನ ಮಾತಾ ಪಿತಾ ವಾ ನ ದೇವಾ ನ ಲೋಕಾ

ನ ವೇದಾ ನ ಯಜ್ಞಾ ನ ತೀರ್ಥಂ ಬ್ರುವಂತಿ .

ಸುಷುಪ್ತೌ ನಿರಸ್ತಾತಿಶೂನ್ಯಾತ್ಮಕತ್ವಾತ್

ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 3..

"There is no mother nor father; no gods nor regions of experience; no scriptures nor sacrificial sites; and no sacred place-so say the Sages. For, in the state of deep sleep, all these are negated and that state is completely devoid(of any object of perception) That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I.

ನ ಸಾಂಖ್ಯಂ ನ ಶೈವಂ ನ ತತ್ವಾಂಚರಾತ್ರಂ

ನ ಜೈನಂ ನ ಮೀಮಾಂಸಕಾದೇರ್ಮತಂ ವಾ .

ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾನುಭೂತ್ಯಾ ವಿಶುದ್ಧಾತ್ಮಕತ್ವಾತ್

ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 4..

"There is no Sankhya nor Saiva, nor that Pancharatra nor Jaina. The conception of the Mimamsaka and others does not exist. For, through the direct realisation of what is qualified, the Self is known as of the nature of the Absolutely Pure. That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I.

ನ ಚೋರ್ಧ್ವಂ ನ ಚಾಧೋ ನ ಚಾಂತರ್ನ ಬಾಹ್ಯಂ

ನ ಮಧ್ಯಂ ನ ತೀರ್ಯಜ್ ನ ಪೂರ್ವಾಽಪರಾ ದಿಕ್ .

ವಿಯದ್ವ್ಯಾಪಕತ್ವಾದಖಂಡೈಕರೂಪಃ

ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 5..

"There is neither above nor below, neither inside nor outside, no middle nor crosswise, no direction, east or west. For it is all-pervasive like space. It is partless and homogeneous in its nature. That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I.

ನ ಶುಕ್ಲಂ ನ ಕೃಷ್ಣಂ ನ ರಕ್ತಂ ನ ಪೀತಂ
ನ ಕುಬ್ಜಂ ನ ಪೀನಂ ನ ಹ್ರಸ್ವಂ ನ ದೀರ್ಘಂ .
ಅರೂಪಂ ತಥಾ ಜ್ಯೋತಿರಾಕಾರಕತ್ವಾತ್
ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 6..

"It is neither white nor black, neither red nor yellow,
neither dwarfish nor stout, neither short nor long. As it is of
the nature of light, it is shapeless also. That One, the
Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I."

ನ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಾ ನ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಂ ನ ಶಿಷ್ಯೋ ನ ಶಿಕ್ಷಾ
ನ ಚ ತ್ವಂ ನ ಚಾಹಂ ನ ಚಾಯಂ ಪ್ರಪಂಚಃ .
ಸ್ವರೂಪಾವಬೋಧೋ ವಿಕಲ್ಪಾನಹಿಷ್ಟಃ
ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 7..

"There is no ruler nor rule, no pupil nor training.
There is no YOU nor I. This universe is not. For the realisation
of the true nature of the Self does not tolerate any distinction.
That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone, am I."

ನ ಜಾಗ್ರನ್ ನ ಮೇ ಸ್ವಪ್ನಕೋ ವಾ ಸುಷುಪ್ತಿಃ
ನ ವಿಶ್ವೋ ನ ವಾ ತೈಜಸಃ ಪ್ರಾಜ್ಞಕೋ ವಾ .
ಅವಿದ್ಯಾತ್ಮಕತ್ವಾತ್ ತ್ರಯಾಣಾಂ ತುರೀಯಃ
ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 8..

"There is no waking state for me nor dream or deep
sleep. I am not Visva[the Self identified with the experiencer
of the waking state], nor Taijasa[identified with dream state],
nor Prajna[identified with deep sleep]. I am really the
Fourth(Turiya). That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone,
am I."

ಅಪಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಕತ್ವಾತ್ ಹಿತತ್ವ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾತ್ (ವ್ಯಾಪಕತ್ವಾದ್ಧಿತತ್ವ)
ಸ್ವತಃ ಸಿದ್ಧಭಾವಾದನನ್ಯಾಶ್ರಯತ್ವಾತ್ .
ಜಗತ್ ತುಚ್ಛಮೇತತ್ ಸಮಸ್ತಂ ತದನ್ಯತ್
ತದೇಕೋಽವಶಿಷ್ಟಃ ಶಿವಃ ಕೇವಲೋಽಹಂ .. 9..

"All this universe which is other than the Self is
worthless(having no existence of its own) for it is well known

that the Self is all pervasive, recognised as the reality and
that its existence is self-proven and does not depend upon
anything else. That One, the Residue, the Auspicious, the Alone,
am I.


ನ ಚೈಕಂ ತದನ್ಯದ್ ದ್ವಿತೀಯಂ ಕುತಃ ಸ್ಯಾತ್
ನ ಕೇವಲತ್ವಂ ನ ಚಾಕೇವಲತ್ವಂ .
ನ ಶೂನ್ಯಂ ನ ಚಾಶೂನ್ಯಮದ್ವೈತಕತ್ವಾತ್
ಕಥಂ ಸರ್ವವೇದಾಂತಸಿದ್ಧಂ ಬ್ರವೀಮಿ .. 10..

" It is not one, for how can there be a second distinct
from it? Aloneness cannot be attributed to it nor even
not-aloneness. It is neither a void nor a non-void. When it does
not admit of a second entity, in what manner can I speak about
it though it is established by all the Upanishads.?"


.. ಇತಿ ಶ್ರೀಮದ್ ಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯವಿರಚಿತಂ ದಶಶ್ಲೋಕೀ ಅಥವಾ
ನಿರ್ವಾಣದಶಕಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಮಾಪ್ತಂ ..

Encoding by M. Giridhar (giridhar at chemeng.Isc.ernet.in)

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