

श्रीशङ्करभगवत्पादविरचितम्
मातृपञ्चकम् ॥

Matrpañcakam

of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada

These five verses are said to have been composed by Sri Sankara on the death of his mother. When he left his home as a wandering ascetic he promised his mother that on her death he would come to cremate her.

आस्तां तावदियं प्रसूतिसमये दुर्वारशूलव्यथा
नैरुच्यं तनुशोषणं मलमयी शय्या च सांवत्सरी ।

एकस्यापि न गर्भभारभरणक्लेशस्य यस्य क्षमः
दातुं निष्कृतिमुन्नतोऽपि तनयः तस्यै जनन्यै नमः ॥१

1. The unbearable pain endured by her at the time of delivery, the lack-lustre feeling and the emaciation of the body during pregnancy, the year-long sharing of the bed dirtied by the baby, none of these sufferings borne by the mother because of pregnancy can be compensated in the least by a son, however great he may be. Salutations to that mother.

गुरुकुलमुपसृत्य स्वप्नकाले तु दृष्ट्वा
यतिसमुचितवेषं प्रारूदो मां त्वमुच्चैः ।

गुरुकुलमथ सर्वं प्रारूदत्ते समक्षं
सपदि चरणयोस्ते मातरस्तु प्रणामः ॥२

2. Having dreamt of me as clad in the robes of an ascetic, she rushed to the gurukula where I was studying and wept aloud. The entire grurukulam also wept with her at once. O mother, salutations to your feet.

न दत्तं मातस्ते मरणसमये तोयमपि वा
स्वधा वा नो देया मरणदिवसे श्राद्धविधिना ।

न जप्तो मातस्ते मरणसमये तारकमनुः
अकाले सम्प्राप्ते मयि कुरु दयां मातरतुलाम् ॥३

3. O mother, I did not give you even water at the time of death. I am barred from performing the prescribed religious rites for you on your death anniversary. O mother, I could not chant

the ‘taraka mantra’ for you at the time of death. O mother, bestow your incomparable compassion on me who was late in coming.

Note. Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada had promised his mother that, wherever he was, he would come to her bedside at the time of her death. He came and performed her cremation, in spite of opposition from the members of his community on the ground that, being a sannyasin, he had no right to perform the funeral rites.

मुक्तामणिस्त्वं नयनं ममेति
राजेति जीवेति चिरं सुत त्वम् ।
इत्युक्तवत्यास्तव वाचि मातः
ददाम्यहं तण्डुलमेष शुष्कम् ॥४

4. When you fondled me as a child these affectionate words came out of your mouth: “You are a jewel, you are my eyes, O my dear one, my son, may you live long!”. To that mouth I am now giving these dry grains!

Note. One of the rites before cremation is putting dry rice into the mouth of the deceased. Sankara laments that he has to do this for his mother from whose mouth words of great affection had emanated.

अम्बेति तातेति शिवेति तस्मिन्
प्रसूतिकाले यदवोच उच्चैः ।
कृष्णेति गोविन्द हरे मुकुन्दे-
त्यहो जनन्यै रचितोऽयमञ्जलिः ॥५

5. O mother, who at the time of delivery cried aloud in pain, “O mother, O father, O Lord Siva, O Krishna, O Govinda, O Hari, O Mukunda”, I offer this obeisance to you.
