॥ ब्रह्माण्डविजय श्रीशिवकवचम् ॥

.. brahmANDavijaya shrIshivakavacham ..
॥ ब्रह्माण्डविजय श्रीशिवकवचम् ॥

ब्रह्मवेचर्यपुराणे

नारायण उवाच-
विष्णु कवच ब्रह्म मत्स्य राजेन यजूर्वद्
नारायण महाभाग श्रीनीवेनु कौटुहल मम ॥ १ ॥

श्रीनारायण उवाच-
कवच श्रुण विष्णुद्रश शंकरस्य महालम्बनः
ब्रह्माण्ड विजयं नाम सर्वाद्वयव रक्षणम् ॥ २ ॥

पुरा दुर्भूससा दत्त मत्स्येय राजाय धीमते ।
दलवा पदक्षेर मदन संव पाप प्रणाशनम् ॥ ३ ॥

सिद्धै च कवच देवं नारित मुनिकुश जीविनाम्
अनेकशेषेजतेवहां सिद्धेश्वरारित संस्कारः ॥ ४ ॥

यजूर्वद्व पठनात वाणः विष्णु प्राप्तियत्वा ।
वभूव शिवतुल्यश यजूर्वद्व नन्दकेशरः ॥ ५ ॥

वैरश्रेष्ठो बुधभद्रो साम्वोभद्रो धारणायतः
जैदेशकविजयी राजा हिरण्यक्षिपु: स्वयम् ॥ ६ ॥

हिरण्याक्ष्ठश्च विजयी चाँभवदृ धारणादिं सः
यजूर्वद्व पठनात सिद्धो दुर्बंसा विख्य पूजितः ॥ ७ ॥

जैगीष्यो महायोगिगी पठनाध्य धारणायतः
यजूर्वद्व वामदेवां देवलः पवन: स्वयम् ॥ ८ ॥

अगस्त्यश्च पुजस्त्थाद्वाम्बवत् विश्वदृष्टिः ॥ ९ ॥

॥ श्रीशिवकवचम् ॥

ॐ नमः शिवायेत च मस्तकः मे सदाववतु ।
ॐ नमः शिवायेत च स्वाहा भालं सदाववतु ॥ १ ॥

ॐ हृ श्री हृ शिवायेत च स्वाहा नेत्रेव सदाववतु ।
ॐ हृ श्री हृ शिवायेत नमो मे पातु नासिकाम् ॥ २ ॥

ॐ नमः शिवाय शान्ताय स्वाहा कण्ठं सदाववतु ।
ॐ हृ श्री हृ संसारं कर्त्र स्वाहा कण्ठं सदाववतु ॥ ३ ॥

ॐ हृ श्री पद्धवक्राय स्वाहा दन्तं सदाववतु ।
॥ नमः श्रीविक्रमादिप्रवीणः ॥

$3$ हि महेश्वर स्वाहा चाठर्य पातुः मे सदा ॥ ४॥
$3$ हि श्री श्रीं त्रिनेत्रबस्त्र स्वाहा केशान सदाः स्वाहाः ॥ ५॥
$3$ हि एवं महादेव वस्त्र स्वाहा काश्य सदाः स्वाहाः ॥ ६॥
$3$ हि श्री श्रीं मुनिज्ञायन स्वाहा भ्रुवो भ्रुवो सदाः स्वाहाः ॥ ७॥
$3$ हि श्री श्रीं ईश्वरिनायन स्वाहा पार्थ सदाः स्वाहाः ॥ ८॥
$3$ हि ईश्वर चोदर्य चोदर्य तावः मे सदा ॥ ९॥
$3$ हि भृगुस्य स्वाहा पातुः सदाः स्वाहाः ॥ १०॥

प्राणाय क्षत्रं स्वाहा क्षत्रं स्वाहा ॥ ११॥

प्राणाय क्षत्रं स्वाहा क्षत्रं स्वाहा ॥ १२॥

प्राणाय क्षत्रं स्वाहा क्षत्रं स्वाहा ॥ १३॥

प्राणाय क्षत्रं स्वाहा क्षत्रं स्वाहा ॥ १४॥

नामायुवतेः ॥ १५॥

नामायुवतेः ॥ १६॥

नामायुवतेः ॥ १७॥

नामायुवतेः ॥ १८॥
The above hymn belongs to the genre of poems known as kavacham. A kavacham is an armour worn by soldiers in the battlefield as a shield to protect them from enemies’ weapons. In this hymn the devotee prays to Lord Rudra to protect his limbs and from danger from all directions. There are kavachams on many deities. This hymn is a rare amulet (kavacham) of Lord Shiva. It is in Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Ganapathy Khanda, chapter 35. The kavacha was given to Sage Naradha at his request by Lord Narayana. The hymn appears as part of the narration of Parasurama’s penance on Lord Shiva seeking boons to fulfill his vow to destroy twenty one generations of kshatriyas. Pleased with his penance Lord Shiva bestowed on him several astras, shastras, rare mantras, stotras and kavachams such as Krishna Kavacham, Padma Kavacham, Durga Kavacham, Kalika Kavacham, theabove shiva Kavacham etc. The kavacham was originally given to Matsya Raja by the Sage Durvasa after bestowing the shadaxara.
mantra. It is in the Kauya Shakha of Vedas. It is a most secretive one and difficult to attain. Lord Narayana describes the benefits of chanting the kavacham with devotion. Reciting this destroys sins and wards off death. One attains (siddhi) fulfillment, attainment of this kavacham by chanting it one million times and becomes verily like Lord Rudra Himself. Without knowing this Kavacham a person will not attain siddhi of Shiv mantra even if he repeats it ten million times. Performing one million asvamedha sacrifices, hundred Rajasuya sacrifices and all other sacrifices cannot become equal to one sixteenth of this Kavacham. The person who chants this Kavacham becomes a Jivanmukta (liberated even while living) and all knowing and attains supernatural powers. The armours were used in olden days by solders during wars to protect the user from enemies’ weapons. In spite of their use solders have been injured seriously or even lost their lives. People resort to using various devices for their protection. The state employs a vast police force and military to provide protection to people. In addition some engage security guards for their protection. Ministers, governors and high ranking officials get special security guards to protect them round the clock. If we ask why all want protection it is to protect themselves from pain and death. Still we see that they get attacked
and killed. Everyone values his life above all else. 

नहः नयतं किवद्रस्तीह नित्यतम ।

किमाश्चर्यम्? The king replies:

अहम्यहि भूतानि गच्छन्तीह यमालयम् ।
शेषा: स्थावरारम्भन्ति किमाश्चर्यमत: परम् ॥

But what happens in reality. Everyone still has fear. The fear arises from various sources. The source may be sickness, accidents or death from different causes. But still inspite of all the efforts, and ingenious devices like insurance schemmes etc., there is still much uncertainty about the efficacy of these items. Because the protection offered from these devices all suffer from various deficiencies. So, they cannot afford total security. One reason is they themselves are not secure totally. Even gods like Indra live in fear. We learn from puranas that the gods were routed and driven away from their homes by asuras like Ravana and Mahabali. Further the positions like Indra and Brahma the
creator are obtained by merit (punyam). One enjoys the rich life there and as soon as the stock of punyam is exhausted the person has to return to this world and take another birth. Krishna says this in Gita (9-21).

Thus these lives in higher worlds are also subject to happiness and grief. Krishna said this to His friend Uddhava (Bhagavatam 11-6-29,30).

Meaning:- Doing through those bodies deeds that but result in grief, they again get new bodies. What happiness comes to mortals in this process? The higher worlds as also the rulers of those worlds, (who live upto a cycle) including Brahma the creator who has a fabulously long life of ten thousand billion years has to be afraid of Me. So if one wants a real protector that one should not have such infirmities. Such a protector without any infirmity is only God. The great Vaishnava acharya Shri Vedanta Desika tells this in his Ashtabhujaashtakam. (5).

Meaning:- O Lord! to get rid of fear I do not think that anyone other than You is to be sought after. When You are kindly inclined from where will fear arise? On the other hand, if You are not kindly
inclined who is there to protect me?
And again in Kamasikashtakam (8) he says:
त्वायरक्षतिरक्षकेः किमन्येः, त्वायरक्षतिरक्षकेः किमन्येः?
When You are there to protect me what use is there by others?
If You do
not think of protecting me then again what use is there of others?
Because of the fact that God is the only real protector, the practice
of invoking the Lord’s names in different parts of the body has been
in vogue from time immemorial. We find in Shri Bhagavatam
the gopis
invoked God’s protection in child Krishna’s body after they found Him
playing on the huge body of Putana after she died. The following
verses give this in detail.
गोमूऽेण भापिया पुनर्गोरजसाभःकम्।
रक्षाचक्रूऽशकृतादशाॆषु
नामिभः ॥ २०॥
Having bathed the boy with the urine of a cow (which is held to be as
sacred as the water of the holy Ganga) and again sprinkling him with
the dust under the hoofs of cows (which is considered to be as good
as sprinkling with the totality of all sacred waters) they (further)
ensured his security by daubing him with cowdung (which is recognised
as another seat of goddess Lakshmi) at twelve points while uttering
(twelve different) names (of the Lord).(20).
(NOTE:- The twelve names to be uttered on such occasions and the twelve
limbs to be touched while doing so are specified in the following verse of the Padma Purana.

Meaning:- One should visualise Keshava on one’s forehead, Narayana on the belly, Madhava on the breast and Govinda on the back of one’s neck, Vishnu in the right side of the abdomen and madhusudana on the right arm, Trivikrama on the neck, Vamana on the left side (of the abdomen), Sridhara on the left arm and Hrishikesa again on the neck, Padmanabha on the back and Damodara on the waist.)

Having sipped water and assigned (a number of seed letters (representing the first letters of the following eleven names of the Lord followed by a nasal sound (Anuswara) separately to the (diverse) limbs of their (own) body as well as to (the parts of) their hands, the cowherd women next assigned the same seed letters to the limbs and (parts of) the hands of the baby.(21)
May Aja (the birthless Lord) protect your feet; Manman (the Lord adorned
with the KAustubha gem) your knees and Yagna (the deity presiding
over sacrifices) your thighs; Achyutha (the immortal Lord) your
loins;
Hayagriva (the Lord endowed with the head of a horse) your
abdomen;
Kesava (the ruler of even Brahma and Siva) your heart; Isa (the
almighty Lord) your bosom and Ina (the master) your throat;
Vishnu
(all pervading Lord) your arms; Urukrama (the Lord with long
strides)
your mouth and Ishvara (the supreme Lord) your head. (22).

May the wielder of a discus stand (as your protector) before
you and Sri
Hari endowed with a mace behind you; the slayer of Madhu
ans Ajana
(the birthless Lord) wielding (severally) a bow and a sword
stand on
your two sides; Urugaya (sung by many) the wielder of a conch
at the
(four) points intervening between the quarters; LOrd VAmana
(the younger
brother of INdra) overhead; the rider of Garuda on the ground
and the
Supreme Person (Lord Sankarshana) wielding a plough on all
sides.(23).
May Hrishikesa protect your Indriyas; Narayana your vital airs; Vasudeva (the Lord of Svetadvipa) your intellect; Aniruddha (the master of yoga) your mind; Pisnigarbha (Pradyumna) your understanding; and Sankarshana (the all-destroying Lord) your ahankara (ego). May Govinda (who sports in the senses) protect you while you are at play; Madhava while lying down; Vaikunta while walking; the Lord Of Sri while seated; and the Enjoyer of sacrifices inspiring terror in all evil spirits while you are dining (24-26).

Malevolent spirits such as) Dakinis, Yatudanis, and Kusmandas, evil spirits that seize their victims taking the form of babes, Bhutas, Pretas and Pisachas, Yakshas, Rakashasas, and Vinayakas, Kotara, Revati, Jyeshta, Putana, (the sixteen) Matrikas and others (such as Charaki and Jwalamuka), Unmadas (evil spirit causing insanity) and Apasmara (those inducing apoplexy), that actually torment the body and sense organs and interfere with the vital functions of those responsible for
evil portents of a grave nature seen in dreams and those that seize
the aged as well as youngsters (alike) -terrified at the mention of
the names of Lord Vishnu, may all these (evil spirits) die out. (27-29).
Thus it is clear that the Lord alone can be the source of true protection.
So, He has he name (Vishnusahasranama-935)
भयापहः भयं संसारजं बुनामपदन्नभयापहः।
and Devi has the name भयापहा in Lalthasahasranama (121).
भयाणि जलस्थलादिप्रत्यक्षादीनि सर्वांक्यपहनातिभयापहा।
तथा च वायुपुराणे - अरण्ये प्रात्तरे वापि जले वापि स्थलेडपि वा।
This says that one caught in the midst of a forest or in a desolate place, in the sea, or anywhere in the land or while in fear of animals
like tiger or shark or thieves or in mental pain should chant Devi’s
names. Shri Appayya Dikshita, the great poet and devotee
echos this thought in verses 12 and 13 in his Durga Chandrakala Stuti.
कान्तारम्यहतरत्मसत्यारसस्ना
मभ्रदृश्वारिषिस्ते रिपुभिष्ठितरुद्धा।
वर्या: प्राप्य चरणिः विपद्यत्रान्ति
सा मे सदास्तु हृदि सर्वज्ञगतसबित्रि॥ १२॥
Those who have lost their way in the dense forest and are
distressed, those who are floundering in the deep seas and are struggling to reach
safety, those who are being attacked by enemies they will find their
problems eased by surrendering at the feet of Durga.
वन्धे वधे महति मृत्युभये प्रसक्ते
वितस्के च वविधे च महापतापे।
Great men have said that fear of incarceration, being killed, death, loss of wealth, varities of other fears such as fear from government agencies, thieves, serpants, animals etc., will be removed by worshipping the Mother. I surrender to that Devi. Shri Shankaracharya was very much aware of the fact that if one has God in his heart one need not fear anything. So, he asks in Sivanandalahari (44) from where will fear come when he has the Lord Shiva in the recess of his heart -Shiva the one who holds a deer in one hand, has destroyed Gajasura and Vyagrasura, who takes into Himself all beings at the time of pralaya, who resides in mount Kailasa and has a white complexion.

So, it should be our endeavour to firmly establish one’s favourite deity, be it Rama, Krishna or Shiva or Devi or any other form by earnest prayers to Him and be rid of any fear. The question, then is, how to firmly establish one’s favourite God in our minds. While people may talk of different ways, Shrimad Bhagavatam shows the easy way. It is listening to His stories or words known as श्रवणम्. Today we should include reading them also in this.

श्रवणम् स्वयं स्वकथा कृष्णः पुण्यश्रवणकर्त्तनः ।
हृदयन्थःस्यो हयमन्त्रणि विधुनोति सुहृत्सताम्॥
This says that Krishna is the friend of the virtuous, Listening to His praises sanctify those who listen or sing them. He abides in the heart of those who hear His stories and uproots the evil propensities of their mind. (Shrimad Bhagavatam-1-2-17). Such statements are to be seen in abundance in this holy book. Today we are indeed blessed because the expositions of holy books by learned scholars are easily available to us in several media like radio, TV, internet, ebboks and internet. Repetedly listening to such holy books and reading them will gradually winnow away the blemishes of the heart like anger, greed, lust etc and make it pure and a fit abode for the Lord to stay.

॥ ऋ तत्सत् ॥

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