
.. Prayer to Goddess Shaaradaa ..

॥ श्रीशङ्करविरचित शारदा प्रार्थना ॥

नमस्ते शारदे देवि काश्मीरपुरवासिनि ।
त्वामहं प्रार्थये नित्यं विद्यादानं च देहि मे ॥ १ ॥

या श्रद्धा धारणा मेधा वग्देवी विधिवल्लभा ।
भक्तजिह्वाग्रसदना शमादिगुणदायिनी ॥ २ ॥

नमामि यामिनीं नाथलेखालङ्कृतकुन्तलाम् ।
भवानीं भवसन्तापनिर्वापणसुधानदीम् ॥ ३ ॥

भद्रकाल्यै नमो नित्यं सरस्वत्यै नमो नमः ।
वेदवेदाङ्गवेदान्तविद्यास्थानेभ्य एव च ॥ ४ ॥

ब्रह्मस्वरूपा परमा ज्योतिरूपा सनातनी ।
सर्वविद्याधिदेवी या तस्यै वाण्यै नमो नमः ॥ ५ ॥

यया विना जगत्सर्वं शश्वज्जीवन्मृतं भवेत् ।
ज्ञानाधिदेवी या तस्यै सरस्वत्यै नमो नमः ॥ ६ ॥

यया विना जगत्सर्वं मूकमुन्मत्तवत्सदा ।
या देवी वागधिष्ठात्री तस्यै वाण्यै नमो नमः ॥ ७ ॥

॥ इति श्रीशङ्करविरचित शारदा प्रार्थना ॥

Prayer to Goddess Shaaradaa

नमस्ते शारदे देवि काश्मीरपुरवासिनि ।

त्वामहं प्रार्थये नित्यं विद्यादानं च देहि मे ॥ १ ॥

हे शारदे । हे देवि । नमः ते । काश्मीरपुरवासिनि । हे काश्मीर पुर्यां वासिनी one who lives ; त्वां भवतीं अहं प्रार्थये प्र very much ; अर्थ 10 A to request अर्थये उत्तम पुरुष एक वचने; नित्यं प्रतिदिनं । विद्यादानं विद्यायाः दानं मे मह्यं देहि ददातु ।

Namaste Saraswati! O effulgent Sarada, worshipped in the city of Kashmir (substitute your city's name here - worshipped in the city of North Brunswick). I pray to you everyday. Please give the pure knowledge. 1

या श्रद्धा धारणा मेधा वग्देवी विधिवल्लभा ।

भक्तजिह्वाग्रसदना शमादिगुणदायिनी ॥ २ ॥

या श्रद्धा faith ; धारणा one who holds, memory ; मेधा intelligence वग्देवी वाचः देवी विधिवल्लभा विधेः ब्रह्मणः वल्लभा पत्नी । भक्तजिह्वाग्रसदना भक्तानां; जिह्वायाः of tounge अग्ने ; सदना one who is, lives ; भक्तजिह्वाग्रसदना one who graces devotees' speech ; शमादि शम दम तितिक्ष इत्यादि गुणान् दायिनि दात्री ।

You are faith, memory, intelligence, the divinity of speech, the spouse of Creator Brahmaa. You grace the devotees' speech, you are the bestower of inner peace, and all other excellences. 2.

नमामि यामिनीं नाथलेखालङ्कृतकुन्तलाम् ।

भवानीं भवसन्तापनिर्वापणसुधानदीम् ॥ ३ ॥

यामिनी यामा अस्यां सन्तीति यामिनी इति अमरम् । यामः restraint, forbearance ; यामिनि she is restraint, forbearance ; नाथ protector लेखा streaks ; नाथलेखा streaks of lightening standing for sparkling knowledge ; अलङ्कृत decorated ; कुन्तला one with ear-ornaments ; Her ear ornaments are decorated with streaks of sparkling knowledge ; भवानी भवस्य पत्नी भवानी इति अमरम् । भव लोकस्य सन्ताप दुखानां निर्वापण killing, extinguishing ; सुधा अमृतं नदी river ;

I prostrate Yamini, one who is forbearance herself, who has her ears decorated with streaks of sparkling knowledge; who is Bhavaani, who is a river of nectar that extinguishes the torments of worldly life. 3.

भद्रकाल्यै नमो नित्यं सरस्वत्यै नमो नमः ।

वेदवेदाङ्गवेदान्तविद्यास्थानेभ्य एव च ॥ ४ ॥

भन्दते भद्रं । auspicious ; भद्रकल्याणी One who bestows auspiciousness ; नित्यं प्रति दिनं सरः प्रसरणं सर्वत्र अस्तीति सरस्वती । She exists everywhere as a flow (of knowledge) and hence she is Saraswati. From where?

Answer: वेद वेदाङ्ग वेदान्त विद्या स्थानेभ्यः ।

Constant salutations to you, O Mother Beneficent! You are the one who exists everywhere as a flow of knowledge originating from the Veda, the auxiliary branches of Veda, Upanishads, and all other forms of Learning. Salutations to you again. 4.

ब्रह्मस्वरूपा परमा ज्योतिरूपा सनातनी ।

सर्वविद्याधिदेवी या तस्यै वाण्यै नमो नमः ॥ ५ ॥

या ब्रह्मस्वरूपा ब्रह्मणः स्वरूपा या ज्योतिरूपा Divine light ; या सनातनी आद्यन्तरहिता या सर्व विद्यानां अधि देवी तस्यै वाण्यै सरस्वत्यै नमः नमः । वण्यते शब्द्यत इति वाणी । That which was said, speech ;

Prostrations to that Vani who is the supreme spirit, who is the divine light, who is The Eternal Being, and who is the presiding deity of all learning. 5.

यया विना जगत्सर्वं शश्वज्जीवन्मृतं भवेत् ।

ज्ञानाधिदेवी या तस्यै सरस्वत्यै नमो नमः ॥ ६ ॥

यया विना without who जगत्सर्वं the whole world शश्वत् अव्यय perpetual, eternal, for ever जीवत् living मृतं dead या ज्ञानस्य अधि देवी तस्यै सरस्वत्यै नमः नमः ।

Prostrations to Sarasvati, Without who, the whole world would appear dead (even though living). And who is the presiding deity of knowledge. A person is as good as dead without the learning, Sarasvati. That is the import. 6.

यया विना जगत्सर्वं मूकमुन्मत्तवत्सदा ।

या देवी वागधिष्ठात्री तस्यै वाण्यै नमो नमः ॥ ७ ॥

मूक dumb उन्मत्तवत् possessed of madness अधिष्ठात्री She is the instrument through which presiding over is done. Or simply presiding. Prostrations to Vaani Without whom the whole world would appear dumb and

demented; who is the presiding deity of speech.

7.

॥ इति श्रीशङ्करविरचित शारदा प्रार्थना ॥

Appendix philosophical interest

Bhavaani

Why is Saraswati described as Bhavaani? I will briefly quote Sankara on the topic in Rudra bhaashyaM. Bhavaani, Uma are adjectives of the Rudra. Rudra means - One who melts the miseries of worldly life. Since the destruction of ignorance or misery of worldly is only possible with knowledge, it is appropriately said that Rudra-Uma sahita is capable of melting that misery. See Rudrabhaasyam for detailed explanation: namaH somaaya cha. Rudra is sheer power. Bhavaani is all knowledge, self-restraint, control. And, you see, Power is all about Control.

Saarada

Saarada means effulgence as was translated in the first sloka of shankara rachita shaaradaa praarthanaa. Namaste Saraswati! O effulgent Sarada,.. Right now, that is, the two months (Oct. 2nd, 1997 - Nov. 29, 1997) where in Sarasvatii puujaa (or Dasaraa festival) falls (aasviyuja, kaartiika) are called sharad Ritu. During the Sarad Ritu, what do you notice when you drive to work? It is a good day – neither cold nor hot, but the turnpike is jammed; but no accident! And after turning to the radio, you find out that traffic is crawling due to the radiant splendour (glare) of bhagavaan.h (or one who has a welath – of radiance) Aditya. That effulgence is called Saaradaa. What does it represent? Have you ever been in the presence of a learned man - be the subject matter is programming languages, neural networks, analog computers or financial mergers or Veda/Geetaas? In his presence, that subject suddenly seems to be very simple, questions seem to be answered with ease and the whole subject matter appears like simple common sense and you feel an unexplainable power and joy. What is it and Where do you think that brilliance flows? That brilliance is Saaaradaa, That flow is Sarasvatii, Those sounds are Vaanii.

Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com

Last updated August 20, 1999