॥ नारायणहृदयम् ॥

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August 2, 2016
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Document Information

Text title : nArAyaNa hRidayam
File name : narayanahridayam.itx
Category : hRidaya
Location : doc_vishhnu
Language : Sanskrit
Subject : philosophy/hinduism/religion
Transliterated by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at satyam.net.in, Anuradha anuraadha_rs at yahoo.co.in
Proofread by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at satyam.net.in, Anuradha anuraadha_rs at yahoo.co.in
Description-comments : should be used with lakShmI hRidayam
Latest update : April 4, 2009
Send corrections to : Sanskrit@cheerful.com
Site access : http://sanskritdocuments.org

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August 2, 2016
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INTRODUCTION: The following abbreviations are used in the comments that follow. (1) Narayana Hridayam - NH. (2) Laxmi Hridayam - LH. (3) Vishnu Sahasranama with the commentary of Shri Shankaracharya - VS. (4) Bhagavad Gita - BG. (5) Shrimad Bhagavatham - BH. (6) Lalitha Sahasranamam - LS. (7) Vivekachudamani of Shri Shankaracharya - VC. (8) Katha Upanishad - KU. (9) Mundaka Upanishad - MU.

Narayana Hridayam stotram is unique in that it is coupled with another stotram Laxmi Hridayam to form a pair. They are found in the Atharva Rahasyam. They were given out by sage Bhargava. They belong to the category of stotram स्तोत्रम्.

The appellation stotram, stuti and stavam all describe a hymn only. स्तव्यस्तोत्रं स्तुतिः स्तुतिः। says Amara, the Sanskrit lexicon. They all narrate the qualities of a deity. गुणसंकीत्तमम् is stotram, says Shri Shankaracharya in his commentary to Vishnu Sahasranama. The Lord in His true form is described in the scriptures as having no attributes or qualities such as name, form or qualities.

यत्तत्त्वदेश्य-मयाह्व-मगोत्र-मथर्ममच्छुः श्रीत्रं तदमथिण-पादम्।
नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सूक्ष्मं तदव्यं वद्द्वत्योतिनं परिपथयतित धीरा:।

MU(1-1-5.)

But since such a God will be impossible for a devotee to comprehend and relate with, the scriptures say that the Lord is also available with names and forms. This makes it easy for a devotee to worship Him. The kindly Lord accepts this kind of worship also.

STOTRAM:- Customarily a stotram describes a hymn that is ancient. It
is generally found in vedas, puranas or itihasas such as the Ramayana or Mahabharatha. Thus we call Vishnu Sahasranama and the Lalitha Sahasranama as stotras. So also we call Aditya Hridayam as stotram. They were narrated by some sage, but the sage himself is not the author. He had heard it or got it from some one. Thus the origin is not known and is lost in antiquity. Generally the sage who narrates it says something about its glory in the beginning. He also appends a list of benefits one will get by reciting it or using it in some specific manner as in a sacrifice or homa. This is known as phalashruti (फलौश्रुतिः १).

Thus, we find these parts or components in these two stotras (NH) and (LH). But some hymns composed by great acharyas or saints later on that were outpourings of intense devotion also carry the appellation stotram. The popular Kanakadharā Stotram by Shri Shankaracharya and Hayagriva Stotram by Shri Vedanta Desika are examples of this kind. But the borderline has become grey with the result that nowadays any hymn is being called a stotram.

WHY RECITE STOTRAM? :- Let us briefly discuss as to why should one listen to and recite stotras. Our scriptures repeatedly state that the birth as a human being is very rare and so immensely valuable. Rarer still are the desire for liberation and association of noble souls They urge us to appreciate the fact and make best use of our birth as humans.

The reason for saying that a human birth is great should be obvious. Animals may be stronger, faster and have capabilities such as very acute hearing, keen eye sight etc., which we do not possess. Still we claim to be superior to them because we humans are endowed with the power of reasoning and common sense. With these gifts we can plan our future intelligently, set goals and do all that is needed to attain the goals. Our scriptures say that if, after being born as a human being, one fails to exploit these gifts properly and achieve the goals, then that person is no different from an animal.
GOALS - The goals may vary from one person to the other and so can be numerous. But our sages have analysed these numerous goals and divided them into four categories. They are (1) dharma, (2) artha or material acquisitions like wealth, house, family etc., (3) kama or sense pleasures that wealth and other material acquisitions mentioned earlier can provide and finally (4) moksha or liberation. These are known as पुरुषार्थाः: since they are sought after by people. अर्थः = goal.

(1) Dharma - Performing actions as prescribed by our scriptures is called dharma. One who wants to move up the spiritual path is enjoined to follow the injunctions, though they may superficially appear to be illogical or inconvenient. Going against them is termed as a sinful act and will lead to one’s downfall. Krishna states this clearly in BG (16-23,24).

यः शास्विधिमृत्युष्य वर्तनते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमापतिः न सुखं परां गतिम् ॥ २३॥

तत्समा-च्छाह्स प्रमाणं ते कार्यार्थ-व्यवस्थितो ।
शाल्या शास्ववधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमहाहासिः ॥ २४॥

(2) Artha - We need wealth and other material comforts to enable us to lead a worry-free life. Besides, money is required to perform religious duties like, going on pilgrimages, pujas, charity etc. So, seeking wealth, per se is not evil. Kalidasa, in his famous poem Raghuvamsam says (1-7) that the kings of the dynasty of Raghu amassed wealth for giving away to the needy and worthy and not for enriching themselves. त्यागाय संभृताशानाम् । Working to acquire wealth and saving for a rainy day are recommended. It is not decried as long the means by which the wealth is obtained is legal and does not involve injury or harm to others. (3) Kama - Our scriptures allows one to enjoy the benefits of artha (i.e) wealth earned. They include house, family, friends etc. But, as said in the case of artha above, the enjoyments sought and indulged in should not be illegal or against the dictates of the shahstras. They should not be such that will lead to attachments and moral degradation. Having desire is natural and allowed. In fact, Krishna says that He is behind such proper desires in all beings. धर्मारिवृध्द भूतेषु कामोऽर्थम् भर्तर्योम।

BG(7-11). Our scriptures talk of special prayers and rituals by which one can obtain immense riches and pleasures including life among gods in
the heavens and even the highest world - that of the creator Brahma. This shows that they allow us to entertain desires as long as they are proper as said above. But attachment binds and so is dangerous. Our scriptures warn us to be wary of developing attachment to money, property, relations, people etc. (4) MokSha or liberation - means liberation from rebirth.

REAL GOAL - It is to be noted that our scriptures do not consider the first three goals as real goals at all. The logic is this. All actions produce results. If one does actions that are dharmic he gets the fruits of the actions in the form of merit or punyam. If one acts contrary to dharma, he gets the results in the form of sins or papam. One enjoys these results in this birth or one may have to be born again once or many times for the purpose. The fruits of punyam may be a better and more comfortable birth in this world or higher worlds. The results of adharmic actions may be inferior births as animals and plants or a human birth full of sufferings and misery in the form of sickness etc. Thus one gets entangled in the cycle of repeated births and deaths. Krishna points out that even if one gets a place in the heavens, he should remember that that place is got as the reward for his good deeds. As soon as the stock of punyam is exhausted he will necessarily have to come down to this world and rejoin the cycle of birth and death. BG(9-21)

This is awful. So, our scriptures do not consider the three goals as commonly understood as real goals. Only liberation or mokSha is said to be the real goal since after attaining mokSha one escapes the agony of samsara. Therefore it is known as the supreme goal or परसपुरुषाय: |

Samsara implies being born, growing up, going through the ups and downs of life, growing old and dying only to be born again. Liberation is freedom for ever. So it becomes the duty of every intelligent person to work for liberation and not keep on wallowing in samsara. Keeping the above facts in mind, the scriptures define the purpose of the goals in a very different manner. They ask us to use these three goals for achieving spiritual progress in order to escape samsara. One should
do dharma to earn wealth which should be used to earn religious merit and not for enjoying sensuous pleasures. The goal of dharma should be kept as spiritual progress. The aim of kama should not be taken as enjoying sense pleasures but should just be keeping the body and soul together. The aim of keeping the body and soul together should be to strive and learn about the way to liberation and not strive to attain transient pleasures like the enjoyment in heaven etc.

The devotees of the Lord were very clear about the above facts. For example, Kulasekhara declares that he is not interested in the three goals - dharma, artha and kama. He says that let events, good or bad, happen according to karmas he had done. He prays to the Lord to grant him unwavering devotion to His lotus like feet in this and in future births. (Mukundamala).

Liberation:- Liberation, as said earlier, means liberation from cyclic birth. It is spoken as attaining the lotus feet of the Lord in the puranas. According to upanishads liberation means dropping one’s identification with the body/mind complex and realising his/her divine nature. The scriptures assert that one is distinct from the body/mind complex and is indeed divine in nature and so is not subject to sorrows and rebirth. The wrong identification with the body/mind complex is due to wrong knowledge or nescience known as ajnanam (अज्ञानम्). Thus, liberation implies settling down in our true or real nature which is divine and thus be free from problems for ever afterwards. तत्तति शोकमात्मविवादिताः says the upanishad. Because of this reason, Krishna says there is no gain greater than this. BG(6-22).

The above facts should be kept in mind to earn religious merit and not for enjoying sensuous pleasures.
DESIRE FOR LIBERATION:- For this reason, liberation does indeed sound immensely attractive. But the sad truth is that it has very few takers. Only a minuscule minority is interested in seeking liberation. Krishna ruefully says this in Gita. भगवान् सहः भक्तिति सिद्धे। BG(7-3). Yama, the Lord of death, also bemoans the fact, and says that the dullards are attracted by sense pleasures and so choose the path of mundane prosperity, but the wise choose the path of liberation. KU (1-2-2).

Wrong knowledge can be righted only by right knowledge called jnanam (ज्ञानम्) just like darkness can be removed only by bringing in light. The way to gain jnanam is described in a very systematic manner in our scriptures. However, our scriptures never tire of warning that the path to gain wisdom is extremely difficult. इशुस्वय मनु श्वास्त्रे श्वास्त्रे च्यातिरित:। ऐश्वर्यो हि प्रौढःभि प्रेयसे वृणिते प्रेयो मन्दो योग्यक्षेमात् वृणिते।

The wise men say it is as difficult as walking on the razor’s edge said Yama to his disciple Nachiketas. कुष्ठस्वय धारा निषिद्धा दुर्गत्वा डुर्गा प्रत्यंत्ययो बदलि। KU (1-3-14). KrishnA too says this.

The reason that this path is very difficult for most people is that their minds are sullied by negative qualities like desires, anger, attachments, jealousy etc. These qualities cloud the intellect and often distort judgement. Impelled by anger or greed one may turn selfish and indulge in illegal or immoral acts. Our scriptures declare that people who have such weaknesses, will always be distracted and so cannot comprehend the subtle spiritual wisdom. Even after hearing about liberation repeatedly, their minds will not be excited enough to take a step in that direction. This is very unfortunate. नावरतो दुःखिततःशाशाम्नो नासमाहितः। नाशात्मानयसो वार्धि प्रह्लादनेनमाधुर्यात्। KU(1-2-24). So it is said that one with the desire for liberation, known as मुमुक्षुत्वम्, is a rare phenomenon.

The first thing to do for one who desires liberation is to purge the mind of such distracting traits and steady it. This is achieved by regular performance of prescribed karma or duties. However we saw earlier that karmas produce results and lead to rebirth. The way to
escape the results is to blend karma with devotion or bhakti. One continues to engage himself in all regular activities, but escapes the results by offering the results to the Lord. The results having been offered to God will not attach to the performer of the action. Krishna says this in BG(9-27, 28).

\[ \text{यत्करोष यद्वशासि यजुदार्थि कदाचि यत्} \]

\[ \text{यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष मद्यपर्यम्} \]

\[ \text{॥ २७॥} \]

He tells Arjuna: \[ यद्वशासि यजुदार्थि कदाचि यत् \]

\[ यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष मद्यपर्यम् \]

\[ \text{॥ २८॥} \]

In this way, actions done, but without any desire for results, lead to purification of the mind. चित्ताय शुद्धवे कर्म॥ VC(11). and योगिन: कर्म कुर्वान्ति संह त्यत्त्वात्मशुद्धि॥ BG(5-11).

ASSOCIATION OF SAINTS:- As the mind sheds its impurities and gets pure, God’s grace slowly reveals itself like the full moon emerging from behind the clouds. The kindly Lord arranges for him to come into contact with noble souls, like sadhus or saints. Our shastras describe them as the messengers of God. They move around the world telling people about the weaknesses of the life one normally leads and explaining the need for treading the spiritual path. They do this without any expectations. They have found the source of happiness. They have the noble desire that others too should take to the spiritual path and find everlasting happiness. Shri Shankaracharya says this.

\[ \text{शान्ता महान्तो निवपन्नति सन्त: वसन्तवह्नोकहितं चरन्तः} \]

\[ \text{तीणा स्वचं भीमवहारणे जनः- नहेतुनाम्यानि तारयन्तः} \]

\[ \text{॥ VC (37).} \]

We, normally will not be able to identify a saint, because he will look like anyone else and will shun publicity and crowds. It is only God’s grace that can lead to a meeting with a mahatma and make us listen to his words. Thus, a human birth is a rarity in the first place and rarer still is the meeting with a saintly person. King Nimi says this when he gets a chance to meet the nine yogis. BH(11-2-29).
As the minds of saints are imbued with devotion, they take delight in talking about the Lord - who is none other than their inner self - and not about mundane matters.

The words of such God intoxicated devotees have great power. They go to the heart and so can work wonders. As one comes into contact with them and listen to their nectar like words, they strengthen the devotion. The mind slowly turns away from the world and towards the Lord. The worldly attractions and worries gradually lose their hold. Mind becomes calm and peaceful. It acquires qualities required to for spiritual progress. These qualities are said to be four in number and are known in the vedantic parlance as साधन चतुःर्यम् or four means of attainment. They are described in texts like Viveka Chudamani and Tattva Bodha. They are more elaborately described by Krishna in chapter 16 of Bhagavat Gita. He calls them as दैवी संपत्त or divine qualities.

They are necessarily to be acquired by one stepping on to the path of liberation. दैवी सम्पदिमोक्षाय। says Krishna. BG(16-5).

It is difficult to acquire these virtues by practice. But one need not despair and refrain from making any attempt in this direction. Our shastras are aware of this problem and provide an attractive solution to the seemingly difficult problem. They say that one who worships the Lord regularly and practises devotion to Him gets over the difficulties with His grace and acquires the qualifications as by-products. He will, therefore progress without much effort on the spiritual path. Krishna makes this assurance. BG(18-55).

The easiest methods of worship are listening to His glories as described in stotras, puranas etc., or chanting stotras or repeating His names by way
of doing japa. That is why in the introduction to Vishnu Sahasranama we find Yudhistira asking Bhishma for a simple method that will give one freedom from samsara. Bhishma answers that the best and also the simplest method to tide over all kinds of sorrows, including samsara, is reciting the hymns that sing the praise of the Lord.

Shri Shankaracharya, in his commentary to the above line, explains why Bhishma said this is the best method. He says

That is, this method does not involve causing injury to other beings as in animal sacrifices, does not require help from another person, or money, or depend on a particular time as Ekadasi or Amavasya or travel to holy places such as Kasi or Rameshvaram. It can be practised by any one irrespective of age, sex, status in society etc. The sage Naradha emphasises the importance when he told Shri Vyasa that reciting the hymns which enumerate the virtues of the Lord is the abiding purpose of doing austere penances, rituals, recitation of vedas etc.

The reason is, that by practising devotion to God one gets the four qualifications necessary to progress on the spiritual path that culminates in wisdom or jnanam as by-products. Shri Shankaracharya says this in his AparokShanubhuti thus.

Shri Bhagavatam also says this. BH(1-2-8).

Thus, it is necessary to perform our prescribed duties and in addition, make listening to and reciting stotras an essential part of our daily routine.
to intensify the devotion. The scriptures contain hymns that narrate the qualities of God with name and form. Shri Rudram is a well known example of a vedic hymn. The Kaivalyopanishad says that reciting Shri Rudram will purify one of all sins. यः शतकृतीयमधीते, सोपिज्ज्ञ्यूतो भवित, सुरापानायत्तौ भवित, ब्रह्मात्यात्तौ भवित, कृत्याक्त्यात्तौ भवित, तस्मादविभुज्यात्तौ भवित। In addition, we have hymns in puranas. Our acharyas and other devotees have also contributed many hymns. The recital of such hymns is the easiest and best method of worshipping Him and acquire purity of mind by purging it of sins.

Because of these reasons, the Lord has the name पुण्यः स्मरणादि कुर्वतो सर्वेऽपुरुष कृत्तीति पुण्यः। VS(925) Thus reciting hymns or just listening to them is eminently suitable for people in this modern age as they are pressed for time.

SUMMARY: To summarise the above, we should first realise that the human birth is an invaluable asset. Our scriptures say that one gets it after many births as other beings as birds, beasts, plants etc., depending on our karma stock. So, we should grab the opportunity with both hands and work assiduously for liberation. If we fail to do so, then the loss is immense since we do not know what our next and subsequent births will be and when we will get another birth as a human being again and will be able to work our way up. At this point there may be an argument. One may say that he will do lot of good karmas, earn plenty of merit or punyam and as a result gain birth in higher worlds. This may be in the world of gods such as Indra and may be even in that of Lord Brahma the creator. There one can have a great time, full of enjoyment and also work for liberation in such a wonderful environment. This is not a wise argument, say our acharyas. The upanishad says that the vision of the Self can be had clearly in the mind, as in a mirror, only in this world. It cannot be had clearly in the world of Gandarvas, manes and gods like Indra. These worlds are meant for enjoyment of pleasures got as a result of many good karmas. The mind that is behind the senses will, therefore, be pulled in many directions. The image of the Self will consequently be scattered like the reflection on the surface of water that is agitated by the wind and so not clear. One will be unable to
concentrate on the spiritual progress. KU(II-III-5)
यथादृश्च तथासस्तमनि यथा स्वमे तथा तितुनोके ।
यथास्पुरीव दृढः तथा गन्धर्व्वतोके चायातपयोरिव ब्रह्मलोके ॥

If one misses the chance to attain liberation in this world, then he can get a chance to attain vision of the Self clearly only in the Brahma Loka. But that world is the highest one and very difficult to attain. It can be reached only by numerous special kinds of rites and meditation. Therefore one should leave no stone unturned to attain liberation in this world itself. Krishna tells Uddhava that, sense-enjoyments can be had in any body, but realisation can be had only with the human body. So, keeping in the mind the fact that the human body is fragile, one should make haste and strive for liberation here itself. BH(11-9-26).

Shri Shankaracharya, in his commentary to the above verse quoted from the KU (II-III-5) makes a subtle observation. The upanishad says that the vision of the Self may be had distinctly, as in a mirror, in our intellect in this world. The idea, he says, is that the reflection will be distinct in a mirror, only when it is spotlessly clear. Similarly, the mind, in order to be able to reflect the Self clearly, should first be made absolutely clear by the performance of prescribed duties, prayers, meditation etc. Then, with the guidance of a guru and following his instructions one can progress towards liberation.

NARAYANA HRIDAYAM AND LAXMI HRIDAYAM:— Narayana Hridayam (NH) and Laxmi Hridayam (LH) form a pair of very valuable and sacred hymns. NH is the shorter one. It consists of only 37 verses. LH is longer and consists of 108 verses. The word (हृदयम्) hridayam is popularly taken to mean the heart. The word also is used to mean secret, true or divine knowledge.
Being hymns found in the Veda the Narayana Hridayam and Laxmi Hridayam Stotras are highly efficacious. They are sanctifying as was said of Shri Rudram earlier. They also contain recondite vedantic truths which may be found in the upanishads, puranas, Bhagavad Gita etc. These truths are also to be seen in other stotras and in the hymns of later acharyas. लक्ष्मीहृदयके स्तोत्रे सर्वमन्यत प्रकाशितम्। (NH - 33).

So, to describe them as hridayam is very apt. They are, therefore, very precious. For these reasons they are considered very sacred and therefore secret - not to be easily given out. गोप्यमेतत्सदा कुर्यात् न सर्वत्र प्रकाशितेत। says Narayana Hridayam (34) in its later part. Because of this restriction these stotras were handed down from a worthy guru to deserving disciples only. They were not freely available like Vishnu Sahasranamam.

Only some noteworthy features of this stotram (NH) could be mentioned in this brief introduction. The reader is requested to read the comments given to the LH also (available in this site under the heading Laxmi in the category DEVI) as these two stotras are linked.

The Narayana Hridayam stotram contains sixteen verses in the beginning that narrate the glory of the Lord. Verses No. 1 and 2 describe the Lord with form. This is suitable for meditation. This form is to be retained in the mind when reciting the NH.

But there is another form of the Lord which needs to be known. This is the form that Krishna discusses in Chapter 7 of BG. The Lord says He has two aspects. The Superior one has no attributes. It is the very soul of all beings and sustains the universe. The other, namely, the Inferior aspect is divided into eight categories and from that the universe of names and forms evolves. This is said to be Inferior aspect since people get snared in names and forms and overlook the Lord behind them who sustains the universe. A familiar example is that we go to a theatre and watch a movie. We get absorbed in the movie and forget to notice the screen. It is the screen that is behind the movie and sustains it, but this fact is overlooked. Similarly we are absorbed in the world of names and forms and fail to notice the Lord who bears all the names and forms.
They, thus get caught in samsara. This aspect is known as Prakriti or maya. Krishna says that His maya is very powerful and difficult to cross over without His grace. BG(7-14) दैवी द्वैशा गुणमयी मम माया दुर्गत्या॥ मामेव ये प्रज्ञन्ते मायामेषां तत्त्वते॥
The supreme Being, known as Brahman, when associated with maya is known as Ishvara or Maheshvara and becomes the cause of the universe through the agency of Maya. मायां तु प्रकृति विद्यामायिनः च महेश्वरम्॥ says the Svetasvataraupanisad (4-10). Everything is born of Prakriti. Maya, in Sanskrit, is of feminine gender. So, it is spoken of as the consort of the Lord, Mother Goddess or Lalitha, LakShmi etc. Thus, though they are spoken as two items, they are indeed one indivisible Brahman only. Shri Shankaracharya says this in his Saundaryalahari (sloka No.97). गीरामाद्वैती दृष्टिः महात्मानिकी विद्यामायिनः हरेः पल्लवः हरसहचरी महात्मानिकी विद्यामायिनः तुरीया कार्यं तेन दृष्टिः भ्रमणसि परश्रमः महामाया विश्व भ्रमणसि परश्रमः महामाया॥
He says that wise people who are well read in the scriptures say that You are Sarasvati the consort of Brahma the creator; again they say You are Laxmi the consort of Hari and also You are Parvati the consort of Siva. You are beyond the three and are the limitless One who is very difficult to reach. You are the Maya who makes the entire universe go round and round. Thus, Ishvar and Maya are inseparable and are known as the parents of the universe. This concept is depicted in our shastras as Ardhanarishwara in whom both Siva and Parvati share half of one body. The poet Kalidasa says this in the invocatory verse to his immortal classic Raghuvamsam as follows. वागर्थिवीच संपृक्तो वागर्थप्रतिपत्ते। जगत: पितारो वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरी॥
Salutes Parvati and Parameswara who are the parents of the Universe and who are (inseparably) united like the speech and its sense. Prakriti or maya named variously as Parvati or Laxmi is the creative power of the Lord. He indeed is the causeless cause of everything that are the products or effect. It is to be noted that the properties of the cause will be there in the products. Thus, ornaments made of gold will have the properties of
gold. Gold has no form but the ornaments are many and have different forms and names. Same is the case with vessels made of clay and so on. In the same way, Lord is the cause of everything. The visible universe contains numerous items, right from Brahma the creator to insignificant insects and inanimate things. But they are all manifestations of the Lord only, but they all bear different forms and names. This is brought out in verse No. 3 to 18. These verse say that there is nothing apart from Him and all were His manifestations only. For this reason these verses are very significant.

The words used herein will sound familiar since they are same as the verses in the Narayana Suktam said along with the Purusha Suktam. The verses are:

\[
िवं नारायणं देवमयरं परमं पदम्।
िवंतः परमाितः इवं नारायणँ हरिम्।
िविधमेवं पुरुषस्तिथिमुपजीविति।
पति विभवस्यात्मेऽधरं शाच्चतः शिवमच्चतम्।
नारायणम महादेशं विश्वात्मानं परायणम।
]

These verse are eminently suitable for meditating on the Lord who is described as being the cause of the universe. From Him only even the creator Brahma and other gods were born. HE is every thing. There is none greater than Him. He is the goal and He is the one who can confer the supreme goal of mokSha and other goals spoken of earlier. So, He is the one to be meditated upon. These verse are followed by ten verses by which one surrenders to the Lord and seeks His grace.

The final part says that this stotram is to be recited first, to be followed by the recital of Laxmi Hridayam and again the recital of this stotram. This is not to be recited separately as a single piece. This is to stress the fact that Lord Narayana and Laxmi are indeed one though spoken of as two different deities.
CONCLUSION. It will be evident from what is said here that both the NH and LH are valuable hymns and like veritable mines of precious gems. An interested reader will be able to find more gems if he digs deep into them. The greater benefit will be, that by reciting them regularly, one will develop devotion to Divine Couple, Lord Narayana and Goddess Laksmi, and reap their abundant grace. Now follows the NARAYANA HRIDAYAM stotram.

॥ ऋत्सत ॥
नारायणद्वयम्

तन्मथे भूमि-पदाङ्कश-शिल्पदलं कर्षिकामूर्त-मेहुम्।
तत्र शायतमूर्ति राणिमय-मकुटे कुण्डलो-ज्वालिसिताः
कष्मी-नारायणाय सरसिजन संततं चिन्त्याम्॥ २॥

अस्य श्रीनारायणाहट्ट-स्तोत्र-महामन्त्रस्य ब्रह्म ऋषिः
अनुदृष्ट छन्दः। नारायणो देवता, नारायण-प्रीत्यं जपे विनियोगः॥

श्री नारायणः परं ज्ञोति-रत्ना नारायणः परः।
नारायणः परं ब्रह्म नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ३॥

नारायणः परेऽदेवो धाता नारायणः परः।
नारायणः परे धाता नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ४॥

नारायणः परे ध्याम ध्यानं नारायणः परः।
नारायण परे धर्मो नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ५॥

नारायणः परे देवो विभा नारायणः परः।
विशे नारायणः साख्यात् नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ६॥

नारायणादु विभिर्जातो जातो नारायणादु भवः।
जातो नारायणादिद्रो नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ७॥

रवि-नारायण-स्तेजः चन्द्रो नारायणो महः।
बहि-नारायणः साख्यात् नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ८॥

नारायण उपास्यः स्यादु मुहं-नारायणः परः।
नारायणः परे बोधो नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ ९॥

नारायणः फलं मुस्मं दिष्ठि-नारायणः सुखम्।
हरि-नारायणः शुद्धि-नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ १०॥

निगमावेदितान्नत-कल्याणगुण-वारिष्ठे।
नारायण नमस्तेदस्तु नरकाण्व-तारक॥ ११॥

जन्म-मृत्यु-जरा-व्याधि-पारत्यादिभिः सदा।
दोषे-रस्त्रपुपाय नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ १२॥

वेदशाहृथविशाखे-साध्यभक्त-मोचर।
नारायण नमस्तेदस्तु मामुदर भवाणवात्॥ १३॥

नित्यानन्द महोदार परात्म जगात्मतः।
नारायण नमस्तेदस्तु मोक्षात्मकाय-देयने॥ १४॥

आद्रहस्थम-परद-मित्तलम-महाधरू।
सर्वभूतात्म-भूतात्मन नारायण नमोऽस्तु ते॥ १५॥
नारायण ह्रिदयम्
पालिताश्रेष्ठ-कोक्ष-पुण्यश्रवण-कीर्तन ।
नारायण नमस्ते दसु प्रत्युपदुक्त-शायिने ॥ १६॥
निरस-चर्चा-शक्ति-गुण-दायिने ।
नारायण नमस्ते दसु दिना न हि भू मे गति: ॥ १७॥
धर्म-काम-मौक्षर्वत्-पुष्पार्थ-प्रताधिने ।
नारायण नमस्ते दसु पुनस्ते दसु नमो नमः ॥ १८॥
॥ अथ प्रार्थना ॥
नारायण ल्यवेको दहराये हृदि स्थित: ।
प्रेरिता प्रेर्यमाणां ल्यवा प्रेरित मानस: ॥ १९॥
ल्यदापाड़ा दिसाया कृत्वा भजामि जन-पावनम् ।
नानोपासन-मार्गाणं भवकुटुं भावोधक: ॥ २०॥
भावत्तकुटुं भवायतो भव सौरवपदो मम ।
ल्यन्यायामोहित सिमथ ल्यभेव परिकंपितम् ॥ २१॥
ल्यद्धिशान-मात्रण सा व अर्हितायकारिणि ।
ल्यमेव तं पुरस्कृत्व दया कामान समरथ्य ॥ २२॥
न मे ल्यद्धक्षातास्ति ल्यद्धयति हि देवताम् ।
ल्यद्धयति न हि जानामि पालकं पुण्यव्यर्थनम् ॥ २३॥
पापस्तार्थिको भावो मनस्थो भवानास्ति: ।
तावत्तिसिद्धिभेत साध्या सब्दा सर्वदा दिनो ॥ २४॥
पापिना-पञ्चकोंयो दयादूरं त्यागणि: ।
दयायो मद्योपित सब कोंड्रा जगान्ते ॥ २५॥
ल्ययाई नैव सृष्टितं न स्थाताव दयालुता ।
आमयो वा न सृष्टित-दोषपरव वृक्षोद्यय: ॥ २६॥
पापस्तः-परिश्रान्त: पापम्यां पापुप-धृक्कः ।
ल्यद्ध: कोंड्रा पाप्येय: जातास्ति जगात्तितले ॥ २७॥
ल्यमेव माता च पिता ल्यमेव ल्यमेव बन्युध सर्वा ल्यमेव ।
ल्यमेव विद्या द्रविण ल्यमेव ल्यमेव सर्वा मम देव देव ॥ २८॥
प्रार्थनादस्तिक्षां वै च भूडूप्रकमथ-परम् ।
च: पड़ेय्युण्याश्चित्वे तस्य ल्यकस्ति: स्थिरा भवेत्, ॥ २९॥
नारायणस्य हृद्यं सत्त्वांभीष-परमपदेः ॥

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लक्ष्मीह्रदयकं स्तोत्रं यदि चैत्यनिधानकृतम् ॥ ३० ॥
तत्सर्व निष्ठत धारों लक्ष्मीः कुर्यति सर्वदा ।
प्रतिप्राणिनि स्तोत्रं सर्वभीष्ट-फलप्रदम् ॥ ३१ ॥
जपेतु संविकलित कृत्वा सर्वभीष्ट-मवामुयात ।
नारायणस्य हृदयं आदि जस्त्रा ततःपरम् ॥ ३२ ॥
लक्ष्मीह्रदयकं स्तोत्रं जपेत्वा रायणं पुनः ।
पुनर्जपेत्वा जस्त्रा पुनर्भूमीनिति जपेत ॥ ३३ ॥
तथोमाधिकं कृष्ण-देवतसञ्जितं शुभम् ।
एवं मयं ह्रिद्वारेन जपेत सञ्जितं शुभम् ॥ ३४ ॥
लक्ष्मीह्रदयके स्तोत्रे सर्वन्यत्र प्रकाशितम् ।
सर्वान् कामान्यानि आधिवाधि-भयं हरेत् ॥ ३५ ॥
गोप्यनेतर सदा कृष्णत न सर्वं ततःप्रकाशितं ।
इति गुह्यतमं शाखेन गोपकेतिभि पुरा ॥ ३६ ॥
लक्ष्मीह्रदयप्रोकते विधिना साधयेत सुधीः ।
तस्मात् सर्वन्यलेन साधयेदु गोपेत्तु सुधीः ॥ ३७ ॥
चतुर्तरुपस्तकं तिष्ठति लक्ष्मीनारायणात्मकम् ।
भूत पेशा स्वतः भयं नेवु सर्वदा ॥ ३८ ॥
भृगुवारे तथा राजौ पूजयेत् पुराकृतं ॥
सर्वदा सर्वं स्तुत्यं गोपेत्तु साधयेत सुधीः ।
गोपनात् साधनान्तः च थन्यं भवति तत्चतः ॥ ३९ ॥
॥ इत्यथरहस्ये उत्तरभागे नारायण हृदय स्तोत्रं ॥

This should be chanted with the complementary LaxmiHridayam Sanskrit text.
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.. nArAyaNa hRidayam ..

was typeset on August 2, 2016

Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com