

**The Legend of Lord Shiva
BOOK 2**

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

**(Full Original Text, Roman Transliteration
& English Version with notes)**

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PREFACE

भवानीशङ्करौ वन्दे श्रद्धाविश्वासरूपिणौ । ३ ॥ याज्ञ्यां विना न पश्यन्ति सिद्धाः
स्वान्तःस्थमीश्वरम् ॥ ४ ॥

वन्दे बोधमयं नित्यं गुरुं शङ्कररूपिणम् । ५ ॥ यमाश्रितो हि वक्रोऽपि चन्द्रः सर्वत्र वन्द्यते ॥ ६ ॥

bhavānī-śaṅkarau vandē śrad'dhā-viśvāsa-rūpiṇau. 3

yābhyām vinā na paśyanti sid'dhāḥ svāntahstham-iśvaram. 4.

vandē bōdhamayaṁ nityaṁ guruṁ śaṅkara-rūpiṇam. 5.

yamāśritō hi vakrō 'pi candraḥ sarvatra vandyatē. 6.

'I bow before and pay my obeisance to Bhavani (Parvati or Uma, the divine consort of Lord Shiva) and Lord Shankar (Shiva himself) who are personified forms of the divine spiritual virtues of Sradha and Vishwas (devotion and faith). Without them it is not possible even for the great ascetics and the realised ones to have a vision or experience of the Supreme Being, known as the 'Ishwar' (here meaning the pure Consciousness, the Atma, the soul), who resides on their inner-self. (3-4).

I bow before and pay my obeisance to Lord Shiva who is the universal and most realised Guru (teacher, moral preceptor and guide) for the whole world, one who is a personified form of Gyan (true form of knowledge), and is eternal and omnipresent (being the Supreme Being personified). Even the crooked (crescent) moon is praised by being associated with him. [This refers to the crescent moon present on the forehead of Lord Shiva.] {Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Shloka line nos. 3-6 at the very beginning of the holy book.}

Lord Shiva is the greatest God in the pantheon of Gods. He is honoured by the epithet 'Maha-Deva', meaning a 'great god'.

This book is the second (Book 2) in a three-book Trilogy dedicated to Lord Shiva. It contains thirteen wonderful sacred hymns dedicated to Lord Shiva. The full original text is presented with its Roman Transliteration and simple English version. It will be of immense value to readers because it brings under a single cover so many sacred hymns of Lord Shiva from different sources that are normally not accessible easily.

Besides this book, let me give a very brief idea of the other two books in this Shiva Trilogy. Book 1 in this series describes in detail the marriage of Lord Shiva with Parvati that has been elaborately narrated in Goswami Tulsidas' two classics—viz. Ram Charit Manas, and Parvati Mangal. Both these have been included in full in the narrative.

The third book, Book 3, has four Chapters—viz. (i) Chapter 1 covers the different legends associated with Lord Shiva, and explains at length uniqueness, their significance and their importance; (ii) Chapter 2 narrates the legend of Shiva as described in Shiva Puran; (iii) Chapter 3 has all the Upanishads dedicated to Lord Shiva, and Chapter 4 tells us why it is important to worship and revere Lord Shiva as declared by Lord Ram, an incarnation of the Supreme Being, himself.

I hope this book will be interesting and useful to all its readers because it helps to access Shiva's hymns and legends in English, thereby overcoming the language barrier that the majority of Indian scriptures face.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to Sri Somil Bharti of Vrindavan who has done the Roman Transliteration of the original text for me.

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**(1) Sacred Hymns from ‘Vinai Patrika’
(of Goswami Tulsidas)**

NOTE—In the book ‘Vinai Patrika’, there are a number of excellent hymns dedicated to Lord Shiva. All such prayers are included herein below. These hymns are 13 in number, and appear from serial number 3—14, and 49 in the mentioned book. Their original numbers have been preserved in our present book so that in case any reader is interested he can easily locate these hymns in the book ‘Vinai Patrika of Goswami Tulsidas’ which is also being published separately by this author in English.

(3)

dkS tkfp;s l Hkq rft vkuA
nhun; kyq Hkxr&vkjfr&gj] l c i xdkj l ejFk HkxokuAA1AA
dkydlW&tj&tjr l jkl j] fut iu ykfx fd; s fc'k&i kuA
nk#u nuqt] txr&nq[knk; d] ekj m f=i j , d gh ckuAA2AA
tkS xfr vxe egkefu ngyHk] dgr l r] Jfr] l dy i j kuA
l ks xfr eju&dky vi us i j] nr l nkfl o l cfgal ekuAA3AA
l or l gyHk] mnkj dyir#] ikjcrh&ifr ije l qt kuA
ngq dke&fj i j ke&pju&jfr] ngyfl nkl dgj di kfu/kkuAA4AA

(3)

kō jāmcīyē sambhu taji āna.
dīnadayālu bhagata-ārati-hara, saba prakāra samaratha bhagavāna. 1.
kālakūṭa-jura-jarata surāsura, nija pana lāgi kiyē biṣa-pāna.
dārūna danuja, jagata-dukhadāyaka, mārē'u tripura ēka hī bāna. 2.
jō gati agama mahāmuni durlabha, kahata santa, śruti, sakala purāna.
sō gati marana-kāla apanē pura, dēta sadāsiva sabahim samāna. 3.
sēvata sulabha, udāra kalapataru, pārabatī-pati parama sujāna.
dēhu kāma-ripu rāma-carana-rati, tulasidāsa kaham' krpānidhāna. 4.

Verse no. 3—Whom else should one petition except Lord Sambhu (Shiva)¹? He is merciful and kind on the underdogs, the downtrodden, the unfortunate, the underprivileged, the wretched and distressed. He eliminates the miseries, grief, troubles and

tribulations of his devotees. He is a Lord God with all abilities, the Lord who is supremely competent, almighty and all-powerful. (1).

During the legendary churning of the ocean, when both the Gods and demons were being scorched by the heat of the hell-like poison² (which was the scum that formed a froth as the result of the vigorous churning of the highly toxic ocean), you had gulped it down voluntarily immediately to keep your vow (i.e. to uphold your promise and reputation) of protecting those creatures who are humble, distressed and unable to take care of themselves. When the ferocious demon Tripurasur³ began to greatly torment and tyrannize the world, you had slain him with a single arrow. (2).

Oh immortal Shiva! When one dies at Varanasi (a holy pilgrim city in northern India), you bestow upon him the most exalted and supreme end (i.e. death which gives salvation and emancipation to the soul) which is considered by the Vedas, Purans and other learned sages as rare and difficult to attain even for saints, sages, hermits and other such people. (3).

Oh Lord (husband) of Parvati! Oh Sujan (one who is clever wise, intelligent, enlightened and learned)! You are easily accessible by service (i.e. by devotion and worship). You are as fulfilling and magnanimous as the Kalpa-tree (the all wish-fulfilling ever-green tree of the Gods), giving desired fruits as desired (by your devotees). You are an enemy of Kamdeo⁴ (the patron God of lust, cupid and passion). [That is, you vanquish inherent passions and worldly attractions that are an integral part of all creatures in this creation. You have astounding self-control.] So, oh merciful Lord! Bless Tulsidas so that he has great devotion in the holy feet of Lord Ram. (4).

[Note—¹Lord Shiva: The Lord is also known as Rudra, the angry form of the concluder of evil aspects of creation.

The *Mantras of Lord Rudra*—References: (i) Krishna Yajur Veda = Rudra Hridaya Upanishad, verse no. 16 (Mantra of Rudra); Panch Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 30 (Mantra of Shiva). (ii) Atharva Veda = Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, paragraph nos. 1-6 (Mantra of Lord Trayambak); paragraph no. 8 (Mantra of Lord Shiva or Rudra); Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 1, paragraph no. 1; Canto 2, paragraph no. 3 (Rudra Mantra/Sukta); Canto 2, paragraph nos. 4, 18 (Tarak Mantras of Rudra); Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 3, verse no. 12-13; Brahman 6, verse no. 5-6; Brahman 7, verse no. 1 (the seven-lettered Mantra of Rudra, known as the Shat-Rudra Mantra).

Now, let us see these Mantras in brief.

(i) The *one-word Mantra* of Shiva—It is the Lord's name 'Shiva' that is in itself a Mantra. Hence, the one-letter eclectic Mantra of Lord Shiva is *Shiva* or *Shivam*. Refer *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 2, paragraph no. 4.

(ii) The *two-letter Mantra* of Shiva or Rudra is the *Rudra Mantra*—The eclectic Mantra is *Rudra-Rudra*. It is dedicated to Lord Rudra who is one of the eleven divine forms of Lord Shiva. It is described in *Rudra Hridaya Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, verse no. 16. [The two letters are 'Ru + Dra =2.] It is so powerful and grand that it is said to incorporate all the Mantras of the not only the other two Gods of the Trinity, viz. Vishnu and Brahma, but all other Gods combined. To quote this Upanishad—“Therefore, a wise and enlightened man who repeats the great Mantra 'Rudra Rudra' and remembers the great Lord is symbolically worshipping all the Gods and repeating their Mantras. This helps him to overcome the evil effects of all sins and misdeeds (16).

{In the view of what has been expounded in this Upanishad, the Mantra 'Rudra-Rudra' would deem to include the divine Mantras of all the Gods of the Trinity—i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Much like OM which is the universal Mantra for the supreme transcendental Brahm, this Mantra 'Rudra-Rudra' is the universal Mantra for all the Gods combined.}

(iii) The *five-letter Mantra* of Lord Shiva has been described in *Panch Brahm Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, verse no. 30. It is ‘Namaha Shivaaye’. [Na + Maha + Shi + Va + Ye = 5.]

(iv) The *six-letter Mantra* of Shiva or Rudra is ‘OM Namaha Shiva OM’ which is mentioned in the Atharva Veda’s *Tripura Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 4, paragraph no. 8; *Brihajjabal Upanishad*, Brahman 3, verse no. 12-13. [OM + Na + Maha + Shi + Vaa + OM = 6.]

The *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 2, paragraph nos. 4, 18 however says that that the six-letter Mantra of Lord Shiva is ‘OM Namaha Shivaaye’. [OM + Na + Maha + Shi + Vaa + Ye = 6.] This is the Tarak Mantra of Lord Shiva. [Canto 2, paragraph no. 18.]

(v) The *seven-letter Mantra* of Lord Shiva or Rudra is ‘OM Namaha Shivaaye OM’. [OM + Na + Maha + Shi + Vaa + Ye + OM = 7.]

(vi) The *eight-letter Mantra* of Lord Shiva is ‘OM Namaha Mahaa-devaaye’. It is given in *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 2, paragraph no. 4. [OM + Na + Maha + Ma + Haa + De + Vaa + Ye = 8.]

This Upanishad says that the eight-letter Mantra of Shiva is known as the Tarak Mantra, the one which provides liberation and deliverance to the spiritual seeker. This Mantra provides liberation and deliverance to the devotees of Lord Shiva in the Lord’s terrestrial abode known as the pilgrim city of Kashi. Preaching this Tarak Mantra of Lord Shiva is equivalent to the preaching of the Mantras of the Vedas. [In other words, this is the Veda Mantra.]

(vii) The *Trayambak Mantra* is described in the *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4 which is entirely devoted to *Lord Trayambak*. It describes the meaning of this word and the Mantras dedicated to Lord Trayambak in great detail. This Mantra is given in Canto 4, paragraph nos. 1-6, and it is ‘Trayambakam Yajaamahe Sugandhim Pushti-varadhan Urwaaruk-miv Bandhanaanmurityor-mukshi-yeti Mamritaat’.

(viii) The Atharva Veda’s *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph no. 4, and *Brihajjabal Upanishad*, Brahman no. 6, verse nos. 5-6 says that the Mantra/Sukta of Lord Rudra (Shiva) should be said while preparing the sacred Bhasma (ash) for applying on the body of the ascetic.

(ix) The Atharva Veda’s *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph no. 1, and Canto 2, paragraph no. 3 say that after praying to Lord Shiva by using the *Rudra Sukta/Mantra*, the worshipper should offer the Lord white Bhasma, the fruits of the Bel tree (the wood-apple tree; *Aegle marmelos*), and leaves of the Bilva tree (*Aegle marmelos*). The leaves of the Bilva tree should be green (i.e. freshly plucked) and three in number. If green leaves are not available, then dry leaves can also be offered. Now, let see what these *two Rudra Suktas/Mantras* are—

“Canto 1, paragraph no. 1 = The Lord known as Maha-Dev was an embodiment of OM (the ethereal sound manifestation of the supreme Brahm also known as Pranav). He was accompanied by his divine consort named Uma (the Mother Goddess).

He had a crown of matted hairs on his head. He had three eyes represented by the sun, the moon and the fire. He was wrapped in the hide of a tiger. He held his hands like a deer (i.e. his hands were resting on his folded-in legs as he sat in meditation posture). His body was adorned (smeared) by the ‘Bhasma’ (ash of the fire sacrifice).

On his forehead were marked the three lines of the Tripund (which is a sacred mark borne by ascetics). There was a subtle sweet and pleasant smile on his face. His body was cheerful and he had a pleasant demeanour (i.e. he was rested and calm; he was not agitated, fidgety or upset).

He was like a lion who was sitting in the posture known as 'Viraasan'. [This one of the many sitting postures of Yoga, and is usually adopted by brave warriors, hence the name 'Viraasan'. The word 'Vir' means one who is brave, valiant, gallant, bold, courageous, daring and mighty.]

He is so mystical and sublime that he is beyond the purview of proofs and measurements.

He is 'Anaadi and Anant'—i.e. he is without an end or beginning as he is eternal, infinite and imperishable.

He is 'Niskal'—i.e. he is the one who has no taints, faults, blemishes and imperfections that can scar his immaculacy and purity. He is immaculate and without any faults or blemishes as he is from all the corrupting influences of Maya (delusions and deceit).

He is 'Nirguna'—i.e. he has no attributes or qualities or physical forms in the true sense (as the Lord is not an ordinary God with attributes, but the Supreme Being who has no known forms, specific attributes and describable qualities).

He is 'Shanta'—i.e. he is calm, serene, peaceful and tranquil.

He is 'Niranjan'—i.e. he is faultless, flawless, uncorrupted, untainted and without any blemishes of any kind. [A Niranjan is an entity that has no defects, faults, taints, blemishes, shortcomings and scars of any kind; one who is absolutely immaculate and pristine pure. It is an epithet applied to Lord Vishnu, the sustainer and protector of creation. one whose sublime, subtle, esoteric and mystical form is so microscopic and diffused that it cannot be seen by the naked eyes of the physical gross body, but which can only be perceived by the eye of wisdom, erudition and enlightenment.]

He is 'Niraamaye', i.e. he is healthy and without any moral or physical ailments or tainting affects that are like a disease that might afflict a person's spiritual well being. One who is free from any kind of diseases—spiritual, mental, physical, psychological, moral etc. that may taint one's character and personality.

He (Lord Maha-Dev) was pronouncing the Beej Mantra 'Hum', 'Phat' etc., and continuously repeating the holy name of the Supreme Being who is also known as 'Shiva'. That is, he was meditating upon his own pure and enlightened 'self' which is truly the Supreme Being known as Brahm manifested in the form of the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness. Hence, he was doing Japa with the Mantra 'Shiva-Shiva'.

His is a living embodiment of the virtues for which the word 'Hiranya' is an aphorism. That is, the Lord has a radiance that is like gold; his hands (limbs) have a golden radiance, his form is like gold, his countenance is golden, and he is a treasury of immaculate virtues which resemble gold. [Since gold is the most precious metal, all his virtues and characteristics are completely immaculate and of the highest quality.]

The Lord is a personification of the grand philosophy of Advaita, the philosophy of non-duality which says that there is only one Brahm or cosmic Truth in the form of Consciousness that is revealed in all the forms that this creation has taken, and therefore whatever that exists is nothing but one single Brahm. [In other words, Lord Maha-Dev is perfectly wise, enlightened and Brahm-realised in as much as he sees no difference between himself and the Supreme Being. This is the reason he is repeating the Mantra 'Shiva' while meditating.]

Since he is extremely enlightened, self-realised and Brahm-realised, he stays in the fourth state of Turiya. [This is the transcendental state of existence in which the ascetic lives in a state of trance. He is so deeply submerged in meditation and contemplation that he is not even aware of his body and what it does, and therefore there is no question of his being aware of the surrounding material world and its temptations. Hence, he is free from all corruptions and delusions that mire an

ordinary soul. The concept of ‘Turiya’ has been explained in detail in a separate appendix of this volume.]

This fourth state is a representative of the Supreme Being who is beyond the Trinity Gods known as Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Rudra the concluder. Hence, the Lord who stays in this eclectic and sublime state of Consciousness is known as ‘Maha-Dev’, the great Lord. [This fact has been expressly emphasized in the Pashupat Upanishad, Purva Kand, verse no. 10, which is the nineteenth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda.]

Such a divine and majestic Lord is the fulfiller of all the desires of his devotees.

Sage Jabal Bhusund politely bowed before the Lord repeatedly, worshipped him and paid his obeisance to him, offered him fruits of the Bilva tree (*Aegle marmelos*) and Bhasma (ash of the fire sacrifice), bowed his head, and asked him with folded hands as a gesture of politeness and submission—‘Oh Lord! You are well-versed in the essence of the Vedas and their profound teachings. Please tell me about the rules and tenets pertaining to the ‘Tripund²’ as described and prescribed in the Vedas, and by following which one is able to attain Moksha (final liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation). One need not take the recourse of any other means if one fully understands this doctrine. (1).

“Canto 2, paragraph no. 3 = ‘The Lord is sitting on the Nandi (the bull). His arms are of a golden hue; his general countenance also has a golden hue; and his form appears to be cast in gold.

The Lord is the eliminator or destroyer of the snare represented by the continuous cycle of birth and death that has shackled all the living beings in its vicious grip. [That is, the Lord grants the boon of Mukti, or liberation and deliverance, to all the creatures.]

He is the primordial Purush personified. [That is, Lord Shiva is a personified form of the cosmic Viraat Purush, the macrocosmic all-pervading and all-encompassing gross but invisible form of the supreme transcendental Brahm, the Supreme Being.]

His neck is coloured dark with a tinge of yellow¹.

He is highly self-realised, enlightened and wise (‘Urdhva-reta’).

He has three eyes (‘Trilochan’). [The Lord has two conventional eyes, and one eye on the middle of the forehead signifying the mystical powers of insight that comes with the highest form of wisdom, enlightenment, knowledge and self-realisation.]

He has taken the form of this whole world (‘Vishwa-roop’). This is because the entire creation is a revelation of Brahm, the Supreme Being, and Shiva is a personified form of Brahm.

That is why he is said to have thousands of eyes (‘Sahastraaksham’) symbolizing countless creatures. This is also metaphor for the fact that nothing is hidden from the Lord, for he ‘sees’ everything, even the most secret and the esoteric.

Similarly, he has thousands of heads (‘Sahastra-shirsha’), and thousands of legs (‘Sahastra-charan’). In fact, the entire creation (world) is embraced in his arms; this whole creation represents his arms. {If he has ‘thousands of eyes’, then it is natural that he would also have equal number of heads. It also means that the Lord has equal number of mouths, tongues, ears, noses etc. Again, if he has thousands of legs it also implies that he must have equal number of hands. All this simply indicate that the entire creation is a majestic multifarious revelation of one single Divinity known as Shiva.}

Hence, Lord Shiva represents the Atma (soul) of the whole creation. [This reflects upon the metaphysical doctrine that the word ‘Atma’ refers to the pure consciousness that resides inside the body of an individual creature as his ‘true self’. This Atma of the individual is the microcosmic counterpart of the macrocosmic Consciousness that is universal and uniformly pervades throughout this creation. This

universal Atma at the macrocosmic level of creation is known as Brahm. This Brahm therefore is the subtlest and most sublime entity in existence. When this Brahm revealed itself, it went through subtle steps in its transition from the subtlest to the grossest forms. The first step was the Viraat Purush, the all-pervading, all-encompassing, all-inclusive invisible macrocosmic form of Brahm which was the latter's first gross form. The word 'gross' when applied to the Viraat Purush is only in terms of relativity, for both Brahm and Viraat are sublime and subtle when compared to the word 'gross' as is understood in the context of the visible world of material sense objects. It is easy to understand this phenomenon—we have air all around us, but do we feel it, can we survive without it? Obviously, the answer is no. But when this same air moves or shows some 'gross' virtues, such as its form known as the 'wind' which is felt when the 'breeze' wafts gradually or a 'storm' blows violently, it is then we can actually feel it bristling against our skins; but still we can't see it. Now, when this same air has pollutants in it, like smoke or coloured gases, we can actually 'see' the air. The same thing applies to Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness. The Viraat Purush is like the 'wind', and the rest of the creation that evolved from this single Viraat Purush is like the various forms the same wind has taken in this world. The grosser revelation of this Viraat Purush in the form of the visible world is akin to the instance of smoke, coloured gases or other pollutants which make us see the invisible wind move. It is the grossest form of the subtlest Brahm.]

Since Lord Shiva is Brahm personified, it is natural that all the honours and epithets applied to Brahm would also apply to Shiva. Hence, Shiva is 'Advaita'—i.e. he is non-dual.

He is 'Nishkal'—i.e. he has no Kalaas, i.e. no separate or distinct attributes, forms, parts, divisions, variations and fractions as he is one immutable whole; one who has no taints, faults, blemishes and imperfections that can scar his immaculacy and purity; one who is immaculate and without any faults or blemishes as he is free from all the corrupting influences of Maya representing delusions, conceit and deceit).

He is 'Nishkriya'—i.e. he is not involved in any of the affairs of the world, as he is totally neutral, detached and dispassionate, has renounced everything, and being self-realised he knows that the deeds are done by the gross body and not by the Atma which is merely a neutral witness of what the body does.

He is absolutely 'Shaanta'—i.e. he is calm, peaceful, serene, rested, tranquil, having no restlessness or agitations.

He is 'Shiva'—i.e. he is an embodiment of the virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, truthfulness, divinity and holiness.

He is 'Akshar'—i.e. he is imperishable and one who is represented by the divine word OM.

He is 'Avyaya'—i.e. he is not diminished; he is infinite; he is eternal, unchanging and imperishable; he is not subject to degradation.

He is the eternal Lord (the Supreme Being; Brahm) from whom Hari (Vishnu the sustainer), Har (Rudra the concluder) and Hiranyagarbha (Brahma the creator) have come into being.

This supreme Creator and Lord of creation cannot be known or verified or judged by proofs, evidences and logics.

The Lord has no beginning or end.' (3).

{Note—¹Lord Shiva's throat is dark blue or purple in colour. Since the glow and radiance of the whole body of the Lord is golden but the throat had turned black because he had kept the horrible poison he had drunk in his throat instead of allowing it to enter the stomach. This corroding poison had emerged from the ocean when it was churned by the Gods and Demons in search of Amrit, the elixir of eternity. The Lord had accepted to drink it to protect the rest of the creation from getting scorched by its heat and toxins. Since this creation is lodged in the Lord's own self, in his abdomen, he had kept this poison in the throat and did not allow it to enter his

stomach. This resulted in the throat getting permanently burnt. The dark blue or purple colour of the Lord's throat is the result of this single event and shows the Lord's willingness to go to any length to grant his unilateral protection to this creation.

It is very interesting to note that while on the one hand Lord Shiva is depicted as being the concluder of creation—and this is assigned role amongst the Trinity of Gods consisting of Brahma, whose role is to create, Vishnu, whose role is to sustain, nourish and protect the creation, and Rudra (a form of Shiva), whose designated role is to bring about the conclusion of this creation—but on the other hand he had allowed himself to be permanently dis-coloured and take the risk of keeping the most horrible poison in existence lodged inside his body because otherwise this poison would kill the creation and scald everything in it to ashes. This is the reason why only Shiva is honoured as being the 'Maha-Deva', the 'great' God. Though Vishnu shoulders the formidable, most daunting and arduous task of taking care of the whole creation—and this is not a cake-walk and a joke considering what a man experiences in life taking care of his single family, what to talk of the whole society—this honour of being a Maha-Deva was not bestowed upon him. The same thing applies to the grand old patriarch of creation called Brahma who had not only created this gross world but even the sources of highest wisdom in the form of the venerable scriptures, but was not honoured with this title.

Hence, Shiva is truly the Supreme Being personified. One of his functions is to conclude this creation, and in this role he is known as Rudra, the angry form. But even as the same Brahm is known to have revealed himself in the form of each and every unit of creation which is extremely diverse and multifarious, the same Shiva has taken many names and assumed many roles, one of which is 'conclusion'."}

The word *Shiva* refers to the third God of the Trinity, and the one who has been assigned the task of bringing the world to an end. The word itself briefly means the eclectic, glorious and beautiful virtues of truthfulness, purity, auspiciousness, wisdom, enlightenment, erudition, sagacity, blissfulness, dispassion, detachment, holiness and divinity. These are accompanied by a high degree of peace, tranquility, serenity and their attendant happiness, joy and bliss. Since 'truthfulness and auspiciousness' are qualities that are beautiful, this word also means something that is beautiful and beyond reproach.

Briefly therefore, the word 'Shiva' means 'one who is auspicious, always pure, holy, divine, truthful, beautiful and blissful'. Shiva is the Lord who is self-realised and a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness and the Absolute Truth.

The *Maho-panishad* of Sam Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse no. 7 describes that Shiva was born from the forehead of the Viraat Purush, the macrocosmic, invisible and all-inclusive gross body of Brahm, the Supreme Being.

The *Panch Brahm Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 41 espouses that Shiva lives in the heart of the creature as an embodiment of 'Sat-Chit-Anand', i.e. as his Atma—"Shiva, as Sat-Chit-Anand personified, always lives in the heart. He is a constant witness of all that is happening. That is why the heart is regarded as the doorway to liberation and deliverance from the traps that have been laid out by this delusory and cunning world of artificiality to ensnare the creature in its tentacles."

The *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition was preached by Lord Shiva himself to sage Jabal Bhusund, and it highlights the fact that Lord Shiva is no ordinary God, or even a senior one being a member of the Trinity of Gods consisting of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Rudra the concluder, but is the supreme transcendental Brahm himself personified. Shiva is the Supreme Being himself. Refer Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 1, paragraph no. 1; Canto 2, paragraph no. 3, 6-8.

The *Yogtattva Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse nos. 92-94 says that Lord Shiva, in his form as Rudra, is the patron deity and personification of

the fire element, and it is no wonder then that he is surrounded by ‘fire-spitting’ serpents as a symbolism of this fact. In this Upanishad’s verse nos. 98-102 it is asserted that Shiva is the patron deity and personification of the sky element.

The *Dakshin Murti Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse nos. 8, 10, 13, 15 and 19 affirms that Shiva is invariably wrapped by serpents.

The *Dakshin Murti Upanishad* of the Krishna Yajur Veda describes Lord Shiva as the south-facing Lord and elaborately elucidates the metaphysical significance of this form.

The *Brihajjabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Brahman 4, verse no. 29 says that the Lord with three eyes (Trinetrum) is the bearer of this world having three aspects or the one who is the foundation upon which all the three Gunas such as Sata Guna, Raja Guna and Tama Guna rest (Trigunadhaaram) and is the one from whom the Trinity Gods (i.e. the creator Brahma, the sustainer Vishnu, and the concluder Rudra) are born. This Lord is none other than Lord Maheshwar, the great Ishwar or Lord of creation who is also known as Shiva, Ishan, Isha etc. This Lord is synonymous with the supreme transcendental Brahm. This fact is endorsed Krishna Yajur Veda’s *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 32, and in *Dakshin Murti* or *Dakshin Mukhi Upanishad*.

As the deity of the fire element, he is said to have ‘three eyes’ (*Yogtattva Upanishad*, verse no. 93), and as the deity of the sky element he is depicted as having a moon tucked in his lock of hairs, besides having five mouths, ten arms and three eyes (*Yogtattva Upanishad*, verse no. 100). Now let us see their significance.

The *Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, Canto 5, verse no. 4/42 says that it is Lord Ram who has manifested as ‘Maheshwar’, the great God. Since this term is conventionally applied to Lord Shiva, it follows that Shiva is actually Lord Ram in this form. Its verse no. 4/43 clearly endorses this view when it says that Lord Ram has manifested himself as Mahadev—the great God. This term ‘Maha-dev’ is also conventionally used for Lord Shiva.

The Atharva Veda’s *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Purva Kanda/Canto 1, verse no. 32 emphasises that Lord Rudra or Shiva is also known as *Pashupati*. To quote—“One must understand that the knowledge of the self-illuminated *Hans* that has been revealed in this Upanishad deals with the eclectic and the divine knowledge of the pure cosmic Consciousness known as the Atma as well as Brahm.

This ‘Hans’ is also revealed in the form of Lord Rudra (Lord Shiva), who is also known as Lord Pashupati¹.

It is this Brahm that is represented by Pranav, the cosmic ethereal sound encapsulated in the word Mantra OM. It is this Pranav representing Brahm that provides one with liberation and deliverance from this mortal gross world (32).

¹Lord Shiva who has full control over his sense organs and their inherent animal-like instincts and behaviour—because he is a highly self-realised and enlightened deity who is chosen by exalted ascetics and spiritual aspirants as their patron God—is known as Pashupati, literally the Lord of animals. Since Lord Shiva tolerates no nonsense and ruthlessly overcomes the wayward tendencies of the sense organs and the mind, showing anger at them for their natural grossness and tendency to commit mischief and misdeeds, he is also known as ‘Rudra’, the angry one. Lord Shiva is uncompromising and unrelenting in his pursuit of immaculacy, purity, auspiciousness, righteousness, nobility, probity and propriety, and hence called Rudra, the angry God.

‘Rudra’ has zero tolerance for impertinence, mischief and nonsense. ‘Shiva’ is, on the other hand, calm, tolerant and forgiving. Shiva always remains in a state of meditation and contemplation, a state that is depicted in his posture of blissfulness and half-closed eyes. Rudra, on the other hand, spews fire and brimstone. While Shiva symbolizes the virtues of Brahm marked by blissfulness, tranquility, calmness, wisdom, enlightenment, self-awareness and contentedness, Rudra represents the qualities of dynamism, vitality, vigour, strength and energy present in Brahm.

The question arises ‘why did Shiva become Rudra (angry)?’ The answer is that when Shiva found that his sense organs and mind did not allow him the peace that he sought by meditation and contemplation upon the ‘Atma, the self’, he became angry over them, and severely took them to task—i.e. he became ‘Rudra’ or angry. It is like the case of a teacher who is of a very calm nature and loves his students like they were his own sons, but when he finds that his kindness and loving nature is being misused by the students who create ruckus in the class, he has to become stern and spank them in order to restore discipline and decorum. But that does not mean that he is cruel or wishes to harm his students in the least. This same thing applies to Shiva.

Shiva becomes Rudra in order to ruthlessly punish the creatures of this creation who behave like savages or animals. This is necessary for him as he is the Supreme Being who has the mandate to maintain order and balance in this creation, and he would be failing in his moral duties and obligations if he tries to maintain a false exterior of calmness when his interior is agitated by the upheaval all around. The Supreme Being that Shiva is has an obligation to uphold positive traits and the virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, probity and propriety in this creation even if it means that his own image of being calm and forgiving is questioned and overshadowed by anger and vehemence.

Just as the case of severe and malignant diseases like cancer and tuberculosis requiring an equally strong medicine, the evil, pervert and demonic forces of creation require an equally strong antidote to be overcome.

Therefore, that aspect of Brahm, the Supreme Being, which helps the Jiva (the living beings of this creation) control evil tendencies and negativity which make him animal-like is known as ‘Pashupat Brahm’, and the effort that a Jiva makes to achieve this eclectic goal is known as ‘Pashu-harta Yagya’.

The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse no. 8 says that Shiva is known as *Hans*; and Canto 1, verse no. 9 says that he is *Brahm*.

The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse nos. 10, 14 assert that Shiva is the creator of everything in this creation, and Canto 1, verse no. 13 says that Shiva represents the creation itself much like Brahm, the *Supreme Being* who is also treated as being an embodiment of the entire creation.

The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 11 says that *Shiva represents the third state of consciousness known as the Sushupta state*.

The Atharva Veda’s *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 2, paragraph no. 6 asserts that Shiva and Rudra are one. The difference between the two names is due to the fact that the same Lord exists in two forms which appear to be diametrically opposite of each other in their characteristic features.

If we closely examine this verse we will understand the difference between the two terms ‘Shiva’ and ‘Rudra’ on the one hand, and between ‘Brahm’ and ‘Shakti’ on the other hand. Lord Shiva is extremely calm, serene, self-contented, self-realised and blissful like Brahm, and is therefore regarded as a personification of the latter (i.e. of Brahm). He remains perpetually involved in doing meditation and contemplation, remaining happy and submerged in the thoughts of the transcendental Truth. Hence, he is regarded as the patron deity of ascetics who themselves are regarded as personified forms of Brahm because they have become extremely self-realised, i.e. they have experienced the truth about themselves as being the Atma which is pure consciousness. This Atma is a microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness and the Absolute Truth of creation known as Brahm.

When the same Shiva assumes an angry form of Rudra at the time of conclusion of creation, he shows an astonishing and an astounding level of dynamism, energy, power, strength and vigour that are synonyms of the cosmic Shakti of Brahm. It is like the case of lightening that is present in the dark rain-bearing clouds in the sky. This lightening appears suddenly, streaks across the sky and causes a huge blast of light and thunder, and if it happens to strike the earth leaves behind scorched trees

and ruined buildings, only to vanish without trace in another moment in the sky, withdrawing itself into the thick bank of cloud from which it made its appearance.

This analogy of the lightning appearing from and disappearing into the clouds in the sky would explain the phenomenon of Rudra vis-à-vis Shiva, and Shakti vis-à-vis Brahm. Rudra appears momentarily from Shiva, accomplishes the task for which Shiva had to assume this ferocious and ruthless form of anger, wrath and vehemence personified, only to vanish into the calm and tranquil form of Shiva. Similarly Shakti appears from the neutral cosmic entity known as the divine Brahm, accomplishes what is expected of it, and then disappears into Brahm without trace.

Since everything in creation is a manifestation of Brahm, this unique character of Brahm and its relationship with its dynamism revealed as Shakti is also revealed in all the five primary elements of creation such as sky, air, water, fire and earth. Let us take one example of earth to understand how it works out.

The earth is the grossest of the five elements, being heaviest and most dense. It is inert and lifeless on the outside like any other celestial body of the fathomless heaven, but still it conceives and harbours all imaginable forms of life, takes proper care of them and provides endlessly for their necessities of existence. The earth is self-sufficient in this respect, and it does not need any other help to sustain life, or even to replenish its reserves which never deplete inspite of constant exploitation. So in this sense the 'earth' is Brahm personified. But when the 'mother earth' becomes angry, she vents her anger as earthquakes, landslides, floods, tsunamis, famines and draughts, leading to large scale destruction and havoc. This is the Shakti form of earth.

Then again, the earth is a solid piece of cosmic body which is lifeless, neutral and barren at one place as evidenced by the endless stretches of rocks and sand seen at some place on its surface, but at the same time it constitutes of charming and vibrant forms of endless variety of fauna and flora symbolizing life in all its splendour and grandeur at the other place. Even when the earth seems to be neutral, lifeless and inane, it still has its inherent dynamism and energy as shown by its magnetic field and its movement not only around its own self but also around the sun. This means that 'earth' stands for Brahm as well as for Brahm's Shakti simultaneously.

Likewise, if we take the example of the fire and the water, we find that on the one hand they are harbingers of life, growth and development on the one hand, and when annoyed become the cause of widespread destruction and havoc on the other hand. For instance, fire is an essential component of life because without the fire there will be no warmth and light, and the resultant chill and darkness would snuff life out of this creation. But the same fire can scorch everything to ashes if it becomes annoyed and decides to punish the world it had so benevolently nurtured.

The water also behaves in a similar fashion. While water is called the benevolent 'elixir of life' as it is the only element which actually cradles life in its merciful arms by providing it with readymade nourishment and acts as a buffer, a coolant and a soft lubricant that helps this creation to overcome the harsh and abrasive conditions on earth, which is nothing but a solid and rugged ball of thick and hardened rock that would have caused severe injury to the creation if it was not protected by the water, the same water can wipe out life if it turns malevolent as is evident during floods, high ocean tides and huge waves, tsunamis etc., or as observed during draughts when the water decides to withdraw itself and let the life parch itself out by thirst.

Air also exhibits similar characteristics. On the one hand the air is absolutely essential for life to exist in this world, because without air the life would suffocate to death, but the same air can cause ruin when it becomes angry, as is proved during fierce storms and cyclones.

The sky is the cosmic bowl which harbours everything that exists in this universe, from the smallest piece of cosmic debris to the huge galaxies and planetary systems. It is in the sky that our earth lives, and it is in the sky that the air we breathe is contained. But it is the same sky in from which devastating meteors and asteroids

might strike upon the earth to wipe out entire generations of creatures. [It is one such event that had wiped out the ancient dinosaurs from the surface of earth, and more recently one such meteorite had blasted its way down to earth across the skies in the Ural Mountains of northern Russia which injured thousands of people and cause material damage to buildings and factories.] During severe thunderstorms, hurricanes and cyclones, it is the sky that is said to ‘open up’ and pour rain on the earth which cause deluge, or blow fierce winds that strike out viciously any thing standing up in its path much like the swing of the Vajra of Indra, the king of Gods. It is one such deluge pouring down from the sky or heaven that is expected to wipe out the present generation at the time of doomsday. Then again, during wars, it is from the sky that rockets, missiles and arrows shower down upon armies to kill and slay mercilessly. So we conclude that while all the elements and all the units of creation are indeed manifestations of Shiva or Brahm, the latter’s life-fostering and benevolent nature is displayed in these units when they act as aids to development of life and its growth, while their destructive aspect is a representative of Rudra. The dynamism, energy, vigour, strength and abilities displayed by all the units of creation are, however, a manifestation of the Shakti in its many myriad forms.

Names of Lord Shiva and their significance—

Rudra—As the concluder of creation, Lord Shiva is known as Rudra—because then he has to assume a ruthless and angry form. The word ‘Rudra’ means anger and wrathfulness. [Refer Sharav Upanishad, verse no. 10.]

Mritunjaya—Shiva is called ‘Mritunjaya’ because he has conquered or vanquished death. [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 1.]

Yajamahe—Shiva is called ‘Yajamahe’ because he represents the basic or fundamental Truth and Authority of creation that we offer our obeisance to. The word ‘Yajan’ means worship and honour, and ‘Mahe’ means me. So, with the combined word ‘Yajan’ and ‘Mahe’ we invoke the essential Tattwa or the basic Truth that forms the fundamental cosmic Reality and the ultimate force that is behind all aspects of this creation. Shiva represents the Absolute Truth and Reality known as the universal cosmic Consciousness of creation that is the only thing that is true, eternal, constant and steady in this otherwise transient and false world. [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 2.]

Aghor—Shiva is also called ‘Aghor’, meaning the most fierce, terrible, formidable and an unconventional form of the Supreme Being who has an odd and mysterious existence. [Refer: Atharva Veda’s Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Purva Kanda/Canto 1, verse no. 10.]

Sugandhim—Shiva is called ‘Sugandhim’ because of an aura of divinity, holiness, purity, spirituality and majesty that effuses from him and radiates in all the directions in an invisible form like the sweet fragrance of a beautiful flower. The word ‘Sugandha’ means good fragrance or a sweet and pleasant aroma. Lord Shiva is omnipresent and an omniscient Lord; his auspicious glories, magnificence and eclectic virtues are well known and famous in all the directions of this creation; the Lord radiates a divine halo wherever he is present and worshipped, and it is as invigorating and spiritually rejuvenating as the fragrance or aroma of a divine flower. Hence, the term ‘Sugandham’ is used for him. [The word ‘Sugandha’ means pleasant fragrance, sweet and attractive aroma, an enchanting scent.] [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 3.]

Pushti-varadhan—Lord Shiva is honoured by the word ‘Pushti-varadhan’ because he creates all the worlds, sustains them, protects them, nourishes them, makes them

health, helps in their growth and development, and enhances their glories and importance by living in all of them uniformly as he is all-pervading, all-including and all-encompassing. Hence, he is honoured by the epithet ‘Pushti-varadhan’. [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 4.]

Urwaaruk-miv Bandhanaan-mrityor-mukshi-yeti—Lord Shiva is called ‘Urwaaruk-miv Bandhanaan-mrityor-mukshi-yeti’. Just like the musk-melon is firmly attached to its stalk, a creature is also sternly clasped in the shackle of death. When he breaks free from this vicious grip of the cycle of birth and death, he finds Mukti or final liberation and deliverance. [Lord Shiva is the most enlightened of the Gods in the pantheon. This is why he is the patron deity of ascetics and hermits. He can liberate the creature from the cycle of birth and death. He is depicted in the Purans as having his terrestrial abode in the holy city of Kashi where he gives Mukti to the dying man who is brought for cremation on the banks of the holy river Ganges.] [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 5.]

Mamritaata—Lord Shiva is called ‘Mamritaata’ because the worshipper attains the elixir of life that gives him eternity and imperishability. He becomes one like Lord Rudra himself. [Refer Atharva Veda’s Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 6.]

Ishaan/Ishan—Lord Shiva is called ‘Ishan’ because he is the greatest, the most wise and exalted amongst the Gods in this creation. He is the *Isha* or the Supreme Lord of creation, and a symbol of cosmic authority and power of the Supreme Being. Hence, he is known as *Ishan*—the symbol, the icon or the emblem of the Supreme Being known as Brahm.

This term Ishan has been defined in *Atharvashir Upanishad* of Atharva Veda tradition, in its Kandika 4 as follows—“Why is he (Brahm in the form of Rudra) known as ‘Ishan’ (literally meaning the ‘Lord’ and his ‘insignia or authority’)? It is because he (Rudra) has full control over all the Gods and their powers and authority. Ishan signifies the Lord’s overriding authority and complete control over all the aspects of creation that are individually controlled by these Gods who actually act on behalf of Rudra representing the dynamic form of Brahm. These Gods are nothing but the different forces of Nature personified.

It is you who controls this entire creation as Indra, the king of Gods as well as the organs of the creature’s body over which these Gods rule. That is also why you are called ‘Ishan’.”

According to *Ram Purva Tapini Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 38-39, Ishan is one of the ten Dikpaals/Digpaals or the custodians of the celestial world. He takes care of the ‘Ishan Kone’ or the North-East direction. His weapon is ‘Shul’ or a sharp spear or lancet or a trident.

Maheshwar/Maha-deva—References: (i) Atharva Veda = Sharav Upanishad, verse no. 34; Atharvashir Upanishad, Kandika 4; Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 2, paragraph no. 1.

Lord Shiva is considered as the most exalted and wisest amongst the Gods, and is therefore honoured with the epithet *Maha Deva* or the Great God, and *Maheshwar* or the Great Ishwar as he is regarded as the supreme Lord of the entire creation. [Refer: Atharva Veda’s Atharvashir Upanishad, Kandika 4; and Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 2, paragraph no. 1.]

The Sharav Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, verse no. 34, says that Shiva is *Maheshwar* as he is the Lord who provides Mukti or liberation and deliverance to the creature from the formidable snare that traps the latter in this gross world, helping the creature to break free from the tormenting cycle of birth and death which is very difficult to break free from.

In his form as the liberator of the soul of the creature by destroying the latter's gross external body and freeing the soul, he is known as *Sharav*. Shiva had assumed this form to liberate Lord Vishnu from the horrible body of Nrisingh (half man and half lion). [Refer *Sharav Upanishad*, verse no. 6-8.]

'Maheshwar' or 'Maha-Deva' are both names of Lord Shiva. The term 'Maheshwar' means the 'Great Ishwar or Lord', while the term 'Maha-deva' means the 'Great God'. Obviously, they both mean the same.

However, the term 'Maheshwar' has been defined independently in *Atharvashir Upanishad* of Atharva Veda tradition, in its Kandika 4 as follows—"Why are you (Rudra as a manifestation of Brahm) called 'Maheshwar' (literally meaning 'the great Lord')? It is because you show your benevolence and grace upon those devotees who worship you selflessly in order to attain Gyan or true knowledge. [As the greatest teacher and preacher in creation, it is you who can only give the knowledge of Truth. This knowledge is known only to you. Hence, you are great amongst even the Gods who are supposed to be wiser and more knowledgeable than ordinary mortals.] It is you who empowers the faculty of speech to speak and express this Truth. You have forsaken all sorts of delusions and overcome all ignorance, and instead remain steady and unwavering in the knowledge of Truth that you have acquired. You are self realised and most wise and enlightened. This gives you immense fame and honour; it establishes you as the greatest enlightened one in creation. This is why you are called Maheshwar.

This is how the divine characters and virtues of Rudra have been outlined here in this Upanishad."

In the *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 2, paragraph no. 1, Lord Shiva has been addressed as *Maha-deva*, and it explains *why* it is so as follows—"Since he is extremely enlightened, self-realised and Brahm-realised, he stays in the fourth state of Turiya. {This is the transcendental state of existence in which the ascetic lives in a state of trance. He is so deeply submerged in meditation and contemplation that he is not even aware of his body and what it does, and therefore there is no question of his being aware of the surrounding material world and its temptations. Hence, he is free from all corruptions and delusions that mire an ordinary soul. The concept of 'Turiya' has been explained in detail in a separate appendix of this volume.}

This fourth state is a representative of the Supreme Being who is beyond the Trinity Gods known as Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Rudra the concluder. Hence, the Lord who stays in this eclectic and sublime state of Consciousness is known as 'Maha-Dev', the great Lord. {This fact has been expressly emphasized in the *Pashupat Upanishad*, *Purva Kand*, verse no. 10, which is the nineteenth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda.}

The *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad* gives the *Tarak Mantra* of Lord Shiva as 'OM Namaha Maha-devaaye' in paragraph no. 4 of the same Canto 2.

Shambhu—He is known as *Shambhu* as he is the one who remains uniform, unruffled and calm even under adverse situations. Shambhu is one who exists or is established in an enlightened state of highest consciousness (i.e. is 'Bhu') that is marked by perfect self control, complete neutrality, absolute tranquility, serenity, peacefulness and blissfulness. Since Lord Shiva possesses all these grand auspicious virtues, he is called 'Shambhu'. Refer: *Atharvashikha Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, *Kandika 3*.

This Upanishad declares that Shambhu is the highest deity to be worshipped and adored, and he represents the fifth state of consciousness that is called the *Turiyateet*, and to the fourth aspect of the ethereal word OM—i.e. when the word has been said fully and the mouth closes. The first letter of OM is A and it represents Brahma the creator, the second letter U represents Vishnu the sustainer and protector of creation, the third letter M represents Rudra the annihilator and one of the names of Shiva, and

the three and half letter called the 'Ardha Matra' represented by the horizontal 'S' mark attached to the symbol of OM on its side represents Ishan, one of the names of Shiva and the God who is the ruler of all other Gods. Finally, the fourth complete Matra symbolised by the dot on the top is Shambhu or Lord Shiva. This Shambhu or Shiva is Brahm in its best and most pristine form.

Lord Shiva is called Shambhu because he possesses the highest knowledge of the 'truth and the Consciousness' known as Brahm, and being self-realised he is a personified form of Brahm. Therefore, Shambhu is the supreme transcendental Lord of creation who surpasses all earlier states of existence such as the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Shshupta or deep sleep state and the Turiya or post-Sushupta state to permanently live in the Turiyateet state of perpetual bliss and tranquility.

The Atharva Veda's *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 2, paragraph no. 18 says that Lord Shiva who is known as Shambhu is also known as Pashupaat and Mahadeva.

Laya-kaari—Lord Shiva brings about an end to delusions, and establish oneness and uniformity in creation by removing or eliminating or dissolving ('Laya') the artificial distinction in the various states of Consciousness (such as the Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta, Turiya) that are caused by ignorance of the reality and its attendant delusions.

Pashupati/Pashupaat—References: (i) Atharva Veda = Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 2, paragraph no. 8, 18; Sharav Upanishad, verse no. 14; Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Purva Kanda/Canto 1, verse nos. 10-11, 29, 32; Uttar Kand/Canto 2, verse no. 7. (ii) Sam Veda = Jabalu-panishad, verse nos. 11-18.

Shiva is called *Pashupati* or *Pashupaat* because he is the Lord of lowly living beings who have animal-like instincts—i.e. those who are engrossed in pursuing the urge for self-gratification and pleasures of the sense objects of this gross world without realizing that they getting sucked in the vortex of endless miseries and being pulled away from peace and happiness.

The *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 2, paragraph no. 8 explains the meaning of this term as follows—"Anyone who knows and understands these eclectic virtues of my (Shiva's) divine cosmic form (as Brahm, the Supreme Being) is freed from the fetters that shackle him to this material world like an animal held in captivity.

I (Shiva) am known as 'Pashupaat'—one who liberates animals from their shackles; it also means freeing a living being from his animal-like lowly instincts that demean the exalted nature of his Atma. [Here, the 'animal' refers to the Jiva, the living being or the creature, and the 'shackle' to (i) the never ending cycle of birth and death, (ii) to the numerous temptations of this mundane artificial and deluding material world of sense objects, and (iii) to the evil and lowly natural instincts that may exist in the Jiva that would undermine the holiness and divinity of his Atma. The Lord ensures that such lowly traits in his character are eliminated for good so that the creature can find liberation and deliverance, or emancipation and salvation.] [8]"

The *Sharav Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, verse no. 14 says—"All the Gods are like animals in front of him. That is, all the Gods are under his overall command and depend upon him for their survival and protection. That is why the Lord is honoured by the epithet 'Pashupatinath' or the Lord of animals.'

Refer also *Jabalu-panishad* of Sam Veda tradition, verse nos. 11-18.

Ahankar, or pride and ego, makes a man no less than an animal. This is stressed in Jabalu-panishad of Sam Veda tradition, verse nos. 11-18, and Sharav Upanishad of Atharva Veda, verse no. 14 which stresses that 'Isha', or the Lord Shiva who is regarded as the supreme Lord of creation, had to become a 'Pashupati', Lord of animals, just because he is the undisputed Lord of all the creatures, and those

creatures who have lost wisdom and a sense of righteousness, those who are overcome with Ahankar, are no better than animals.

When the 'Ahankar' is eliminated or symbolically reduced to ashes, the creature becomes an 'Ish' from a 'Pashupati'; in other words he has become a purified creature in the place of an animal-like creature. This transformation or metamorphosis—from an animal to a non-animal or from an animal-like creature to a wise and erudite person—is tantamount to acquiring truthful knowledge and become spiritually wise and enlightened.

The Lord is especially honoured by the epithet of 'Pashupati' because an enlightened worshipper targets all his spiritual endeavours towards attaining high levels of purity and holiness that entails that he first controls his basic animal-like natural instincts; he is expected to have completely exercised total self-restraint on his sense organs. Brahm is not sitting somewhere in the sky, but the Lord resides inside one's own inner-self as his Atma. This Atma is the Lord of the creature. So when a worshipper pays his obeisance to 'Pashupati Parmatma' he is actually honouring the Atma which has learnt to practice exemplary self-control over animal-like instincts, characters, qualities and behaviour.

Tripurari/Tripura-raari—Refer (i) Atharva Veda = Sharav Upanishad, verse no. 14.

The *Sharav Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, verse no. 14 describes that Lord Shiva is also known as the slayer of the demon Tirpurasur. Hence, Shiva or Rudra is also called Tripurari. This is because of the following legend associated with the Lord. Tarakaasur was the son of Vajraanga and his consort Varaangi. He had done severe Tapa (austerity and penance) as a result of which the creator Brahma had granted him several boons which had made him invincible. He was killed by Lord Subramanya, the son of Shiva and Parvati. He had three sons—Taaraaksha, Kamlaaksha and Vidyunmaali. They had also pleased Brahma and by his blessings built three great cities, collectively called 'Tripura'. These cities were made of gold, silver and iron. When they became a nuisance for the Gods, Shiva destroyed these three cities and the demons with one arrow. These three demon brothers are collectively called *Tripuraasur*. Therefore he got the name of Tripurari—one who destroyed the three enemy cities.

Kamari/Kaamaari—Lord Shiva is also known as Kaamaari or Kamari, literally the one who had reduced to ashes the pride of Kaamdeo, the God of passions and lust. The Lord had vanquished the haughtiness and arrogance of this God of passions and his belief that he is invincible and infallible. This fact has been stated in the *Sharav Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, verse no. 15, which says that Lord Shiva had subdued even the God of Death known as Yam and the God of passions known as Kamdeo cupid. Hence, he is known as 'Kamari/Kaamaari'—the Lord who had killed or conquered Kaam, the negative quality of having passions, lust, yearnings and longings; the desire for gratification of the natural carnal instincts in a living being; longing for sensual pleasures.

The legend associated with this event is briefly as follows—"Once when Shiva was in deep meditative trance and was teased by Kamdeo, the God of passions, at the behest of Gods who had wanted Shiva to marry and produce a male child who would kill the demons, he felt so annoyed by Kamdeo's impertinence that he opened this third eye to burn him down."

The story of Shiva subduing Yam has been narrated in the Purans as follows—"Shiva had trounced *Yam*, the God of death, to save his devotee Maarkandeya. Sage Maarkandey was the son of sage Maarkandu. He was a great devotee of Lord Shiva, the patron God of death, so much so that when death approached him personified as Kaal when the sage was yet quite young because destiny had it that he would die still when young, he clung to the Shiva Lingam (the image of Shiva) with the greatest of devotion, surrender and urgency that comes with one facing certain death. Lord Shiva

appeared and prevented Yam, the God of death from tying him in his snare and taking him away. The Lord blessed him with a virtual eternal life, blessing him that he would live for another 14 Kalpas (1 Kalpa = 1 day of Brahma or roughly 4.32 billion human years). His magnum opus is the 'Maarkandey Puran'. He had also edited and abridged the Manusmriti, the code of life and conduct as laid by the first human named Manu to regulate society and act as a constitution and manual for ready reference for the forthcoming human race, into eight thousand verses, and passed it to sage Bhargava. His reference comes in the Mahabharat epic when he approaches the Pandavas and taught them the principles of Dharma (code of righteousness, auspiciousness, probity, propriety and nobility). He was the one who had enlightened Yudisthira that Krishna was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu (Vanapurva, 189). In the same Mahabharat, he preaches the celestial sage Narad the laws of Dharma (Anushaasan-purva, 50-62)."

Parmeshwar—The word means the Supreme Ishwar or the Supreme Lord. Lord Shiva is addressed with this honourable epithet in the Atharva Veda's *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph no. 3.

Trinetrum/Trinetra/Trilaksha/Lalaataksha—

Refer (i) Atharva Veda = Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 1, paragraph no. 6; and Canto 2, paragraph no. 21; Sharav Upanishad, verse nos. 10, 14; Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 1-2; (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda = Yogtattva Upanishad, verse no. 93.

The word *Trinetra* means the Lord who has three eyes, two conventional eyes and one rare eye of wisdom located in the center of the forehead, between the eyebrows and just above the root of the nose. Hence, Lord Shiva is also known as Lord *Trinetrum*. ['Tri' = three; 'Netra' = eyes; 'Laksha' = to see.]

The location of the third eye in the center of the forehead has given Shiva the name of *Lalaataskha*. ['Lalaat' = forehead.]

The *third eye* is not some physical eye but a subtle eye symbolising the Lord's high level of enlightenment and wisdom. This burning of the evil world by opening of the third eye of Shiva is a metaphoric way of saying that a creature can use his eyes of wisdom, erudition, knowledge and enlightenment to overcome all delusions and misconceptions about the truth and reality, along with all mischief as well as negativity and evil tendencies in this world. The 'burning' is elimination of such negativity and perversions.

According to Yoga philosophy, an ascetic focuses his Pran or vital winds at this spot in the forehead where he experiences enlightenment and the nectar of bliss dripping from it. By the way, Shiva is regarded as the patron God of all ascetics precisely for this reason.

There is a legendary story associated with this third eye. Once, Parvati, his divine consort, had closed his two eyes, and as a result the world was plunged in darkness. To save the world from this all-encompassing darkness, Shiva willed a third eye between the two eyebrows. This eye spouted fire with its accompanying heat and light. So, the celestial sun can be regarded as a symbol of this third eye.

Once when Shiva was in deep meditative trance and was teased by Kamdeo, the God of passions, at the behest of Gods who had wanted Shiva to marry and produce a male child who would kill the demons, he felt so annoyed by Kamdeo's temerity and impertinence that he opened this third eye to burn him down.

According to the Atharva Veda's *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 2, paragraph no. 21, the three eyes of Shiva or Rudra stand for the Sun, the Moon and the Fire. These three entities are regarded as the eternal sources of light in this creation. The Sun and the Fire provide the heat and energy so essential for sustenance of life

besides being an eternal source of light, while the Moon is regarded as the pitcher of Amrit, the elixir of bliss and the soothing nectar that neutralises the scorching effects of the Sun and the Fire.

The third eye, as has been noted above, stands for the excellent level of wisdom, erudition, knowledge, enlightenment and omniscience that the Lord possesses.

The *Sharav Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, verse nos. 10 and 14 says as follows—

“Verse no. 10= We bow reverentially and pay our obeisance to the great Lord known as Rudra who can burn to ashes the entire world by the fierce spurt of fire emanating from the third eye located in his forehead¹, and is so gracious that he re-creates it once again after punishing it (for its sins and misdeeds by reducing it to ashes), and then offers it his protection (10).

“Verse no. 14 = We bow reverentially and pay our obeisance to the great Lord known as Rudra whose three eyes are the Sun, the Moon and the Fire (representing eternal sources of light, life, energy, warmth and heat) (14).”

From the metaphysical perspective, his two eyes are the conventional eyes, and his third symbolizes his deep insight and great wisdom and enlightenment. Shiva personifies the fire element which also has a symbolic significance. The fire is known to burn all impurities present in gold when it is put into it, thereby purifying the metal. Similarly, fire is used in blast furnaces to extract iron from its ore. Fire has the inherent ability to reduce to ashes all filth and garbage, which is a metaphoric way of saying that a person who has worshipped this element in the form of Shiva is supposed to have burnt all his faults, blemishes and shortcomings that taint his character and soul, thereby purifying his inner self. The ash is indicative of total renunciation and detachment from the world of materialism, because it is indicative of a renunciate way of life and symbolically stands for burning of everything into the fire pit. That is why Lord Shiva has been called the patron God of ascetics, hermits and Sanyasis who worship the fire element only.

Besides these points, Shiva is the God assigned the task of concluding the world which necessitates his being closely associated with the ‘fire element’ in the sense that he must be as unrelenting, merciless, powerful and ferocious as the latter in order to conclude this creation in spite of all the odds. He must reduce everything to ashes just like the fire does. And it is from this ash that the new creation would emerge in due course. Herein lie the magic of creation and its chief Lord, Brahm, the Supreme Being—the fact that a new creation rises from ashes!

To quote *Yogtattva Upanishad*, verse no. 93—“This (i.e. the fire element is the symbolic abode of Lord Rudra or Shiva. [That is, he symbolises the fire element.] One should meditate upon this Lord who has three eyes, who is the one renowned for granting boons (to his followers and devotees, and in the presence case to the ascetic), who is as splendid, illuminated and radiant as a sun which has just risen, and who has the ash of the fire sacrifice smeared all over his body (just like an ascetic, indicating that he is their great icon and patron deity of ascetics) (93).”

Trayambak—The word *Trayambak* means the Lord who has a most unconventional form with one extra eye oddly placed in the forehead. Lord Shiva’s behaviour and general bearing are also most unconventional and odd because he is at once an incarnation of the eclectic virtues of peace, renunciation, detachment, tranquility and blissful, and at another moment he becomes personified form of anger and wrath. On the one hand his cosmic form is the Supreme Being, the Greatest amongst the Gods (‘Maha-deva’), and in another form he is a gross Lingam (Shiva’s gross symbol made of stone). In one instance he is lost in meditation and contemplation, being completely detached from the outside world, and in another instance he is said to have a family consisting of his divine consort Parvati or Uma, the divine Mother, and sons known as Ganesh and Kartikeya. Hence, he is called *Tryambak*—the ‘odd one’.

The word also means ‘the Lord of the three (‘Traya’ = 3) worlds’ consisting of the heavens, the earth and the hell; the cosmos, the terrestrial world, and the nether world.

The Lord’s Mantra is given in the *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4 is entirely devoted to Lord Trayambak. It describes the meaning of this word and the Mantras dedicated to Lord Trayambak in great detail. This *Trayambak Mantra* is given in paragraph nos. 1-6, and it is ‘Trayambakam Yajaamahe Sugandhim Pushti-varadhan Urwaaruk-miv Bandhanaan-mrityor-mukshiyeti Mamritaata’.

Lord *Triyambak*’s name appears in the following Upanishads—

(i) Atharva Veda’s *Bhasma Jabal Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph no. 6 which says that his Mantra should be said when the worshipper applies the sacred Bhasma (ash of the fire sacrifice) on his body from the toe to the head.

(ii) The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4 is entirely devoted to Lord Trayambak. It describes the meaning of this word and the Mantras dedicated to Lord Trayambak in great detail. This Trayambak Mantra is given in paragraph nos. 1-6, and it is ‘Trayambakam Yajaamahe Sugandhim Pushti-varadhan Urwaaruk-miv Bandhanaan-mrityor-mukshiyeti Mamritaata’.

Neelkantha—‘The Lord with a purple or blue-tinged throat’. Lord Shiva is known as ‘Neelkanth’ because he had drunk the horrible poison called Halaahal which emerged as a scorching froth at the time of churning of the ocean by the Gods and the Demons in search of Amrit or the ambrosia of life and eternity. The legend goes that Lord Shiva had drunk the fierce poison that emerged at the time of churning of the celestial ocean in the beginning of creation by the Gods and the Demons in search of Amrit, the nectar of eternity and bliss. As soon as this boiling poison came out, there was the fear of the entire creation being scalded by its heat and ferocity. So Lord Shiva took the name of Lord Ram and gulped it in one mouthful. But the Lord knew that if this poison entered his abdomen the whole creation will be annihilated nevertheless as it resided in his abdomen. This shows that Lord Shiva is none but the supreme Brahm in whose body the entire creation resides like the embryo lives in its mother’s womb. Hence, the merciful Lord kept the poison in his throat, giving it a purple colour. {Refer: (i) Sharav Upanishad, verse nos. 11, 16. (ii) Mahabharat, Adi Parva, Canto 18. In its verse no. 18 it is stated that—(a) Lord Shiva had drunk the poison while invoking and repeating the holy Mantra, and of course that Mantra was the holy name of Lord Ram because the Lord is Shiva’s patron deity, and (b) this is the reason why his throat became dark blue or purple, because he had retained the poison in his throat instead of gulping it down in his stomach. (iii) The same fact is endorsed in Tulsidas’ Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 19. (iv) Tulsidas’ Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, verse nos. 157-158 allude to Lord Shiva drinking the Halaahal poison.}

Nataraj—One of mystical forms of Lord Shiva is known as the ‘Nataraj’ (pronounced as ‘Nut-Raaj’). The word ‘Nat’ means to dance, and ‘Raaj’ means a king or an expert who knows the secrets of any kind of art. So, when Lord Shiva performs his cosmic dance he is known as ‘Nataraj’. This mystical form of Lord Shiva is known as the ‘Nataraj’ because it represents the Lord’s cosmic dance that symbolizes both the destruction and the creation of the universe, and it reveals the cycles of death and birth. Since one dances only when he is extremely happy and ecstatic, this Nataraj dance of Lord Shiva indicates that the Lord is extremely blissful and ecstatic in self-realisation. This pose is for the welfare of the world, and to tell the world how one enjoys total bliss upon self-realisation. In the pose of Nataraj, the ‘King of Dance Forms’, Shiva is giving darshan (divine viewing) to his beloved devotees within the abode of Consciousness, which is the heart of man. In other words, only when one becomes self-realised and experiences the existence of the pure conscious Atma

inside one's heart, inside one's inner-self, that he can dance in ecstasy, lost in bliss and oblivious of the surrounding world.

During this form of cosmic dance that is known as 'Tandav' (pronounced as 'Taan-dav'), Lord Shiva is depicted as having crushed under his feet the demon of ignorance called 'Apasmara Purusha'. This demon of ignorance is created when the creature forgets the truth and reality of his true 'self' and that of existence as a whole, and the killing of this demon stands for overcoming ignorance and its attendant delusions. One hand is stretched across his chest and points towards the uplifted foot, indicating the release from earthly bondage of the devotee. The fire represents the final destruction of creation. But since Lord Shiva is the 'Maha-Dev', the great God, he is simultaneously responsible for bringing to an end this creation as well as creating it once again.

Therefore, this dance of the Nataraj is also an act of creation whereby the Lord arouses dormant energies and scatters the ashes of the universe in a pattern that will form the design, the contours and the texture of the ensuing creation.

Sharav—In his form as the liberator of the soul of the creature by destroying the latter's gross external body and freeing the soul, he is known as *Sharav*. Shiva had assumed this form to liberate Lord Vishnu from the horrible body of Nrisingh (half man and half lion). [Refer *Sharav Upanishad*, verse no. 6-8.]

Lord Shiva has many other names also as follows:--

1. Aashutosh—meaning one who fulfills all wishes of his devotees instantly.
2. Bhairav—meaning the Lord of Terror.
3. Bhole-naath—meaning the Lord who is simple-hearted, unpretentious, straightforward, honest, sincere, and humble inspite of being the Lord God.
4. Bhu-Dev—meaning the Lord of the earth.
5. Devaa-dhi-dev—meaning the Lord of all the Gods; the supreme God; the primordial God; the first amongst the Gods; the God who was present before the coming into being of all the other Gods.
6. Gangaa-dhar—meaning the Lord who holds the mighty river Ganges in the lock of hairs on his head.
7. Jagdish—meaning the Lord of the world, the universe.
8. Kailash—meaning the Lord who eliminates miseries and torments, restoring peace and happiness to the creature. It also means the Lord of the sacred mountain with the same name, viz. Mt. Kailash.

Symbols associated with Lord Shiva—

Shiva Lingam/Jyotirlingam—References: The Atharva Veda's (i) Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 2, paragraph nos. 11-12,14 refer to the Shiva's 'Lingam' and to his 'Jyotirlingam'; (ii) Gopal Uttar Tapini Upanishad, verse no. 12.

The Atharva Veda's Gopal Uttar Tapini Upanishad, verse no. 12 gives the *names* of some of the twenty *Shiva Lingams* as follows—"Vireshwar, Rudreshwar, Ambikeshwar, Ganeshwar, Neelkanth, Gopaleshwar, Bhadreshwar etc."

The *Shiva Lingam* is a gross manifestation of Shiva who himself is a divine, subtle and sublime Being. Just like the case of the rest of this creation being a visible and gross manifestation of the supreme transcendental Brahm, the cosmic Supreme Being, Lord Shiva's Lingams too represents the otherwise invisible, attribute-less, cosmic, all-pervading and the most sublime Lord Shiva's subtle form in its grosser aspect or form that is visible, and has attributes like the other grosser manifestations of the Supreme Being known as Brahm. This is one of the primary reasons why Lord Shiva is also called 'Maha-deva', the Great God, because he is none other than Brahm himself.

The Shiva's Lingam is like an icon that is normally used to stand as a unique symbol for a particular deity or God. It is an emblem of Shiva. If we look at the

Lingam closely we observe that it is a cylindrical structure passing through the center of a circular girdle or ring. This structure reminds one of a wheel with the central axle. This imagery is used to indicate the fact that Shiva is the supreme transcendental Brahm around whom the whole of the creation rotates. 'Rotates' is a metaphoric way of saying that the entire creation depends upon Brahm; it is centered around Brahm; Brahm is the pivot that supports the entire edifice of creation. Just like the wheel cannot move if the axle is removed, this creation cannot survive if Brahm, the Consciousness and the Truth of creation, is removed from it. The fact that this creation is like a wheel rotating around the central axle called Brahm is endorsed in a number of Upanishads, e.g. (a) Atharva Veda = Prashna Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 11; Canto 6, verse no. 6; Mundak Upanishad, Mundak (Canto) 2, section 2, verse no. 6; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 2-7; Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 9, verse nos. 4, 6; Tripdvibhut Maha-Narayan Upanishad, Canto 7, paragraph 3-14 (which describes the 'Sudarshan Chakra' of Vishnu); Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 4, verse no. 6-7 (which describes the wheel or Chakra that is present in the navel and how it keeps the creature trapped in it); Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 2 (which describes the Sri Chakra dedicated to Goddess Tripura who is regarded as the Mother Goddess; Surya Upanishad, verse no. 1 (describes the Sun God as the one who keeps the wheel of life and death, known as the Kaal Chakra, rotating). (b) Krishna Yajur Veda = Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 4, 6; Canto 5, verse no. 12; Canto 6, verse nos. 1-3. (c) Shukla Yajur Veda = Paingalopanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 3-4.

Besides this eclectic viewpoint we also observe that a cylinder is a smooth surface that is round from all sides. It appears the same from whichever side one sees it. This signifies the fact that Brahm is uniform and even in all respects, and neither does it have any specific form and feature. Like the Lingam passing through the circular girdle around it, the entire creation too forms a ring that moves around Brahm which holds the creation together and passes through its center. Now, this 'center' also means a core, and hence this refers to the Atma, the soul, that is the pivot or the core around which life revolves in this world.

If we look further ahead and observe a potter's wheel and how the potter moulds his pots and pans on it we find that it has a striking resemblance to the Shiva Lingam. As the wheel turns the potter expertly raises the shape of his wares at its center, and the rotating potter's wheel can be treated as an apt metaphor for the way the Shiva Lingam represents the phenomenon of creation moulded from the dynamic energy of Brahm revealed as the Shakti that continuously revolves around the principal known as Brahm.

Iconographically, the Shiva Lingam has three distinct parts—the lower part fixed to the ground stands for Brahma the creator; the middle part of the wheel stand for Vishnu the sustainer and protector of creation; and the upper part of the cylinder represents Rudra the concluder. These three Trinity Gods stand for the three basic and fundamental aspects of creation—birth, development and growth, and finally the end. They thus represent Brahm in its entirety.

The Shiva Lingam is called *Jyotirlingam* because it is mentioned in the Linga Puran, Chapters 17-20 that the Shiva Lingam appeared as an endless shaft of fire. And 'fire' is characterized by the virtues of light and illumination. It came to be known as the 'Linga' because all the creatures of this creation have a gross body in which their soul or their Atma lived, called the 'Linga Deha', and they reproduced themselves with the help of the genitals, called the 'Linga'. Since only the Supreme Being has this capacity to create and then sustain his creation, the grosser form of the Lord in the form of this creation and its self-replicating creatures was symbolized in the grosser symbol of the Linga. In other word, the Lingam represents the whole creation in a miniature gross form. This icon of Brahm is called 'Shiva' Lingam because Shiva is a personified form of Brahm.

It is also believed that it is called ‘Lingam’ because the entire creation would collapse at the end in Brahm, the ethereal cosmic Consciousness. The phrase ‘Linga Deha’ literally refers to the ethereal form of the corporal body of a creature. So when the creature sheds the body, his Atma would merge with the cosmic Atma known as Parmatma. Since Lord Shiva is the Parmatma—the Supreme Being—of this creation, it is natural that his symbol would be called a Lingam. It is to emphasize the fact that one should not be misled by its outer gross structure of being merely a cylindrical structure made of stone or rock but a divine symbol of the cosmic Atma that cannot be visualized by the naked eyes.

The physical Lingam is the visible form of the invisible Linga Deha of Shiva which is the Lord’s ethereal and cosmic form.

The fact that the Lingam is an image of Lord Shiva is affirmed by the Lord himself in the Atharva Veda’s Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 2, paragraph nos. 12 where the Lord preaches about the immense symbolic metaphysical importance and significance of the Lingam, and in paragraph nos. 14-15 when he preaches about the great many *benefits of worshipping the Shiva Lingam* which is his image, and *how to worship it*. To quote—

“verse no. 12 =[This verse emphasizes the importance and the significance of the Shiva Lingam as follows—] Even the Sun God, the Moon God, the Fire God and the Wind God (i.e. the primary Gods) are unaware of the mysteries and enigmatic glories of this Shiva-Lingam.

The self-illuminated and self-emerged or self-created Lingam extends as far as the pit of the earth known as Paataal.

This Shiva-Lingam is an image of me who am the Lord of the world. Hence, it is known as ‘Vishwanaath’ Lingam.

Worshipping it and paying obeisance to it is directly worshipping and paying obeisance to me.

A worshipper who offers his worship and obeisance to me, who serves me and honours me with full devotion, sincerity and faith, by offering three leaves of the Bilva tree, and then offers the auspicious rewards of such exemplary worship to me (rather than expecting any gain for himself in return for such worship or service), who wears the Bhasma (sacred ash) and the Rudraksha beads as prescribed, who has sought my shelter and has taken refuge in my holy feet, and who is an unquestioned and most committed devotee of mine—verily I say that I accept his worship and free him from the fetter represented by the endless cycle of birth and death.

Even a great sin and its evil consequences are neutralized by offering daily worship to my Shiva-Lingam, by offering libations to me (a process known as ‘Abhishek’) and praying to me by reading or reciting the hymns of the Rudra Skuta daily with the greatest of devotion and faith, and then drinking the water left over after the completion of worship and offering of libations to my Lingam.

Such a devotee is free from all sorrows, grief, miseries and torments. He is freed from the shackling effect of this mundane and entrapping world. [12]

“verse no. 14 = (Benefits of worshipping the Shiva Lingam—) By offering libations to my Lingam, which is my image, with the milk drawn from a Kapila cow (i.e. a cow with reddish-brown, white, or white-spotted skin) while reciting the hymns of the Rudra Sukta, a devotee can obtain purification (pardon) from the horrendous sin of killing a Brahmin.

Offering of libations with the curd made from the milk of the Kapila cow helps one to eliminate or clean the great sin caused by drinking intoxicating liquids.

Offering of libations with clarified butter made from the milk of the Kapila cow helps one to overcome the grave sin caused by stealing gold (or theft of any kind).

Offering of libations with honey helps one to overcome the horrible ignominy and sin caused by being amorous towards the wife of one’s Guru (teacher and moral preceptor).

Offering of libations with white sugar helps one to overcome the sin of being cruel to others.

Offering of libations with milk and other products (as prescribed above) helps the devotee fulfill all his aspirations, desires and wishes.

By offering libations one hundred times with quantity of materials that are one hundred times more than that used for one standard routine offering (i.e. roughly 100 kilograms or 1 quintal by weight) helps the aspirant to free himself from the fetters that shackle him to this world. [14]

“verse no. 15 = (How to worship the Shiva Lingam—) My (Shiva’s) image in the form of the Shiva-Lingam should be offered worship during the time of the Aadra Nakshatra (an asterism known as Aadra), on the full moon day, on the new moon day, the Vyatipaata Yoga (the seventeenth astrological union of stars), on the occasion of eclipses (solar and lunar), and on the day of the Sakranti (the summer and winter solstice).

During these days, worship should be done by first offering libations followed by oblations. For this, the following items are to be used—sesame seeds, rice, barley, three leaves of the Bilva tree, clarified butter made from the milk of the Kapila cow, scents and fragrances, incense sticks, lighted lamp, sweets, fruit etc. Then flowers and water in cupped palms of the hands should be offered most respectfully at the end of the worship.

By offering worship and service to me with devotion and faith, the devotee obtains Sayujya Mukti (i.e. he becomes one with me).

If the worship is done with rice of quantity that is one hundred times that used for standard routine worship (i.e. roughly 100 kilograms or 1 quintal), the worshipper obtains the abode of the Moon God known as Chandra-loka.

If equal quantity of sesame seeds (i.e. roughly 100 kilograms or 1 quintal) is used for worship, the worshipper obtains the abode of the Vayu God (the Wind God).

If equal quantity of horse beans (i.e. roughly 100 kilograms or 1 quintal) is used for worship, the worshipper obtains the abode of the Varun God (the Water God).

If equal quantity of barley (i.e. roughly 100 kilograms or 1 quintal) is used for worship, the worshipper obtains the abode of the Surya God (the Sun God).

If twice the above amount of items are used for worship (i.e. if roughly 200 kilograms or 2 quintals are used), the worshipper obtains the higher heaven known as the Swarga-loka.

If four times the above quantity of items are used for offering worship to me (i.e. if roughly 400 kilograms or 4 quintals are used), the worshipper obtains the abode known as Brahma-loka, or the abode of Brahma the creator.

If worship is offered to me or my Lingam by using the items needed for such worship measuring one hundred times than the standard offerings (i.e. if roughly 100 x 100 = 10,000 kilograms or 100 quintals are used), the worshipper is freed from the jurisdiction of death, or clutches of death, as far as the Brahm-Kosha. [That is, he is freed from the fear of death till the time the creator would be born again. The word ‘Kosh’ means the source from which Brahma the creator was born, the point of time when Brahma was born. Refer paragraph no. 20 of this Canto 2 below.]

Since he is my devotee, he crosses over from the abode of Brahma and reaches my abode known as the Shiva-Loka that is beyond it. There is no abode or heaven better than it. He becomes free from all miseries and sorrows upon attaining it. He is freed from all fetters and encumbrances that had kept him shackled.

By worshipping me in my form as the Lingam, ascetics have attained great mystical powers. Those who do fire sacrifices (i.e. the worshippers of the sacred fire) are actually offering their obeisance to me when they offer their oblations to the sacred fire. It is me whose magnificence, holiness, eclectic glories and divine virtues are sung and lauded by the Vedas in their hymns.

It is proved beyond doubt by the great scriptures such as the Vedangas (branches of Vedas), the Upanishads, and the Itihasas (ancient mythological histories) that there is nothing besides me in this creation. Everything is me; everything is established in me; I am the foundation and basis of everything. [This is because Lord Shiva is the supreme transcendental Brahm personified. Nothing exists in this creation that is not Brahm; it is Brahm who has manifested or revealed in every single unit of creation.] [15]”

The significance of the *moon on his forehead*, and his *five heads and the ten arms*— Lord Shiva has been depicted in the Purans as having a *crescent moon* on his forehead. The moon is said to have sixteen Kalaas or phases, symbolising the sixteen Kalaas or aspects out of the total of sixty four Kalaas of the supreme Brahm. These sixteen Kalaas represent the visible world which is one fourth part of the entire creation consisting of the remaining of the Kalaas of Brahm. The visible world is called ‘one Pada’ or one leg or one aspect or Kalaa of Brahm. So, Shiva is the Lord who presides over the entire visible part of creation, and this world is his ornamentation in the sense that the Lord appears to be so beautiful if we consider the beauty of Nature as the astounding beauty and the expert craftsmanship of Shiva on display.

The moon present on Shiva’s forehead also stands for the various eclectic qualities called Kalaas that he possesses and which adorn him like the moon. Symbolically, the devotee is advised to follow the example of his chosen deity Lord Shiva and note the symbolism of the Moon on his head. These eclectic qualities should be as prominent as the moon on the head of Shiva and they should form an integral part of the character of the devotee if he wishes to place himself in the position of being called a sincere follower and worshipper of Lord Shiva. Now let us have a glimpse of these *Kalaas*. They are the various eclectic qualities or attributes that an exalted man should possess, and briefly they are the following—(i) Shraddha (faith, believe, conviction, reverence, respect, devotion), (ii) Pran (ife; the very essence of creation; the vibrations of life; the rhythm and essential functions pertaining to life), (iii) Akash (the all-pervading, all-encompassing sky or space element), (iv) Vayu (wind, air element), (v) Tej (energy, splendour, radiance, glory, might, majesty and fire element), (vi) Apaha (water element which is the all-important ingredient for life), (vii) ‘Prithivi’ (earth element which is the base or foundation for all mortal creation), (viii) Indriya (the organs of the body, both the organs of perception as well as of action), (ix) Mana (the mind and heart complex and their stupendous potentials), (x) Anna (food, the element without which life is simply not imaginable because it provides it with the basic nourishment and energy), (xi) Virya (semen, sperms, standing for courage, valour, potency, vitality and prowess), (xii) Tapa (austerity and penance, tolerance of hardship as a means of penitence, forbearance as well as carrying out strict religious vows in order to purify one’s self) (xiii) Mantra (the ability to give good advise, the power to contemplate and think, concentrate and focus, logically arrive at a conclusion), (xiv) Karma (taking actions and doing deeds), (xv) Loka (worldly interactions and behaviours), and (xvi) Naam (good name, fame, reputation, honour and glory).

Reference should be made to the Chandogya Upanishad, 6/7/1-6 of Sam Veda tradition in this context.

The *five heads* of Shiva stand for the ‘Panch Vyom’ or the five forms that the sky element is said to have. According to Vedanta, the concept of the *sky* or ‘Akash’ has many connotations. According to one interpretation, there are *five* subtle skies representing the space surrounding the five sheaths or *Koshas* present in the body of a creature. They are the sheaths that surround the Atma and are called ‘Panch Akash’. These are the following—(1) the Food Sheath called Anna Maye Kosh; (2) the Vital Air Sheath called Pran Maye Kosh; (3) the Mental Sheath called Manomaye Kosh;

(4) the Intellectual Sheath called Vigyan Maye Kosh; and (5) the Bliss Sheath called Anand Maye Kosh. Refer—Mudgal Upanishad, 4/5 of the Rig Veda.

The *ten arms* of Shiva stand for the ten forms of the subtle sky element. They are the following—(1) Ghatakash—the space inside a hollow pot; (2) Mathakash—the space inside a holy building, such as a holy shrine, a monastery, an abbey etc.; (3) Hridayakash—the subtle space inside the heart; (4) Akash—the vacant or blank space above the earth; (5) Suryakash—the space of the solar system; the space around the sun, or the solar system illuminated by the light of the sun; (6) Paraakash—the space above or beyond the solar system, it is said to burn with the celestial fire; (7) Mahakash—the great sky that is aglow with divine illumination, the heaven; that space which is radiant with a divine glow; (8) Paramakash—the supreme sky beyond the Mahakash, it is said to be very magnificent and encloses everything that exists, including all the other skies; that space which is illuminated, all pervading, all encompassing and full of bliss and felicity; (9) Tattwakash—the elementary space that is at the core of the concept of space, or the space that surrounds the basic elements of creation; by natural corollary it refers to the subtle, sublime, ethereal and supreme space where the eternal, transcendental Brahm has his abode because Brahm is the cause of all the basic elements of creation; there is complete beatitude and felicity there; that space which surrounds the essential truth known as Brahm; and (10) Anatariksha—the physical space where stars are present in deep space; the intergalactic space. Besides these, there is one more space called ‘Swarga’ which means heaven or the Duloka.

These skies have been ascribed different names just to facilitate understanding, and not because any one form of sky is fundamentally different from the other. For example, the space present inside the mud-pot, called the Ghata-kash, is the same as the space present outside the body of the pot. When the pot is broken, the demarcation wall of the body of the pot is removed, and both the space inside and outside of the erstwhile pot become indistinguishably and inseparably the same. Therefore, the various names are artificial and misnomers.

To quote *Yogtattva Upanishad*, verse no. 100—“This Lord Shiva is most pure and immaculate, and as clear and clean as pure crystal¹. He has a crescent moon tucked in the lock of hairs on his head. He has five mouths, is very sober, gentle and pleasant, has ten arms and three eyes (100).

{Note—Since Lord Shiva is the patron God of Yogis or those ascetics who do Yoga, especially those who practice its exercises and rituals as propounded by Patanjali, and this Upanishads deals with Yoga, the supreme transcendental Supreme Being known as Brahm of metaphysics and Upanishads is personified here in him.}

The significance of the *serpents* wrapped around his body—The *snakes* that are wrapped around Lord Shiva show that he is beyond the power of death and poison. These coiled serpents around his body indicate the fact that he constantly reminds himself of imminent death, because serpents are very poisonous and symbolise immediate death. They also remind him about the unholy and poisonous nature of the gross world. This helps him to remain focused on his spiritual aim of self-realisation instead of being attracted by the material charms of this material world of sense objects and getting deluded by them.

The serpents also signify that Shiva is the Lord of death; he is death personified. Since he is able to wrap the serpents around his body and they cannot harm him, it indicates the fact that he has conquered death. That is why he is called ‘Mrityunjay’, the conqueror of death.

Again, the coiled serpents represent the Kundalini, the coiled subtle cosmic energy center at the base of the spine which when activated can entitle the spiritual aspirant to experience a burst of stupendous spiritual energy which provides him a glimpse of his own divine powers as well as the powers of the cosmic Consciousness

present inside his bosom as his Atma. This Kundalini is activated by doing numerous Yoga exercises as described in the Upanishads on the subject of Yoga.

The coiled serpents may also represent cycles of time in the macrocosm and the basic energy of life in the microcosm in the form of sexual energy.

These reptiles are very ferocious, dangerous, poisonous, and a symbol of male potency. The symbolism is that Shiva is a very potent God who can be extremely ruthless and unforgiving towards sinful creatures. He has exercised extreme self control and has 'girdled' or readied himself in preparation for enduring the greatest of hardships and sufferance for self-realisation as well as to provide the world with liberation and deliverance. The serpents warn his enemies not to fool around with him. That is also why he has fire in one of his hands. This fire signifies his ability to reduce to ashes the entire physical world consisting of falsehood and sins as well as eliminate all impurities, imperfections, faults and shortcomings that cripple the creature's spiritual well being.

The *Trident* of Lord Shiva is known as 'Trishul', and it represents the three Gunas, or the three natural tendencies or the three fundamental qualities that are inherent in this creation and they govern all characteristics in the living world. These three Gunas are known respectively as the Sata Guna, the Raja Guna, and the Tama Guna.

The Trident is known as the 'Trishul', and is one of the most popular symbols associated with Lord Shiva. It is a weapon used by Lord Shiva for the restoration of Dharma. But the Trishul has a deeper symbolic meaning as follows—

The Trishul symbolizes the balance of the three forces of preservation, creation and destruction. It represents the three aspects of consciousness—cognition, conation and affection.

The *sound* of Shiva's *two-sided drum* represents the cosmic sound known as Naad that reverberates in the background of the cosmos. This sound is symbolically represented by the sound that is produced by uttering the word OM.

The *vehicle or mount* of Lord Shiva is the white *bull called the Nandi*—which means the cheerful one, the joyful one. The bull on which Lord Shiva rides represents virility and strength, the animal-like power and basic instincts in a man.

In Shiva temples, there is always a reclining bull placed in front of the chief shrine or just outside it, with the head turned away from the deity but the gaze fixed on it. It is interpreted as the Jivatma, the individual soul of all living being, with its animal-like nature pulling it away from God, but the Lord's grace pulling it back towards him.

Lord Shiva is often depicted in the Purans and imagery as *seated* on a tiger skin or *wears* a tiger skin. Here, the tiger represents the stupendous power of the mind.

Lord Shiva *lives* on Mount Kailas that is located in the northern side of the mighty mountain range known as the Himalayas.

Importance of having devotion for Lord Shiva (according to Tulsidas)—

Tulsidas' immortal epic story of Lord Ram, known as *Ram Charit Manas*, highly respects Lord Shiva. In it, Lord Ram, who was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Being, has said himself that if one wishes to have 'Bhakti' (devotion) for the Lord, then it is necessary for him to have great respect of Lord Shiva—reference: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 45; and Lanka Kand, Doha no. 2 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 7-8, till Chaupai line nos. 1-4 that precedes Doha no. 3.

Tulsidas has sung the glories of Lord Shiva in his book *Kavitawali* in its Uttar Kand, verse nos. 149—164.

Mantras pertaining to Shiva—(i) The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4, verse/paragraph no. 8 describes the great Mantra of Lord Shiva which gives the worshipper the stature equivalent to that of Lord Shiva. To quote—“The Lord (Shiva) replied, ‘You must worship the God who vanquishes death with the help of the Anushtup Chanda ‘Trayambak’ etc. (narrated above).

It has been said from the beginning that the monosyllabic word OM is a representative of the Lord (the supreme transcendental Brahm) who is universal and uniformly all-pervading, all-incorporating and all-encompassing.

Hence, those who worship the Lord with Mantra ‘OM Namaha Shivaaye’ of the Yajur Veda are able to attain the exalted stature equivalent to Lord Rudra. He is rewarded with auspiciousness. [This Mantra briefly means ‘Salutations to the Lord represented by the word OM! I bow before Lord Shiva who is this particular supreme transcendental Lord’.]

You must be fully enlightened about it. [That is, a spiritual aspirant who knows the profound import of this great Mantra uses it for offering worship to the Lord in order to attain the supreme state of enlightenment that gives him salvation and emancipation.] [8].”

(ii) The *Tripura Tapini Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4, verse/paragraph nos. 2-6 describe the great Mantra of Lord Shiva in his divine form as Trayambak. The full Mantra is ‘Trayambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim Pushtivardhan Urvaaruk-miv Bandhanaan-mrityor-mukshi-yeti Mamritaam’

(iii) The *Sharav Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, verse nos. 10, 23, 26, 33-34, describes the glories of Lord Shiva as follows—

“verse no. 10 = We bow reverentially and pay our obeisance to the great Lord known as Rudra who can burn to ashes the entire world by the fierce spurt of fire emanating from the third eye located in his forehead¹, and is so gracious that he re-creates it once again after punishing it (for its sins and misdeeds by reducing it to ashes), and then offers it his protection (10).

“verse no. 23 = Lord Maheswar, the Great God (‘Ishwar’) and Lord of all the other gods, is truthful, is eternal, unchanging, steady and always omnipresent everywhere, is a (neutral and dispassionate) witness to all and everything (that is happening in this creation), is eternally blissful and happy, has no comparison or parallel in this creation, and is indescribable and incomprehensible.

The Lord or Bhagwan is also known as ‘Girish’ as he is the Lord of mountains. [This is because the symbolic abode of Shiva is said to be on the higher reaches of snow-covered Mt. Kailash. The reason for Shiva living in mountains is that he is the greatest Yogi or ascetic, and for an ascetic it is prescribed in the scriptures that he makes mountains and forests his abode. This is to help him in his meditation and contemplation or other forms of spiritual exercises. Mountains are places that give serenity, solitude, peace and tranquillity to the soul. They are the natural habitat for those who wish to pursue spiritual path of meditation and contemplation because they provide the aspirant with the perfect environment that fits their spiritual needs. Besides this, the mountains are metaphors for areas on earth where the positive energy of the consciousness is at its peak—and this is physically depicted in the form of high peaks of mountains that almost touch the sky.]

We say that the Lord lives there or anything else about the Lord only because we imagine it to be so, as it is just not possible to know about him (23).

“verse no. 26 = Everything in existence comes to an end in a regular cycle and in a sequential order when the time comes. Therefore, everything is impermanent, mortal and perishable, and hence false and illusionary. {This is because if they would have been real and truthful then they would have been permanent and immortal, as ‘truth’ never ends and it is constant.}

OM salutations! We pay our obeisance and greatest of respect to that Great Lord known as Mahadev (literally the great God or Lord) holding the ‘Shul’ (the invincible and strong spear or any sharp pointed weapon, here meaning the trident held by Shiva) who devours everything and brings them to an end. That is, Shiva is the Authority that concludes this creation.

At the same time our obeisance and greatest of respect are meant for the same Lord Maheshwar (literally the great Ishwar or God or Lord) known as Rudra (or Shiva) who is ever so merciful, gracious, benevolent and munificent on all (26).

“verse no. 33-34 = Shiva is the only truthful, eternal and imperishable entity that remains infinitely constant, steady and unchanging, that is immutable and indivisible. Except Shiva everything else is un-truth, illusionary and false.

That is why besides the other exalted God known as Vishnu, the aspirant should meditate and contemplate only upon Lord Shiva who is the Lord (like Vishnu) who can help the aspirant to break free from all the fetters that shackle him down and prevent his liberation and deliverance from this ensnaring world.

We pay our sincere obeisance and the greatest of respect to Maheshwar (the great Lord God) who provides liberation and deliverance from the formidable snare of this world which is very difficult to break free from, as well as is the Lord who devours everything in this world. [Refer verse nos. 10, 17-18, 24, 26 and 30 in this context.] (33-34).”

The *Shiva Tattva*—The essence of the Shiva principle called the Shiva Tattva has been dealt with in Krishna Yajur Veda’s *Dakshin Murti Upanishad*, verse nos. 4-5, 24, 28-30; *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 6, Canto 4, verse no. 32; *Rudra Hridaya Upanishad*, verse nos. 5-6, 12-14.

Shiva Tattva—The word ‘Tattva’ means truth, reality, essence, fundamental aspect, the primary and basic element, the real and truthful principle, while the word ‘Shiva’ stand for a host of eclectic virtues and divine glories exemplified and personified by Lord Shiva, such as the divine and grand virtues of spiritual beauty, auspiciousness, truthfulness, righteousness, nobility, dispassion, detachment, wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment etc.

Since the primary essence and the basic elementary Truth of creation that is absolute, pristine pure, uncorrupted, untainted, immutable, eternal, imperishable and universal, that is auspicious, righteous and noble, is known as Brahm, and since these virtues are undiluted, untainted and eternally truthful, since they are unchallengeable and irrefutable ‘truths and reality’ of existence, they are collectively called the ‘Shiva Principle’. Lord Shiva is the ultimate Authority and Principal of creation who personifies these virtues.

The word Shiva refers to one is not only beautiful, auspicious, holy and truthful, who is not only most enlightened, wise, self-realised and Brahm-realised, but personify or embody these virtues in his own self. That is why Shiva is the universal teacher and preacher of the great principles and tenets of metaphysics and spirituality because there is no one more competent, more knowledgeable and wiser than him. This is also the reason why he is depicted always in a state of perpetual Samadhi—the state of perpetual meditation and contemplation, because he has tasted the nectar of eternal bliss and happiness that comes with realising the ultimate Truth of existence which fills the spiritual aspirant with an extreme sense of contentedness and ecstasy. It must be remembered that all Upanishads rely on and unequivocally expound upon one basic philosophy, and it is the tenet of ‘Advaita’ or ‘non-duality’. They

endeavour to establish by their teachings that the ‘Tattva’, or the fundamental essence behind everything in this living creation, no matter what its external form and quality is and what the context and circumstance are—is basically the one and the same entity that is known as pure cosmic Consciousness. Since the underlying essence is the same and it remains constant, unchanging, immutable, indivisible and universal inspite of the mind-boggling variations in which it is manifested in this visible world, since nothing can exist without this fundamental essence, and since it would outlast all known visible faces of creation that appear to be true on their face but are fundamentally flawed because they come to an end whereas ‘truth’ should be eternal and imperishable, it is known as ‘Tattva’, the great essence and fundamental ‘truth’ behind everything.

So, the Shiva Tattva being talked about here is the ultimate essence or Tattva that is ‘Shiva’ in nature. That is, the essence that is basically truthful, beautiful, auspicious, holy and divine in nature.

The main aim of all spiritual pursuit and study of the scriptures is to become aware of the supreme and irrefutable Truth that is Absolute in this creation along with the basic principles that define this Absolute Truth and form its eclectic essence. Since the concept of the Absolute Truth is too abstract to be comprehended by the mind, it has been personified as a deity or Deva. What is it? It is the eclectic, esoteric and mystical knowledge and awareness of the cosmic, universal and eternal divine Being who personifies this Truth, and who is the subject matter of all metaphysical research and spiritual practices. This Supreme Being is none other but Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness. The knowledge of this Brahm is known as the Shiva Tattva—the auspicious, holy and divine essence and principle that defines and governs the enigmatic and mysterious entity known as Brahm.

It is like the case of the hidden nucleus around which the electrons move in an atom, or the atom itself which is invisible but forms the basic building block around which all the molecules are constructed, and which in turn form the basis of all material things that have come into existence in this world. If we remove the nucleus or the atom, nothing would exist though no one has actually seen either of them.

The varying ratio of the three basic qualities of Sata, Raja and Tama in a person determine his individuality, and since the chances of these qualities mixing with each other is phenomenally large, we have countless types of men with no two individuals having everything in common. But suppose a situation is brought about when these three Gunas neutralise each other, as the case was before the beginning of creation when they were present in Brahm but lay in a neutral state, it would result in the elimination of all disparities and differences seen in this world. That is, the state of non-duality, homogeneity and uniformity would be reached. All variations and changes would cease to matter—what is now would also be in the future, and it was the same in the past. This is the basis of the theory of non-duality, i.e. that what was then is present now and would be there in the future and beyond. Since only ‘truth’ does not change, the entity targeted by this Upanishad is this ultimate ‘absolute truth’ which it prefers to call the ‘Shiva Tattva’.

The *abode of Shiva in the body*—reference: Body as an abode of Lord Shiva—(i) The Krishna Yajur Veda’s Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 72, 165-168, Canto 2, verse nos. 6-10, 20, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-15, Canto 5, verse nos. 2-5, 13-16, and Canto 6, verse nos. 32-33, 47; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 50 and 53; and Skand Upanishad, verse nos. 10-11. (ii) Sam Veda’s Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 48-59. (iii) Atharva Veda’s Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 7, verse no. 4.

The *Varaaha Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 5, verse nos. 50 and 53 describe Shiva’s symbolic abode in the body in the Mooladhar Chakra (at the lower end of the body) and the region of the head (forehead) respectively.

The *Brihajjabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Brahman 7, verse no. 4 says that when one wears the sacred ash of the fire sacrifice, called the Bhasma, on one's body, all the pores of the body become as holy as Shiva Lingams. To quote—“King Janak asked sage Yagyavalkya once again—‘What are the benefits of wearing the Bhasma?’

The sage replied—‘By wearing (smearing of) the Bhasma on the body, all the pores of the body from where the hair follicles emerge become de-facto Shiva Lingams. [The ‘Shiva Lingam’ is a symbol of Lord Shiva and is shaped like an erect cylinder which is encircled by a rounded horizontal flat platform at its base. This Shiva Lingam is consecrated in all the shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva. In the present case, by saying that each pore of the body of the wearer of Bhasma becomes a Shiva Lingam, it is meant that the whole body, the entire being of the wearer, becomes holy and sanctified, and it becomes a de-facto shrine of the Lord. It is to emphasize the profound sanctifying and purifying powers of the sacred Bhasma.]

Since the sacred Bhasma is rubbed on the whole body, and since each pore of the body has become a Shiva Lingam, it follows that the spiritual rewards of wearing the sacred Bhasma on the body is equivalent to offering the Bhasma to as many physical Shiva Lingams in temples of Lord Shiva.

All the sections of the society, whether they are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas or Shudras, get the same auspicious benefits and blessings, the same grace and benediction by wearing the sacred Bhasma as are got by offering it in a shrine of Lord Shiva’ (4).”

Hymns of Lord Shiva—There are many hymns or Stotras dedicated to Lord Shiva as follows—(1) Arunchal Pancha-ratna; (2) Rudra Ashtak from Ram Charit Manas; (3) Shiv Manas Puja (mental worship of Lord Shiva); (4) Sri Shiva-aparaadha-kshamaa-stotra (hymns asking Lord Shiva's forgiveness); (5) Veda-saar-shiva-stava (the essence of Shiva as espoused in the Vedas); (6) Shiva-ashtakm (the 8 verses of Shiva's hymn); (7) Sir Panchaa-kshar Stotra (hymn describing the mystical significance of Shiva's five-lettered holy name); (8) Dwaadash-jyotirlingam Stotra (hymn dedicated to the 12 self-radiant Lingams/symbols of Shiva); (9) Shiva Taandav Stotra (hymn dedicated to the cosmic dance form of Lord Shiva); (10) Sri Pashupatya-ashtakam (the 8 verse hymn dedicated to Lord Pashupati); (11) Sri Viswanaath-ashtakam (the 8 line hymn dedicated to Lord of the world).

The hymn known as “Rudra Ashtak” appears in Gowami Tulsidas' epic narration of the divine story of Lord Ram in the Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, verses that precede Doha no. 108. The beauty of these verses is their poetry and rhyming of the verses, something that lacks in other classical works in Sanskrit. These sacred hymns are called ‘Rudra Ashtak’ because, one, ‘Rudra’ is one of the many names of Lord Shiva, and two, there are ‘eight’ (Ashtak) verses of two lines each, followed by a concluding Shloka.

²The churning of the ocean and emergence of the ‘Kaal-Kut Visha’: Once, the Gods and demons churned the ocean using Mt. Sumeru as the churner and Seshnath, the serpent, as the rope. The first produce of the vigorous churning was the ‘Halahal’ poisons (literally, the scalding, corrosive, biting, fierce and sharp as a saw) which started scalding all the directions of the world. The Gods and the demons decided after confabulations that only Lord Shiva can give them protection from this fear. On being propitiated and worshipped, Lord Shiva manifested himself and drank the poison in a single mouthful—but instantly he realised that the Lord resides in his heart, and this ferocious poison would kill all the creation because the Lord is all-pervading and omnipresent. So, he just kept it in his throat for eternity. That is why his throat became blue-tinged, and his name became, inter alia, ‘Neel-Kanth’, the blue-throated one.

³The slaying of demon Tripura: The demon called Tarak had 3 sons—Taarkaaksha, Bindumaali and Kamal-Lochan. They did severe penances and austerities and propitiated Lord Brahma as well as Shiva, and acquired the kingdom of the 3 celestial ‘Puras’ or cities as a boon. After that, due to haughtiness and pride, they started great excesses and tyranny in the world. Tormented and persecuted by them, the Gods prayed to Shiva under the guidance of Vishnu. Shiva manifested himself and demolished the 3 celestial cities and the 3 demons brothers. Since then, Shiva has been called ‘Tripurari’ or the one who has vanquished the 3 ‘Puras’ or cities of the above demons. In some legends it is held that the demon was called ‘Tripura’ and he had conquered the Gods and pilloried and tormented them. His slaying at the hands of Shiva give him the name of Tripurari.

⁴‘Kaam-Ripu’ or the enemy of Kaam: Parvati was called ‘Sati’ in her previous life. After her death by burning in the sacrificial fire at being indignant and angry at Shiva's insult at the hands of her father Prajapati during the fire sacrifice. At the same time, the demon Tarakasur (pronounced as ‘Taarkaasur’) created such havoc that the Gods were extremely terrified and tormented. The demon had a boon that he can be killed by Shiva's son only—but the dilemma was that Sati had died, and after her death Shiva had sat in a trance like state of Samadhi, unwavering and oblivious of his surroundings. To get him married to Parvati so as to beget a son it was necessary to break his austerities, severe renunciation mode that his trance like posture had created. The patron God of love, cupid, lust and passion, Kamdeo, was selected and motivated for the purpose. Once, at the instant when Parvati had gone to offer her offerings of flowers to Shiva at his abode in Kailash, Kamdeo appeared at the scene, armed with an arrow made of flowers. But before he could strike, Lord Shiva regained consciousness (or awareness) and seeing him with a pulled bow, he opened his third eye in wrath, burning Kamdeo instantly to ashes. Since then, he was called ‘Kamari’, ‘Madanripu’ (i.e., slayer of Kamdeo, enemy of Kamdeo respectively) etc. Later, Kartikeya was born of the wedlock and he killed Tarkasur.

This fascinating story is narrated in detail in Tulsidas’ famous epic “Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 82—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 88.]

Rāga Dhanāśrī

¼½

nkuh dgq l d j & l e ukghA
 nku&n; kyq fnckbz Hkko\$ tkpd l nk l kgkghAA1AA
 ekfjdS ekj Fkl; kS txe\$ tkdh i Fke js[k HkV ekghA
 rk Bkdj dks jhf> fuokftck\$ d°; kS D; ka ijr eks ikghAA2AA
 tkx dkfV dfj tks xfr gfj l kq efu ekxr l d p kghA
 cn&fcfnr rfg in ij k f j & i j] dhV irx l ekghAA3AA
 b l mnkj mekifr ifjgfj] vur ts tkpu tkghA
 rgyfl nkl rs ek+ ekxu\$ dcgq u i v v?kkghAA4AA

(4)

dānī kahum̐ saṅkara-sama nāhīm.

dīna-dayālu dibōṭī bhāvai, jācaka sadā sōhāhīm. 1.

mārikai māra thapyau jagamēm, jākī prathama rēkha bhaṭa māhīm.

tā ṭhākurakau rijhi nivājibau, kahyau kyōm̐ parata mō pāhīm. 2.

jōga kōṭi kari jō gati harisōm̐, muni mām̐gata sakucāhīm.

bēda-bidita tēhi pada purāri-pura, kīṭa pataṅga samāhīm. 3.
 īsa udāra umāpati parihari, anata jē jācana jāhīm.
 tulasidāsa tē mūrha māmṅanē, kabahum̃ na pēṭa aghāhīm. 4.

Verse no. 4—Indeed, anyone who is as generous, charitable and magnanimous as Lord Shankar (Shiva) is nowhere to be found in this world. He is a great benefactor of those who are distressed, miserable, downtrodden and humble. He is indeed very fond of giving (i.e. is very charitable and generous by natural disposition; he loves giving away to others). And therefore he likes those who seek anything from him. (1).

How can I describe the graceful and forgiving nature of a Lord who allowed Kamdeo (the patron God of lust, desire, cupid, passion), one of the most brave warriors, to live without a form (in the mind of the people) after burning him to ashes (for his demeanours, temerity and audacity of disturbing Shiva during his meditation)?

[When he was burnt for disturbing Shiva and his wife Rati pleaded with the Lord for pardoning his sin, the Lord granted her this boon by which Kamdeo did not die altogether but survived in an immortal subtle form that had no gross physical body, and in this bargain Kamdeo all-pervading and omnipresent in an invisible form.] (2).

The ultimate end or aim of the soul (which is to attain final emancipation and salvation) for which the sages and hermits strive but hesitate to request as a grant of boon from Lord Hari (Vishnu) even after doing a lot of Yoga (meditation and contemplation) is easily available even to insects and flies (who live and die) in the worldly abode of Lord Tripurari (literally the Lord of the three worlds; Shiva). [The city referred to here is Varanasi, the terrestrial abode of Shiva.] This fact has been revealed in the Vedas. (3).

Those who are foolish enough to abandon such a generous and benevolent husband of goddess Parvati (i.e. Shiva) and go to beg or seek something elsewhere can never satisfy their hunger fully (i.e. they can never be contented and be at peace ever). (4).

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 nkfu cMks fnu nr n;s fcuq on&cMkbZ HkkuhAA1AA
 fut ?kjdh cjckr fcykdgq gkS rē ije l ;kuhA
 flcdh nbZ lānk ns[kr] Jh&l jnk fl gkuhAA2AA
 ftuds Hkky fy[kh fyfi ejh] lq[kdh ugha ful kuhA
 fru jādudks ukd lpkjr] gkā vk; ks udckuhAA3AA
 nq[k&nhurk nq[kh buds nq[k] tkpdrk vdykuhA
 ;g vf/kdkj lkfi;s vksfgā Hkh[k Hkyh eā tkuhAA4AA
 iē&iī d k&fcu; &C; xtr] lfu fcf/kdh cj ckuhA
 rylh efnr egd eufgaeu] txr&ekrq ed qckuhAA5AA

(5)

bāvarō rāvarō nāha bhavānī.
 dāni barō dina dēta dayē binu, vēda-barāṭī bhānī. 1.
 nija gharakī barabāta bilōkahu, hau tuma parama sayānī.
 sibakī daṭī sampadā dēkhata, śrī-sāradā sihānī. 2.
 jīnakē bhāla likhī lipi mēri, sukhakī nahim nisānī.
 tina raṅkanakau nāka samvārata, hauṁ āyō nakabānī. 3.
 dukha-dīnatā dukhī inakē dukha, jācakatā akulānī.
 yaha adhikāra saumpiyē aurahim, bhīkha bhalī mairī jānī. 4.
 prēma-prasansā-binaya-byaṅgajuta, suni bidhikī bara bānī.
 tulasī mudita mahēsa manahim mana, jagata-mātu musukānī. 5.

Verse no. 5—[Tired of re-writing the destiny of the people because they were always pardoned by Shiva and obtained salvation and emancipation inspite of their ineligibility for it, the creator Brahma went to goddess Parvati and complained:-] ‘Oh Bhavani (Parvati)! Your husband (Shiva) has gone astray and has lost his mind. [That is, he is literally exceeding his brief because he is supposed to bring the creation to conclusion, and not to be an agent of eternity and fostering perpetual life!] He always gives, even to those people who are not eligible to receive anything in return because they have never done any charities (i.e. anything good) in life. This violates the sanctioned regulations of the Vedas. (1).

You are very clever and wise, so take care of your household! (The wealth of the house is being gradually diminished as) Lord Shiva has been virtually squandering away the property because of his charitable nature, and even goddesses Laxmi (the patron goddess of wealth) and Saraswati (the patron goddess of learning) are (sarcastically) praising you and your rich household (because inspite of your husband giving away freely the wealth never seems to end or be depleted, and the great wonder is that even you do not object to your husband emptying the coffers of the house). (2).

Those wretched people and paupers for whom I had not destined any comfort, pleasure or happiness of any kind, I have become fed-up creating and arranging comfortable heavens for them due to the sheer madness of your husband (Shiva) and his un-restrained habit of granting boons (of eternity and salvation) to such people. (3).

The personified forms of such pitiable conditions in this world such as misery, grief, sorrows, torments and other misfortunes, as well as the accompanying tendency of begging for mercy and seeking solace and succour from such agonies, are so distressed and dismayed because they have lost their natural habitat. [This is a metaphoric way of saying that Lord Shiva grants boons of eternity, happiness and bliss to all who pray to him, and therefore such things as torments, misfortunes, misery and pain are vanishing from the world.] I am so fed-up with this transgression of authority and interference in my jurisdiction by Lord Shiva that I request you to please entrust this work of writing people’s destiny to someone else—for, I would rather prefer begging to feed (sustain) myself than being subjected to this humiliation of being side-lined, and my authority being undermined and eroded by Shiva (who has begun writing the destinies of people). (4).

Hearing such words of Brahma that were laced with immense affection, praise, prayer and sarcasm, Lord Mahesh (Shiva) felt mentally happy and delighted, while the mother of the world goddess Parvati smiled. (5).

Rāga Rāmakalī

१/६½

tkfp; sxfj tki fr dkl hA tkl q Hkou vfuekfnd nkl hAA1AA
 vk&j&nkfu nør i fu Fkkj A l dr u nf[k nhu dj tkj AA2AA
 l [k&l i fr] efr&l qfr l gkbA l dy l qHk l dj&l ockbAA3AA
 x; s l ju vkjfrdS yHlgA fujf[k fugki y fufe' keg; dhlgAA4AA
 rnyfl nkl tkpd tl xkoA fcey Hkxfr j?kq frdh i koAA5AA

(6)

jāmçiyē girijāpati kāsī. jāsu bhavana animādika dāsī. 1.
 auḍhara-dāni dravata puni thōrēm. sakata na dēkhi dīna karajōrēm. 2.
 sukha-sampati, mati-sugati suhāṭī. sakala sulabha saṅkara-sēvakāṭī. 3.
 gayē sarana āratikai līnhē. nirakhi nihāpala nimiṣamaham'kīnhē. 4.
 tulasidāsa jācaka jasa gāvai. bimala bhagati raghupatikī pāvai. 5.

Verse no. 6—One should seek (or beg, request) only from the Lord of Girija (i.e. from Shiva who is the husband of Parvati, the daughter of the king of mountains) whose abode is in Kashi (the city of Varanasi), and to whom Anima and such other Siddhis¹ are subservient and obedient like a maid-servant is to her master. (1).

Lord Shiva is a very generous giver by nature; he becomes mellowed by or yields easily to even a little bit of service. He cannot watch distressed creatures standing at his doorstep with folded hands, and so he quickly fulfils their desires as soon as possible. (2).

All kind of happiness and joys, wealth and prosperity, refined intellect and wisdom, as well as the best kind of end (i.e. death which culminates in liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation) etc. are easily available by serving Lord Shiva. (3).

Those distressed and eager souls who sought his refuge or shelter were immediately accepted by him (Shiva), and they were all instantly fulfilled and their wants or desires immediately satisfied. (4).

The beggar (i.e. humble) Tulsidas also sings his glories (with the hope) that he might also be lucky enough to be bestowed with the alms (i.e. granted the boon) of devotion and love for Lord Ram (5).

[Note—¹The eight Siddhis are the following mystical powers—(i) 'Anima' means the power to become microscopic or so minute that one becomes invisible to the naked eye. (ii) 'Mahima' is to have majesty, glory and fame; to be honoured and acknowledged for one's achievements, wisdom, erudition, knowledge and skills. (iii) 'Garima' is to have weight, stature, dignity, decorum, gravity and significance. (iv) 'Laghima' is the grand virtue of being simple and humble inspite of being great, powerful and authoritative; it is to have simplicity and humility despite possessing grandeur, majesty, power, authority and magnificence. (v) 'Praapti' is to be able to attain or obtain anything wished or desired for. (vi) 'Praakramya' is to have valour, ardour, strength, powers, prowess, potential and punch that leads to triumph, glory and majesty. (vii) 'Ishwatwa' is to be able to have lordship or sway over everything else. And (viii) 'Vashitwa' is to be able to control and subdue others, and exert influence on them so much so that they become obedient.]

१/७½

dl u nhuij nōgq mekojA nk#u fcifr gju d#ukdjAA1AA
 cn&igkjku dgr mnkj gjA gefj cǰ dl Hk; gq dfr urjAA2AA
 dofū Hkxfr dhllgh xpfuf/k f}tA gkb iǰ llū nhllggq fl o in futAA3AA
 tks xfr vxe egkefu xkofgA rc ig dhV i r xgq i kofgAA4AA
 nōgq dke&fj i djke&pju&jfrA rǰfl nkl i Hkq gjgq Hkn&efrAA5AA

(7)

kasa na dīnapara dravahu umāvara. dāruna bipati harana karunākara. 1.
 bēda-purāna kahata udāra hara. hamari bēra kasa bhayēhu kṛpinatara. 2.
 kavani bhagati kīnhī gunanidhi dvija. hō'i prasanna dīnhēhu siva pada nija. 3.
 jō gati agama mahāmuni gāvahim. taba pura kīṭa pantagahu pāvahim. 4.
 dēhu kāma-ripu!rāma-carana-rati. tulasidāsa prabhu!harahu bhēda-mati. 5.

Verse no. 7—[In this verse, Tulsidas lovingly and politely admonishes Lord Shiva for delaying to attend to his prayers.] ‘Oh the dear husband of Parvati (i.e. Lord Shiva)! Why are you not becoming benevolent, benignant, kind, merciful and graceful towards this distressed and wretched (Tulsidas)? Oh the mine of mercy, graciousness and kindness! You are the one who can vanquish and eliminate the greatest of miseries, troubles and tribulations. [Then why are you not paying heed to Tulsidas’ pleadings?] (1).

The Vedas and Purans assert that Lord Har (Shiva) is enormously large-hearted and greatly magnanimous. Why then have you become so miserly and reluctant in my case? (2).

What kind of special worship had a Brahmin named Guna-Nidhi¹ done that you were so pleased with him so much so that you had bestowed him with your auspicious abode (i.e. you raised him to an exalted stature of one who has attained salvation)? (3).

The highest attainment for the soul (i.e. salvation and emancipation of the soul which is equivalent to attaining oneness with the Supreme Being), which is assumed to be difficult even by the sages and ascetics, is easily accessible to the ordinary insects and flies in your city of Kashi (or Varanasi, if they live in it and die there). (4).

Oh the enemy of Kamdeo! Give Tulsidas firm devotion for and steady faith in the holy feet of Lord Ram. Eliminate all sense of doubts and confusions and dichotomy arising out of duality that clouds his mind. (5).

[Note—¹The story of Guna-Nidhi (गुननिधि) and his liberation: A Brahmin called Gun-Nidhi was a thief. Once he went to a Shiva temple to steal the dumb-bell. Unable to reach its height to enable him to bring it down, he mounted the Shiva-Lingam to lift him up to the proper height. Instantly, Shiva appeared and blessed him with the boon of abode in heaven, for he said, ‘people offer flowers and leaves, but you have offered your whole self. What more could you offer me and what more could I expect’. As a result, Gun-Nidhi went to heaven.]

1/8½

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 fd; snj nǰk l cfudǰ ftllg&ftllg dj tkj AA1AA
 l ok l feju l ftckǰ ikr vk[kr FkkjA
 fn; s txr tgj yfx l cǰ l q[k] xt] jFk] ?kkj AA2AA

xlqo cl r ckeno] eā dcoq u fugkjā
 vf/kHkkf rd ck/kk Hkb] rs fdādj rkjāAA3AA
 cfx ckfy cfy cjft; j djrfr dBkjā
 ryl h nfy] : i; ks pgā I B I kf[k fl gkjāAA4AA

(8)

dēva barē, dātā barē, saṅkara barē bhōrē.
 kiyē dūra dukha sabanikē, jinha-jinha kara jōrē. 1.
 sēvā, sumirana, pūjibau, pāta ākhata thōrē.
 diyē jagata jaham' lagi sabai, sukha, gaja, ratha, ghōrē. 2.
 gām'va basata bāmadēva, maim' kabahūm' na nihōrē.
 adhibhautika bād'hā bha'ī, tē kiṅkara tōrē. 3.
 bēgi bōli bali barajiyē, karatūti kaṭhōrē.
 tulasī dali, rūm'dhyō cahaim' saṭha sākhi sihōrē. 4.

Verse no. 8—Oh Shankar (Shiva)! You are a great God, a generous giver, and very simple-hearted. All those who besought your graciousness, mercy, benevolence and kindness by humbly approaching you with folded hands are blessed by you as you eliminate all their sorrows, miseries and misfortunes without exception and in an unpartisan manner. (1).

With only a few leaves of the wood-apple tree (Bel-leaves) and few grains of rice it is possible to offer service to you, worship you and also meditate upon your form (i.e. please you), and in return you bestow upon the worshipper all the objects of comfort, pleasure, majesty, pomp and grandeur in this world, such as elephants, chariots, horses etc. [These things symbolize the majestic stature fit for a king. They stand for authority, grandeur and power. Hence, you are so liberal in your habit of giving, and so easy to please that you raise an ordinary creature to the stature of a king in exchange of even a token form of worship and respect.] (2).

Oh Vamdeo (Shiva)! I live in your city (Varanasi); I have never asked you for anything. But still, unfortunately and without provocation, these servants (subjects) of yours are tormenting me like some demonic force. [Tulsidas was subjected to continuous harassment and anguish by the Pandas (priests) of Varanasi. So he asks Shiva why he is being made miserable though he had never bothered or caused any annoyance to the Lord anytime.] (3).

Therefore I beg you to summon them soon and restrain these cruel people from tormenting this innocent, humble and harmless Tulsidas, because they wish to crush this symbolic plant of Tulsi (Basil) represented by Tulsidas, and sow the Cactus tree in its stead (4).

1/9½

fl o! fl o! gkb i l lu d# nk; kA
 d#uke; mnkj dhjfr] cfy tkm; gjgq fut ek; kAA1AA
 tyt&u; u] xq&v; u] e; u&fji q efgek tku u dkbA
 fcuqro dik jke&in&i dt] liugq Hkxfr u gkbAA2AA
 fj'k;] fl)] efu] euqt] nuqt] l j] vij tho tx ekghA
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 vfgHk ku] n# ku&fji &l od] nō&nō] f=i j kj hA

ekg&fugkj &fnokdj I dj] I ju I kd&Hk; gkj hAA4AA
 fxfj tk&eu&ekul &ejky] dkl hl] el ku&fuokl hA
 rnyfl nkl gfj &pju&dey&cj] ngq Hkxfr vfcukl hAA5AA

(9)

siva! siva! hō'i prasanna karu dāyā.

karunāmaya udāra kīrati, bali jā'um̃ harahu nija māyā. 1.

jalaja-nayana, guna-ayana, mayana-ripu, mahimā jāna na kōṭī.

binu tava kṛpā rāma-pada-paṅkaja, sapanēhum̃ bhagati na hōṭī. 2.

riṣaya, sid'dha, muni, manuja, danuja, sura, apara jīva jaga māhīm̃.

tava pada bimukha na pāra pāva kō'u, kalapa kōṭi cali jāhīm̃. 3.

ahibhūšana, dūšana-ripu-sēvaka, dēva-dēva, tripurārī.

mōha-nihāra-divākara saṅkara, sarana sōka-bhayahārī. 4.

giriajā-mana-mānasa-marāla, kāsisa, masāna-nivāsī.

tulasidāsa hari-carana-kamala-bara, dēhu bhagati abināsī. 5.

Verse no. 9—Oh Shiva! Live up to your famed name of 'Shiva', be pleased with me, and grant your mercy, kindness, graciousness and compassion to me. You are famed for your reputation of being exceedingly merciful, compassionate, kind and gracious as well as being most magnanimous, kind-hearted, benevolent and liberal. I adore you for these virtues, and beseech you to kindly eliminate your Maya. [Since you are so kind, I beg you to spare me the anguish that the uncountable delusions create for me.] (1).

Your eyes are like the lotus flower. You possess all the imaginable eclectic virtues and the best of qualities. You are like an enemy of Kamdeo (the patron God of worldly passions). Without your grace it is not possible for anyone to either have any knowledge of your magnificent fame (i.e. your true nature and form), nor can he have any devotion in the holy feet of Lord Ram even in his dreams. (2).

Hermits, ascetics, mystics, sages, men, demons, gods and all other creatures in this world—none of them can ever cross this world which is like an endless ocean of delusions even after crores of Kalpas (i.e. even after millions of years) by remaining opposed to your holy feet (i.e. by not worshipping you). (3).

Serpents form your ornaments. [This is because Shiva wraps them around his body like one wears a garland, a necklace, armlets, head-dress etc.] You are a servant (i.e. an ardent devotee, a faithful and obedient follower) of Lord Ram who is the slayer of demons Khar and Dushan (representing all the evils, vices, deceit, conceit, corruptions and perversions in this world). You are the Lord of the gods, and the slayer of the demon known as Tripura. Oh Lord Shankar! You are like the real sun for the purpose of eliminating fog-like Moha (worldly delusions, attachments, infatuations, attractions, affections etc.). [Just like the heat of the sun helps to disperse fog, the Lord's mercy is able to remove all effects of worldly delusions.] You are the one who eliminates all the miseries, misfortunes and distresses as well as all the fears and consternations of those who have taken shelter in your hold feet. (4).

Oh Lord of Kashi (Varanasi)! [Shiva is the patron God of the city of Varanasi.] Oh the resident of the cremation grounds. [It is believed that Shiva constantly stays in the cremation ground so that he can utter the name of Lord Ram in the ears of the dead brought for cremation. This is said to provide the dead with salvation.] Oh the royal Swan who floats majestically in the mind and heart of Parvati

(his consort) which resemble the legendary fresh-water lake named Mansarovar! Please bestow upon (or give the boon of) eternal devotion to Tulsidas in the most exalted holy feet of Lord Hari (Lord Ram) (5).

[Note—The city of Varanasi is situated on latitude 25⁰ which, by Vedic calculations, is the line through which the spine of the universe runs. This bestows it with special mystical and spiritual powers, enabling it to occupy a unique place in cosmic atlas.]

Rāga Dhanāśrī

¼10½

no]

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dca&dn&di] &foxg #fpj] r#.k&jfo dkfV ruq rst HkktA

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ekfyl dy tV&edV fo|PNV] rVfu&oj&okfj gfj&pj.k&ira

Jo.k dMy] xjy dB] d#.kkdn] | fPpnkuan ons o/kiraAA3AA

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rkMfor&uR; ij] Me# fMfMe ioj] v'kkk bo Hkkr dY; k.kj'khA

egk dYi kr cā&M&eMy nou] Hkou dSykl] vkl hu dk'khAA5AA

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vf[kyfoxg] mxz i] f'ko] Hki | g] | oXr] "koZ | okā dkjAA7AA

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nfg dkekfj! Jhjk&in&i dts Hkfä vuojr xr&Hkn&ek; kAA9AA

(10)

dēva,

mōha-tama taraṇi, hara, rudra, śaṅkara, śaraṇa, haraṇa, mama śōka
lōkābhirāmaṁ.

bāla-śaśi-bhāla, suviśāla lōcana-kamala, kāma śatakōṭi-lāvaṇya-dhāmaṁ. 1.
kambu-kundēndu-karpūra-vigraha rucira, taruṇa-ravi kōṭi tanu tēja bhrājai.

bhasma sarvāṅga ardhāṅga śailātmajā, vyāla-nṛkapāla-mālā virājai. 2.

maulisaṅkula jaṭā-mukuṭa vidyucchaṭā, taṭini-vara-vāri hari-caraṇa-pūtaṁ.

śravaṇa kuṇḍala, garala kaṇṭha, karuṇākanda, saccidānanda vandēvadhūtaṁ.

3.

śūla-śāyaka-pinākāsi-kara, śutru-vana-dahana iva dhūmadhvaja, vṛṣabha-
yānaṁ.

vyāghra-gaja-carma-paridhāna, vijñāna-ghana, sid'dha-sura-muni-manuja-
sēvyamānaṁ. 4.

tāṇḍavita-nṛtyapara, ḍamaru ḍiṇḍima pravara, aśubha iva bhāti kalyāṇarāśī.

mahā kalpānta brahmāṇḍa-maṇḍala davana, bhavana kailāsa, āśina kāśī. 5.

tajña, sarvajña, yajñaśa, acyuta, vibhō, viśva bhavadanśasambhava purārī. brahmēndra, candrārka, varuṇāgri, vasu, maruta, yama, arci bhavadaṅghri sarvādhikārī. 6.

akala, nirupādhi, nirguṇa, nirañjana brahma, karma-pathamēkamaja nirvikāraṁ.

akhilavighraha, ugrarūpa, śiva, bhūpasura, sarvagata, śarva sarvōpakāraṁ. 7. jñāna-vairāgya, dhana-dharma, kaivalya-sukha, subhaga saubhāgya śiva! sānukūlaṁ.

tadapi nara mūḍha āruḍha sansāra-patha, bhramata bhava, vimukha tava pādamūlaṁ. 8.

naṣtamati, duṣṭa ati, kaṣṭa-rata, khēda-gata, dāsa tulasī śambhu-śaraṇa āyā. dēhi kāmāri! śrīrāma-pada-paṅkajē bhakti anavarata gata-bhēda-māyā. 9.

Verse no. 10—Oh Lord (Shiva)! You are like a real sun to eliminate the darkness of Moha (the negative virtues of worldly attachments, attractions, infatuations, involvements and attendant delusions). Oh Har! Oh Rudra! Oh ‘Sharanya’ (one who readily gives refuge and shelter to those who seek it)! Oh ‘Lokabhiram’ (one who is most charming or delightful in the world)! You are the one who eliminates my sorrows, miseries, troubles and tribulations. The young moon of the 2nd night (of the dark fortnight) is adorning the lock of hairs on your head. Your large eyes are like the lotus flower. Your glamour and beauty resembles the one possessed by millions of Kamdeos (who is the patron God of passions and lust, and hence regarded as the most handsome God). (1).

The bright and beautiful countenance of your auspicious and glorious form (body) resembles that of a conch-shell, a lotus flower, a moon and camphor. The splendour, radiance and glory of your divine body (form) is dazzling like crores (millions) of mid-day suns shining together. Your whole body is smeared with ash (of the sacred fire). Your consort (named Parvati or Uma), who is the daughter of Himachal (the king of the Himalayan Mountains), adorns one half of your divine form. [This form of Shiva is envisioned as having its right half like that of a male representing Shiva, and the left as a female representing Parvati. The statement also means that Parvati sits to the left of Shiva.] Garlands of serpents and skulls are worn by you around your neck. (2).

The patted lock of glistening hairs on your head resembles a yellow-hued (or brownish) crown which is as splendid and dazzling like electric. The holy river Ganges, which has been made holy and pure by coming in contact with the divine feet of Lord Hari (because Ganges is said to have originated from Vishnu’s toes), has found its abode on your head (among the intertwined cluster of hairs which you wear as a crown)¹. Your ears have ear-rings, the terrible poison (that emerged at the time of the churning of the ocean by the gods and the demons) glistens with a bluish or purplish hue in your neck (thereby making your neck itself appear to be blue or purple in colour). I praise and pray to the Lord, who is the root of the eclectic virtues of grace, kindness, mercy and compassion, who is a personification of the grand virtues of Sat (truth), Chit (consciousness) and Anand (bliss), and whose form is like that of an ‘Avadhut’ (which is the highest category for a self-realised and enlightened monk or ascetic to attain). [There are a number of Upanishads dealing with the concept of Sanyas which explain in detail the virtues of Avadhuts.] (3).

You hold a spear, a sword, an arrow and a bow in your hands. You are like a fire that can easily burn the forest represented by one’s enemies. A bull is your mount.

You have wrapped the hide of a tiger and an elephant around your body. You are a rich treasury of the best of knowledge, erudition and wisdom (i.e. there is no dearth of these qualities in you). You are being faithfully and diligently served (honoured, revered and worshipped) by great Siddhas (those who have mystical powers), Gods, sages and hermits, as well as by other ordinary men. (4).

You play with and shake a beautiful tabor to produce music while performing the cosmic dance known as ‘Tandav’ (which is a special form of Tantrik dance). Though you appear inauspicious from your dress, external appearance, demeanours and paraphernalia that accompany you, the reality is that you are a mine of immense auspiciousness, goodness, welfare and good luck. You turn to ashes the entire universe at the time of Dooms-day (which marks the dissolution of the world into the primordial cosmic gel). Mt. Kailash (in the lofty Himalayan ranges) is your terrestrial home, while you take your official seat in Kashi (the city of Varanasi in the Gangetic plains of India). (5).

You know the essence of the matter in this creation (i.e. you are enlightened enough to have a full grasp and knowledge of the fundamental Truth; the elementary things; the absolute reality and irrevocable truth in creation). You are all-knowing and omniscient. You are the Lord of fire-sacrifices and other religious ceremonies and rituals. You are ‘Vibhu’ (one who is all-pervading, all-encompassing, uniform, almighty and eternal Lord of creation). You always remain stable in your state; you are unchanging and unwavering; you are immutable and constant. Oh Purari (Shiva)! This whole world has emerged from you, and is a fractional part of your whole being. It is by the virtue of worshipping your holy feet that the various Gods—such as Brahma (the creator), Indra (the king of Gods), the Moon God, the Sun God, Varuna (the Water God), the Fire God, the eight Vasus (patron gods of essential wealth in creation), the forty-nine Maruts (Wind Gods) and Yam (the God of death; the God responsible for upholding the laws of Dharma; the God who determines the destination for a dead creature’s soul depending upon his deeds)—have acquired their respective authorities and powers. (6).

You are the one who has no Kalaas or fractions, divisions and separate forms (because you are an eternally immutable whole). You are the one who is neutral and indefinable because you do not have any specific attributes, virtues, qualities, forms and characteristics that can be employed to designate your state of being. You have no Gunas or specific attributes, qualities, virtues, forms and characteristic features (and therefore you are invisible and incomprehensible by the senses). You are faultless and taintless. You are indeed the supreme Brahm personified. In this ever-changing world characterized by multifarious activities and innumerable deeds you the only one who remains constant and uniformly one. You have no birth (because you are eternal and imperishable), and therefore you are free from any kind of shortcomings, faults and corruptions that are an inherent part of all forms of births in this world. The whole world is nothing but your manifestation. In spite of your external form being very unconventional, un-holy, ferocious and angry (‘Ugra’), you are still, in your primary form, very auspicious, holy and divine. You are the Lord of the Gods. You are all-pervading and omnipresent. In spite of being the slayer or annihilator of all (because you are the concluder of creation), you are the one who graciously takes good care of everyone in this world, and provide for their well-being and welfare. (7).

Oh Shiva! Those on whom you become benevolent and show grace upon can easily acquire such eclectic virtues as knowledge and wisdom, develop profound renunciation, dispassion and detachment, acquire wealth in the form of the virtues of righteousness, scrupulousness, probity and propriety, attain the bliss, the felicity and

the beatitude that comes with final emancipation and salvation, and obtain good fortunes and favourable luck. In spite of all these benefits it is most regrettable and surprising that men turn away from serving your holy feet and instead prefer to wander aimlessly here and there on the difficult and hazardous path represented by this mortal world. (8).

Oh Shambhu (Shiva)! I—the wretched and miserable Tulsidas whose wisdom and intellect have decayed, become decrepit and corrupted, and who has fallen on bad times as he is surrounded by miseries, misfortunes, grief, troubles and tribulations—have come poignantly to seek refuge and shelter at your holy feet. Oh Kaamaari (the slayer of Kamdeo)! Please give me a stable, unwavering and eternal devotion in the holy feet of Lord Ram so that the delusions and doubts in my mind are destroyed (removed) for ever. (9).

[Note—¹River Ganges is called ‘Hari Charan Poot’ (हरि-चरण-पूत), which literally means one who has born from the holy feet of Lord Hari (Vishnu):

When Lord Vishnu had assumed the dwarf mendicant form and asked king Bali for land equivalent to his three steps, the former had expanded his body so large that the entire universe was measured in just a single step. At that time, Brahma (the creator) had washed his feet and kept the water in his Kamandalu (a pot made of dried pumpkin kept by ascetics and hermits), which later emerged as the flow of the holy river Ganges. Being thus having its importance at being used to wash the Lord's feet, it was called Hari Charan Poot or the offspring of the Lord feet.]

Prayer offered to Bhairavanātha (a form of Śiva)

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(11)

dēva,
bhīṣaṅākāra, bhairava, bhayaṅkara, bhūta-prēta-pramathādhipati, vipati-
hatrtā.
mōha-mūṣaka-mārjāra, sansāra-bhaya-haraṇa, tāraṇa-taraṇa, abhaya-katrtā.
1.
atula bala, bipula, vistāra, vighraha gaura, amala ati dhavala
dharaṇīdharābhaṁ.
śirasi saṅkulita-kala-jūṭa piṅgalajaṭā, paṭala śata-kōṭi-vidyucchaṭābhaṁ. 2.
bhrāja vibudhāpagā āpa pāvana parama, mauli-mālēva śōbhā vicitraṁ.
lalita lallāṭapara rāja rajanīśa kala, kalādhara, naumi hara dhanada-mitraṁ. 3.
indu-pāvaka-bhānu-nayana, mardana-mayana, guṇa-ayana, jñāna-vijñāna-
rūpaṁ.
ramaṇa-girijā, bhavana bhūdharaḍhipa sadā, śravaṇa kaṁuḍala, vadana chavi
anūpaṁ. 4.
carma-asi-śūla-dhara, ḍamaru-śara-cāpa-kara, yāna vṛṣabhēśa, karuṇā-
nidhānaṁ.
jarata sura-asura, naralōka śōkākulaṁ, mṛdula cita, ajita, kṛta garalapānaṁ.
5.
bhasma tanu-bhūṣaṇaṁ vyāghra-carmāmbaram, uraga-nara-mauli ura
māladhārī.
Ḍākinī, śākinī, khēcaram, bhūcaram, yantra-mantra-bhaṅjana, prabala
kalmaṣārī. 6.
kāla-atikāla, kalikāla-vyālādi-khaga, tripura-mardana, bhīma-karma bhārī.
sakala lōkānta-kalpāntaśūlāgrakṛta diggajāvyaṅkta-guṇa nṛtyakārī. 7.
pāpa-santāpa-ghanaghōra sansṛti dīna, bhramata jaga yōni nahim kōpi trātā.
pāhi bhairava-rūpa rāma-rūpī rudra, bandhu, guru, janaka, janani, vidhātā. 8.
yasya guṇa-gaṇa gaṇati vimala mati śāradā, nigama nārada-pramukha
brahmacārī.
śēṣa, sarvēśa, āsīna ānandavana, dāsa tulasī praṇata-trāsahārī. 9.

Verse no. 11—Oh Bhairav! You have a colossus form. You look terrible and ferocious. You are the Lord of ghosts, spirits, phantoms and other similar followers of Lord Shiva. You are the remover of troubles and misfortunes. For the rat-like negative qualities of delusions and attachments you are like a cat. You are the remover of the fear of this world characteristic by the cycle of endless births and deaths (and their accompanying horrors). You provide liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation to all the creatures, and at the same time you are an embodiment of these virtues. You bestow fearlessness to all (your devotees). (1).

Your strength and powers are immeasurable and incomparable. Your colossus form is of a fair complexion, is holy and pure, is bright and glorious, and its radiance resembles that of Shesh-Nath (the legendary serpent who holds the earth on its hoods). The crown of matted hairs on your head—which is yellowish or brownish in colour, and splendidous like 100 crores (10 million) streaks of lightning shining simultaneously—looks exceptionally magnificent. (2).

The most pure and holy river of the Gods, known as Ganges, which has a mysterious and enchanting beauty, swirls around your head and adorns it like a garland wrapped around it. The position of the beautiful crescent moon on your magnificent forehead looks astoundingly charming and beautiful. I bow my head in reverence to such a Shiva who is a friend of Kuber (the treasurer of Gods). (3).

The moon, the fire and the sun are your (three) eyes. You are the crusher or vanquisher of Kamdeo (the God of passions and lust). You are a treasury of eclectic virtues, noble qualities, highest wisdom, truthful knowledge and metaphysical science. You move around in the company of (your consort) Parvati, and Mt. Kailash, which is the chief and most important among the mountains, is your permanent abode. You have large ear-rings in your ears, and the beautiful countenance of your face is most bewitching. (4).

You are armed with a shield, a sword and a spear. You also hold in your hands a tabor, an arrow and a bow. A bull is your mount. You are a treasury of mercy, compassion and kindness. This is evident from the fact that when the scalding hot and most terrible poison emerged from the ocean (at the time of its churning in some ancient time), and its heat and corrosiveness was scorching the gods, the demons and all the creatures of this world, you were so moved by their plight, distress and agony that you had immediately gulped it without a second thought. (5).

The ash (from the sacrificial fire) is the ornament of your body (i.e. your whole body is smeared with it). You are attired in a leopard skin. You are wearing a garland of serpents and skulls (around your neck and) on your chest. You are the destroyer of female hobgoblins, the ghosts, the Khechars (those evil spirits who move in the sky) and the Bhuchars (terrestrial evil spirits), besides the malignant effects of evil magical charms known as Yantras, and similar malignant use of Mantras. You destroy huge sins instantly. (6).

You are the Mahakaal (the 'great Kaal' or 'the supreme God of death' personified) who causes even Kaal (the 'death god') to die. For the present age known as Kaliyug which is as horrifying as serpents, you act like Garud (the legendary eagle who feeds on serpents, and who is a vehicle of Lord Vishnu). You are the slayer of the demon known as Tripurasur, and you have done many other great deeds which are very formidable and awe-inspiring. At the time of the great Dooms-day, when the whole universe is being annihilated, you are able to pierce (kill, conquer, trounce) even those who are most brave, valiant and courageous ('Diggajs') with the point of your trident, become emotionally neutral and dispassionate, and dance as if you are in a state of extreme trance. [This cosmic dance of destruction is known as Tandava Nritya.] (7).

I (Tulsidas) am moving endlessly in this horrifying mortal world full of sins, pains, miseries and torments in a circle consisting of endless cycles of births and deaths which has made me take births for a record number of eighty-four lakh times, and am therefore immensely distressed, dismayed and horrified at the prospect of having to undergo this torture once again. I am feeling extremely wretched, hapless and helpless as I find there is no one to provide me with salvation and deliverance. Oh Bhairav! Oh Rudra who is a personification of Lord Ram! For me you are a friend, a Guru (moral preceptor, guide and teacher), a parent and the Vidhata (the creator who decides destiny). Please save me; please protect me. (8).

Tulsidas says that Lord Shiva, whose virtues are always being sung by Saraswati (the goddess of wisdom and speech), Vedas, sage Narad and other wise ones who have profound wisdom and are well-steeped in the knowledge of the supreme Brahm, and who bestows freedom from all fears to his devotees, is present in Kashi (the holy city of Varanasi) which is much like a forest of joys and happiness known as 'Anand Van'. (9).

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(12)

sadā-

śaṅkaraṃ, śampradaṃ, sajjānānandadaṃ, śaila-kan'yā-varaṃ,
paramaramyaṃ.

kāma-mada-mōcanaṃ, tāmarasa-lōcanaṃ, vāmadēvaṃ bhajē bhāvagamyaṃ.

1.

kambu-kundēndu-karpūra-gauraṃ śivaṃ, sundaraṃ, saccidānandakandaṃ.

sid'dha-sanakādi-yōgīndra-vr̄ndārakā, viṣṇu-vidhi-vandya caraṇāravindaṃ. 2.

brahma-kula-vallabhaṃ, sulabhamatidurlabhaṃ, vikaṭavēṣaṃ, vibhaṃu
vēdapāraṃ.

naumi karuṇākaraṃ, garala-gaṅgādharmaṃ, nirmalaṃ, nirguṇaṃ, nirvikāraṃ.

3.

lōkanāthaṃ, śōka-śūla-nirmūlinaṃ, śūlinaṃ, mōha-tama-bhūri bhānuṃ.

kālakālaṃ, kalātitamajaraṃ hamaṃ, kaṭhina-kalikāla-kānana-kr̄śānuṃ. 4.

tajñamajñāna-pāthōdhi-ghaṭasambhavaṃ, sarvagaṃ, sarvasaubhāgyamūlaṃ.

pracura-bhava-bhañjanaṃ, praṇata-jana-rañjanaṃ, dāsa tulasī śaraṇa

sānukūlaṃ. 5.

Verse no. 12—I always worship the Lord Vamdeo who is also known as Shankar because he spreads auspiciousness and all round happiness and good fortunes everywhere around. He does good to all, is the bestower of welfare and happiness, gives joys to saints, is the husband of the daughter of Himachal (i.e. Parvati), is most charming and attractive, is the crusher of the pride, vanity and haughtiness of Kamdeo (the God of passion and lust), is lotus-eyed, and is attainable only by devotion. (1).

His body (skin; countenance) is smooth (wrinkle-free, radiant, glorious, healthy and well-toned) like a conch-shell, the lily flower, the full moon, and camphor. It is soft and delicate, is comfortably cool (i.e. is not 'hot' in the sense that it is not agitated and aggressive, it does not inspire fear or repulsion), is fair in complexion (due to the ash being smeared all over it), and it effuses a fragrant and sweet aroma (to indicate its holiness and divinity). The Lord is a personification (embodiment) of the virtues of auspiciousness and all round welfare as well as of (spiritual) beauty. He is like a tuber-root or treasury of the glorious virtues of Sat (truth), Chit (consciousness) and Anand (bliss). Such acclaimed ones as the various Siddhas (those who have acquired mystical powers; the mystics), sages such as Sanak,

Sanandan, Sanatan and Sanatkumar, ascetics such as Yugiraj (great ascetics), the different Gods, Lords Vishnu (the sustainer of creation) and Brahma (the creator of the visible world)—all of them worship and pray at the holy feet of the Lord (Shiva). (2).

He loves and shows respects to the Brahmins (i.e. those who have a high birth in the sense that they are learned, wise and enlightened). He is easily accessible to saints and those with a pure heart, and is most un-attainable by those who are wicked and pervert. His form is very formidable, fearsome and awe-inspiring. He is ‘Vibho’ as he is eternal, omnipresent, all-pervading and all-powerful. He is so exalted and sublime that he is even beyond the reach (understanding) of the Vedas. He is a mine of kindness, mercy, compassion and grace. He is the one who bears the ferocious poison (in his throat) as well as the holy river Ganges (on his head) simultaneously. I bow my head in reverence to pay my obeisance to this Lord (Shiva) who is immaculate and pristine pure, who is without any attribute and untainted by one or the other Gunas (qualities that are characteristic of this mortal world full of corruptions and impurities), and who is absolutely taintless, flawless, faultless and without any trace of corruptions. (3).

He is the Lord of all the worlds. He renders sorrows and agonies in vain (futile, harmless and ineffective). He bears (holds) a trident. He is like a sun for the purpose of destroying the (spiritual) darkness represented by Moha (delusions; worldly entanglements, attractions and attachments). He is the death of ‘Death’ itself. He is beyond the reach and purview of time (i.e. he is imperishable, infinite, eternal and constant). He does not become old and decrepit (from diseases or age because he is eternal, steady and imperishable). He removes a creature (i.e. provides liberation and deliverance) from being perpetually trapped in the never-ending cycle of arrival (birth) in and departure (death) from this mortal world. And he is like the wild-fire for the purpose of burning (getting rid of; eliminating; clearing) the dense forest represented by the present dark era known as Kaliyug. (4).

This Tulsidas takes the refuge and shelter at the holy feet of Lord Shiva who is well versed and enlightened in the ultimate essence and truth of everything in existence, who is like sage Agastya¹ as far as soaking the deep sea of ignorance is concerned, who is all-pervading and omnipresent as well as all-knowing and omniscient, who is like a root from which all good fortunes and auspicious spring forth, who is the destroyer of the vast and endless world of births and deaths, who gives happiness and joys to those who seek his refuge and shelter, and who is always benevolent, gracious, kind and favourable towards such people. (5).

[Note—¹‘Pathodhi-Ghatsambhav’ (पाथोधि घटसंभव): There lived a Sandpiper (a type of bird) couple by the sea. The former’s eggs were regularly washed away by the latter; so anguished and indignant at the sea’s behaviour, they started dropping sand particles in the sea in order to fill it. Sage Agastya passed that way, and he was moved with pity and compassion at the miserable condition and frustration of the Sandpiper couple. As a punishment, he invoked the great Tarak Mantra ‘Om Ram’ three times and gulped down the whole ocean in a draught—not a drop was left. All the marine ecology and life went topsy-turvy, so the Gods prayed to him to calm down and reinstate the equilibrium of nature. Then, sage Agastya restored the ocean water in the form of urine; that is why, the ocean is salty and un-potable.]

Rāga Basanta

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sēvahu siva-carana-sarōja-rēnu. kalyāna-akhila-prada kāmadhēnu. 1.
 karpūra-gaura, karunā-udāra. sansāra-sāra, bhujagēndra-hāra. 2.
 sukha-janmabhāmi, mahimā apāra. nirguna, gunanāyaka, nirākāra. 3.
 traya nayana, mayana-darmana mahēsa. ahamkāra-nihāra-udita dinēsa. 4.
 bara bāla nisākara mauli bhrāja. trailōka-sōkahara pramatharāja. 5.
 jinhakham'bidhi sugati na likhī bhāla. tinhakī gati kāsīpati krpāla. 6.
 upakārī kōpara hara-samāna. sura-asura jarata kṛta garala pāna. 7.
 bahu kalpa upāyana kari anēka. binu sambhu-krpā nahim bhava-bibēka. 8.
 bigyāna-bhavana, girisutā-ramana. kaha tulasidāsa mama trāsa-samana. 9.

Verse no. 13—[Tulsidas advises the creatures as follows—] ‘One should worship with great devotion the dust of the holy lotus-like feet of Lord Shiva which is a provider of all auspiciousness and welfares, and fulfils all desires like a Kamdhenu cow.’ (1).

Lord Shiva is fair complexioned like camphor. He is very generous in showing mercy, compassion and graciousness. He is like the sublime entity known as the Atma (the pure conscious soul; the essence and the only truth; the only entity of worth; the life and vitality) in this world that is otherwise worthless, gross, soul-less, meaningless, lifeless and inane. He wears the legendary serpent known as Vasuki, the king of serpents, like a garland (around his neck). (2).

He is the ‘mother-land’ of all bliss, happiness and joy (i.e. all these virtues have their origin in him; he is the one from whom they emerge and then spread in this world; he is the fountainhead of these virtues). His fame, majesty and glory are fathomless and infinite. He is beyond the purview of the three Gunas (such as Satvik, Rajsik and Tamsik). He is in fact the Lord of all types of virtues and qualities (good or bad). And he is formless and without attributes. (3).

He has three eyes. Lord Mahesh (Shiva) is the one who had crushed the ego, the pride and the vanity of Mardan (Kamdeo), and is therefore like a sun that can destroy or eliminate the mist of ego, pride, vanity, haughtiness and arrogance. [The mist disappears on the appearance of the sun, so do pride and vanity that disappear in the presence of Shiva.] (4).

A young (nascent) moon looks glorious on his forehead. [This refers to the crescent moon of the second night after the new moon.] He is the eliminator of the sorrows and miseries of the three worlds. [The three worlds are the terrestrial world, the heavens, and the nether world.] He is like a King for his subject or followers. (5).

For those whose destiny written by the creator contains nothing that is worth looking forward to, nothing that is auspicious and joyful, Lord Shiva is their only destiny (i.e. Shiva is their only refuge and shelter). By the Lord's blessings, graciousness and kindness, they also achieve emancipation and salvation. (6).

Who is more generous, kind, benevolent and merciful than Lord Har (Shiva) who had drunk the venomous poison (that was produced at the time of legendary churning of the ocean) to protect the gods and demons from being burnt, scalded and corroded by its ferocity. (7).

No matter what one tries, and no matter how many attempts and formulas are employed for numerous Kalpas (eras, period of time), one would not realise and understand the real and true nature of the world without the blessings, grace and kindness of Shiva. [That is, one cannot get wisdom, become self-realised and attainment enlightenment without the Lord's grace.] (8).

Tulsidas pleads with Lord Shiva as follows—'Oh the one who is very dear to the daughter of Giri (the king of mountains)! [Here it refers to Parvati whose divine husband is Shiva.] You are an abode (treasury) of Vigyan (i.e. knowledge, especially metaphysical, of the highest order). You are the only one who can remove all my fears (including the ones arising out of ignorance and delusions).' (9).

¼14½

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(14)

dēkhō dēkhō, bana ban'yō āju umākanta. mānōm dēkhana tumahim āī ritu basanta. 1.

janu tanuduti campaka-kusuma-māla. bara basana nīla nūtana tamāla. 2.

kala kadali jaṅgha, pada kamala lāla. sūcata kaṭi kēhari, gati marāla. 3.

bhūṣana prasūna bahu bibidha raṅga. nūpura kiṅkini kalarava bihaṅga. 4.

kara navala bakula-pallava rasāla. śrīphala kuca, kaṅcuki latā-jāla. 5.

ānana sarōja, kaca madhupa gaṃuja. lōcana bisāla nava nīla kaṅja. 6.

pika bacana carita bara bar'hi kīra. sita sumana hāsa, līlā samīra. 7.

kaha tulasidāsa sunu siva sujāna. ura basi prapaṅca racē paṅcabāna. 8.

kari krpā hariya bhrama-phanda kāma. jēhi hṛdaya basahim sukharāsi rāma.

9.

Verse no. 14—[Tulsidas imagines Shiva to be a forest, and then describes the beauty of Nature using this metaphor as follows:-] 'Look, the beloved Lord of Uma (i.e. Lord

Shiva)! Today you have metaphorically assumed the form of a dense forest. Parvati, who stays as your other-half by your side, appears to be the spring season which has arrived to meet (see) you. (1).

The radiance, shine and majesty of your body is akin to a garland of Magnolia (Champa) flowers, while the beautiful dark-blue attire that you wear is like new leaves of the Catechu (Tamal) tree. [Here, the 'dark-blue colour of the attire' refers to the sky that is wrapped around the mendicant Shiva and worn by him as a cloth.] (2).

Your thighs are like the smooth stem of the plantain (banana) tree, your feet (soles) are like the red-hued lotus flower, while the thin waist reminds one of the lion, and your attractive and majestic gait reminds one of a swan. (3).

Many coloured flowers that adorn the verdant forests are your ornaments, while the Nupur (anklet with tiny bells) and Kinkini (bracelet with tiny bells) are represented by the sweet chirping sound of birds (hopping around and playing merrily in these forests). (4).

Your hands are represented by the leaves of Molsiri (a tree called Ninsops dengi whose flowers are very fragrant; also called Bakul) and Mango trees, the breast (chest) by the fruit of the plum-tree, and the vest by the creepers that cover the numerous trees in the forest. (5).

Your face is like a lotus, hairs are like the (black) bumble-bee, and large eyes are like the petals of a new blue-tinged lotus (6).

Your sweet voice is like that of a Cuckoo; your virtuous characters are like the peacock and the parrot; your bewitching smile is like a white flower (lily); and your activities are like the cool, fragrant and slow breeze that blows in a forest. (7)'.

Tulsidas says, 'Oh the most wise and enlightened Shiva! Kamdeo (lust, desire, lasciviousness, passions etc.) resides in my heart and creates a lot of mischief for me. (8).

Please be kind to cut down this deluding and ensnaring trap created by Kaamdeo so that Lord Ram, who represents eternal spiritual bliss, happiness, beatitude and felicity, can reside in my heart. (9)'.

(49)

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(49)

dēva-

danuja-vana-dahana, guna-gahana, gōvinda nandādi-ānanda-dātāvināśī.
 śambhu, śiva, rudra, śaṅkara, bhayaṅkara, bhīma, ghōra, tējāyatana, krōdha-
 rāśī. 1.

anamāta, bhagavanta, jagadanta-antaka-trāsa-śamana, śrīramana,
 bhuvanābhirāmaṅ.

bhūgharādhīśa jagadīśa īśāna, vijñānaghana, jñāna-kalyāna-dhāmaṅ. 2.
 vāmanāvyakta, pāvana, parāvara, vibhō, prakāṣa paramātamā, prakṛti-svāmī.
 candraśekhara, śūlapāṇi, hara, anagha, aja, amita, avichinna, vṛṣabhēśa-
 gāmī. 3.

nīla jaladābhatanu śyāma, bahu kāma chavi rāma rājīvalōcana kṛpālā.
 kambu-karpūra-vapu, dhavala, nirmala, mauli jaṭā, sura-taṭini, sita sumana
 mālā. 4.

vasana kiṅjalkadhara, cakra-sāraṅga-dara-kaṅja-kaumōdakī ati viśālā.
 māra-kari matta mṛgarāja, trainaina, hara, naumi apaharaṅa sansāra-jālā. 5.
 kṛṣṇa, karuṅābhavana, davana kāliya khala, vipula kansādi nirvanśakārī.
 tripura-mada-bhaṅgakara, mattagaja-carmadhara, andhakōraga-grasana
 pannagārī. 6.

brahma, vyāpaka, akala, sakala, para, paramahita, gyāna, gōtīta guṇa-vṛtti-
 hatrtā.

sindhusuta-garva-giri-vajra, gaurīśa, bhava, dakṣa-makha akhila
 vidhvanśakatrtā. 7.

bhaktipriya, bhaktajana-kāmadhuka dhēnu, hari, haraṅa durghaṭa vikaṭa
 vipatti bhārī.

sukhada, narmada, varada, viraja, anavadyakhila, vipina-ānanda-vīthina-
 vihārī. 8.

rucira hariśaṅkarī nāma-mantrāvalī dvandvadukha harani, ānandakhānī.
 viṣṇu-śiva-lōka-sōpāna-sama sarvadā vadati tulasīdāśa viśada bānī. 9.

Verse no. 49—[Note: This is a unique form of prayer in as much as each of its stanzas has two parts, one dedicated to Lord Hari or Vishnu, and the other to Lord Har or Shiva. It is also known as 'Hari-Shankar' prayer precisely for this reason. Tulsidas has tried to establish the fact that both these two forms of the Lord are basically synonymous with and equivalent to each other. They are but the two aspects or sides of the same coin. This fact that there is no difference between Lords Vishnu and Shiva have been affirmed in the Upanishads as well—viz. (i) Krishna Yajur Veda tradition's *Skanda Upanishad*, verse nos. 4, 8-9; and the entire *Rudra Hridaya Upanishad*. (ii) Atharva Veda tradition's *Brihajjabal Upanishad*, Brahman 6, verse nos. 8-9; *Sharav Upanishad*; and *Ram Rahasya Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse no. 3.]

Lord Vishnu :- He is the destroyer of the forest representing demons. He is a forest (a rich and colourful garden; a treasury) of auspicious virtues and noble

qualities. He is restrainer of the sense organs, gives happiness and joy to Nand and Upnand, and is indestructible and imperishable (i.e. eternal and immortal).

Lord Shiva :- He is renowned by the famous names of Shambhu, Shiva, Rudra, Shankar and other auspicious names. He is very fierce and formidable. He possesses great radiance and splendour. And he is an epitome of anger — Stanza 1.

Lord Vishnu :- He is without an end (i.e. is eternal, imperishable and infinite). He is empowered and endowed with the six types of Aishwaryas (fames, glories, qualities). [Refer verse no. 38.] He is the one who can terminate this world (existence). He is the remover of the torments caused (inflicted upon a creature) by Yam (the God of death and hell). He is the Lord of Laxmi (the goddess of wealth, prosperity and opulence). And he is a provider of happiness, cheer and joys to the whole world.

Lord Shiva :- He is the Lord of Mt. Kailash. He is the Lord of the universe. He is known as 'Ishan' (one of the eleven Rudras or forms of Lord Shiva). [The word 'Ishan' has its root in the word 'Ish' meaning a Lord.] He is a treasury or fount of knowledge and wisdom, and he is also an abode of enlightenment as well as the ultimate destination that is described as emancipation and salvation—Stanza 2.

Lord Vishnu :- He manifested in the form of Vaaman (the dwarf mendicant incarnation of Vishnu). He cannot be described by the mind and felt by the sense organs. He is pure, immaculate and untainted by any kind of impurities, vices and evils. He is the Lord of animate and inanimate world, as well as this mortal world and the immortal world beyond it. He is the 'Parmatma' himself (i.e. he is a manifestation of the supreme cosmic Soul; he is the macrocosmic, all-encompassing form of the supreme transcendental Brahm known as the Viraat Purush). And he is the Lord of Prakriti (Mother Nature).

Lord Shiva :- He bears the moon on his forehead and the trident in his hands. He is the annihilator of the entire creation. He is free from all sins. He is without birth and death (as he is eternal, imperishable and infinite). He is without divisions and separable parts (i.e. he is one whole and cannot be fractioned, partitioned or divided into units; he cannot be destroyed or dismembered; he is immutable, whole and one infinite divine entity). And he mounts a Nandi (a bull) — Stanza 3.

Lord Vishnu :- He is of a dark complexion like the rain-bearing cloud. He is of a magnificent charm, beauty and glamour that is equivalent to countless Kamdeos taken together. His eyes are as beauteous and bewitchingly charming as the lotus flower. And he is the all-pervading, all-prevailing, all-encompassing and omnipresent Lord of the whole world.

Lord Shiva :- His body is like the conch-shell and camphor for its smoothness, fair complexion and a divine fragrance emanating from it. He is without faults and impurities (i.e. he is taintless and uncorrupt; he has no trace of evils, vices, blemishes etc. of any kind whatsoever). He has a crown of matted hairs which bears river Ganges on his head. And he is wearing a garland of white flowers —Stanza 4.

Lord Vishnu :- He wears a Pitambar (a body-wrapping silk cloth) which is yellow in colour like saffron. He holds in his hands a conch-shell, a discus, a lotus, a bow, an arrow, and a large water lily that resembles a mace.

Lord Shiva :- He is akin to a lion for the purpose of vanquishing wild and arrogant elephants representing Kamdeo (the God of passions and lust). He has three

eyes. [The third eye is renowned as the ‘eye of wisdom and enlightenment’, and is located between the eyebrows above the nose.] He destroys or eliminates the entangling net of this world consisting of a web of birth and death. I bow my head to such a divine Lord Har (Shiva)— Stanza 5.

Lord Vishnu :- He attracts the attention of all creatures towards himself. He is an abode of mercy, compassion, kindness and graciousness. He is the vanquisher of the dangerous snake known as Kalia¹ represented by the present age known as Kaliyug. [Kalia was a venomous and ferocious dragon that was killed by Lord Krishna in his childhood days.] He had killed the entire clan of Kansha (the maternal uncle of Krishna, who was very cruel and tyrannical) along with other demonic forces. [This reference alludes to the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as Lord Krishna.]

Lord Shiva :- He crushed the haughtiness, pride, vanity and arrogance of the demon Triparasur. He wears the hide of wild elephants. He is like Garuda (the legendary vehicle of Vishnu; the heavenly bird eagle or heron) for the purpose of gobbling up (destroying, conquering and eliminating) the serpents representing darkness (of ignorance, delusions, various worldly taints and entrapping temptations) that were represented by another demon known as Andhakaasur, the demon with the name Andhak²—Stanza 6.

Lord Vishnu :- He is the ‘Purna-Brahm’. [That is, he is a wholesome and complete manifestation of the transcendental Supreme Being known as Brahm.] As such, he is all-pervading, all-prevailing and omnipresent divine entity in the entire creation. He is, on the one hand, without any forms and attributes, is invisible, immutable and one uniform divine Being (‘Akal’), and on the other hand he has taken numerous gross visible forms exhibiting as many characteristics and varied attributes (‘Sakal’). He is the Supreme Being, the most exalted and the best amongst all entities in creation. He who is most concerned about the welfare and good of the subjects of this creation. He is an embodiment of wisdom, enlightenment, erudition, sagacity and truthful knowledge of the highest order and refinement. He is beyond the reach and grasp of any of the subtle instruments of perception and comprehension of the inner-self (i.e. of the mind and the intellect), as well as any of the external instruments of the body such as its sense organs. He can remove (eliminate) the numerous Vasanas (inherent worldly tendencies), and the three Gunas (Sativik, Rajasic and Tamasic) that are an integral part of the inherent nature of all living beings in this creation.

Lord Shiva :- He is like a Vajra (an invincible and strong weapon of Indra, which is represented by the thunderbolt) for the purpose of cracking and demolishing the mountain of pride, vanity and haughtiness of demon Jalandhar. He is the beloved husband of goddess Parvati. He is the origin of the entire creation. He is one who had interrupted and destroyed the Yagya (fire sacrifice) performed by Daksha (who was the father of Parvati in her previous birth), as well as the Lord who can annihilate or bring to conclusion the entire creation (because Shiva is the third God of the Trinity responsible for bringing to an end of the cycle of creation initiated by Brahma, and it is essential to do so in accordance with the fundamental law of Nature that says that everything that has come into being must end one day)³—Stanza 7.

Lord Vishnu :- He loves nothing but devotion, and is like the Kamdhenu cow to fulfill all the desires of his devotees and remove their greatest of troubles and distresses. This is why he is renowned as ‘Hari’—i.e. one who robs or steals. In this case, the Lord is the one who forcibly takes away or snatches all the miseries and

agonies that make his devotees suffer, and frees them the burden of having to bear with troubles and tribulations of any kind.

Lord Shiva :- He is the Lord who grants the boons of happiness and joys, of bliss, beatitude and felicity, and anything else that is desired by seekers. He is completely dispassionate, detached and full of renunciation. He is free from all taints, corruptions and impurities that are so characteristic of this existence. He roams in the lanes of Kashi (the city of Varanasi) which is like ‘Anand-Van’, i.e. a forest of happiness and bliss— Stanza 8.

These beautiful stanzas listing the different holy names (and glories) of Lords Hari (Vishnu) and Shankar (Shiva) are collectively called ‘Hari-Shankari’. They can remove the perplexities, bewilderments, tribulations, miseries and consternations caused by worldly faults such as Raag and Dwesh (attachments and infatuations on the one hand, and malice, ill-will and hatred on the other hand). They are a mine of bliss, ecstasy, happiness and joys. They are like a ladder to climb to the abode of Vishnu and Shiva (i.e. reach heaven). Tulsidas asserts all this affirmatively, articulately, with a firm conviction and a steady voice which is well-thought and free from any corrupting influences of this world—Stanza 9.

[Note—¹The serpent Kaliya (davāna kāliya khala): According to Srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran, a ferocious serpent called Kaliya lived in the waters of river Yamuna. Due to the heat of its venom, the water was on the boil constantly. Sri Krishna pierced its fangs and leashed it. Thereafter, the serpent left the river and went to the ocean (perhaps this is one of the reasons why the ocean water is so un-potable).

²The demon Andhak (andhakōraga-grasana): Andhak was a tyrannical, strong and riotous demon, and was the son of Hiranyaaksha. Propitiating Brahma he got the boon that he would live as long as he does not get wisdom and enlightenment. Such an incongruously odd boon! Bolstered by the sense of immortality, he became bellicose, threatening and tormenting the Gods who ran like hunted fox. At last, they invoked Shiva to intercede and protect them. Shiva fought a ferocious battle with Andhak. Finally, he struck the latter with a trident (symbolic of wisdom), as a result of which, the demon entered into a trance like state of meditation. Pleased at his posture, the merciful Lord Shiva gave him the boon of eternal and abiding devotion. The story appears in Shiva Puran.

³The destruction of the fire-sacrifice of Prajapati Daksha (dakṣa-makha akhila vidhvanśakatṛtā): In her previous birth, Shiva’s consort Parvati was known as Sati. Sati’s father Daksha Prajapati performed a fire-sacrifice but did not invite Shiva, his son-in-law. This infuriated Sati because she took it as a public insult of her husband. She was very angry and disgusted, and therefore had burnt herself by a self-kindled fire of Yoga. Shiva, on getting the news, sent Virbhadrā who went and disrupted the sacrifice to punish Daksha. This episode has been narrated by Tulsidas in his epic story of Lord Ram, called the Ram Charit Manas, in its Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 60—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 65.

The word ‘Akhla’ is significant here. It means ‘all’. ‘All’ has two connotations: one refers to the destruction of the entire sacrifice of Daksha, and the other interpretation is that Shiva is the Lord who brings to an end the entire creation as the ‘supreme Concluder’ of creation. It ought to be noted that the Supreme Being known as ‘Brahm’ had assumed three distinct forms when he created this creation. As its ‘creator’ he became ‘Brahma’, as its ‘sustainer’ he became ‘Vishnu’, and as its ‘concluder’ he became ‘Rudra’ which is one of the many name of Shiva.]

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(2) 'Rudra Ashtak' from Ram Charit Manas of Tulsidas

This hymn appears in the great epic known as the *Ram Charit Manas*, in its Uttar Kand, Chanda line nos. 1-16 along with its Shloka that precede Doha no. 108. This magnificent hymn dedicated to Lord Shiva was composed and used as a prayer by sage Kaagbhusund's Guru (teacher) to please the Lord and be merciful upon his disciple Kaagbhusund who had been cursed by Shiva for not showing due respect to the Guru. The beauty of these verses is their poetry and rhyming of the verses, something that lacks in other classical works in Sanskrit.

छं०. नमामीशमीशान निर्वारूपं । विभुं व्यापकं ब्रह्म वेदस्वरूपं ॥ १ ॥

chanda.

namāmiśamīśāna nirvāṇarūpaṁ. vibhuṁ vyāpakam brahma vēdasvarūpaṁ. 1.

'Oh Isha (Lord of the world)! I reverentially bow before you. You are the cardinal deity of creation and the patron god of the Ishan direction (north-east). You are an image of Nirvaan (final liberation and deliverance; i.e. you exemplify the state of being attained by a creature when he is delivered from the fetters of this world and its attendant delusions).

You are Vibhu (the Supreme Being who is almighty, omnipresent, all-pervading, all-encompassing, magnanimous, eternal, infinite, all-powerful, immovable, constant and immutable). You are Vyaapak (one who is immanent, omnipresent, all-pervading, all-incorporating and all-encompassing). You are a personified form of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness and the Supreme Being, as well as the Vedas (the embodiment of Gyan-knowledge, wisdom, gnosis and enlightenment). (1)

निजं निर्गुणं निर्विकल्पं निरीहं । चिदाकाशमाकाशवासं भजेऽहं ॥ २ ॥

nijam nirguṇam nirvikalpaṁ nirīham. cidākāśamākāśavāsam bhajē'ham. 2.

You have realised your true 'self' and are therefore firmly established in it. [This 'true self' is the pure conscious Atma, the soul.]

Hence, you possess all the virtues of the Atma—such as being Nirguna (without any Gunas or qualifications or qualities; without any taints associated with the different aspects of creation, such as the good, the bad, the mediocre, and everything in between).

You are Nirvikalp (one of your own kind; without any alternatives or parallel or comparison; without any sort of divisions; uniform and seamless).

You are Niriha (without any desires, passions, yearnings or wants; to be totally dispassionate and non-desirous of anything; to be complete detached from anything and everything).

You live in a sublime and ethereal form as the Consciousness that pervades the subtle aspect sky in this creation (such as the one that fills all the space in the heart of the living beings). Not only this, you are present throughout the visible form of this sky that fills this world. And you wear the sky (firmament) as your cloth; you are surrounded by the subtle sky from all sides.

[This is an important observation: Lord Shiva represents the enlightened creature who has realised the true nature of his ‘self’ as the Atma, the pure consciousness. This Atma is a miniscule or microcosmic form of the Parmatma, the cosmic Atma. This Atma lives in the subtle space—the sky—of the gross organ known as the heart present in all persons. Just as no one can live without the heart, there can be no life without the Atma. This Atma is not a gross entity like the physical heart or the body in which it lives; it is rather an ethereal entity that is similar to the air that fills the entire length and breadth of the sky. Like the Atma that cannot be physically seen but its existence nevertheless cannot be doubted, Lord Shiva is the cosmic Consciousness that is present everywhere in this creation, filling every nook and corner of the sky, though one cannot actually see the Lord with his physical organ of the eye.]

I have devotion for you; I worship you; I adore and admire you (‘Bhajeemham’). (2)

निराकारमोंकारमूलं तुरीयं । गिरा ग्यान गोतीतमीशं गिरीशं ॥ ३ ॥

nirākāramōṅkāramūlaṁ turīyaṁ. girā gyāna gōtītamīśaṁ girīśaṁ. 3.

You are Nirakar (without any forms and attributes).

You are the root from which the ethereal sound of OM generates; you are a personified form of OM, the ethereal word representing the supreme transcendental Brahm and the cosmic Consciousness. [Or, you represent the primary Consciousness which generated the primordial ‘sound’ represented by the word OM that pervades the entire sky. It is from the energy of this sound that the rest of the creation has come into being. This subtle sound of OM pervades throughout the firmament of creation. It ought to be noted here that the ‘sound’, and the ‘alphabets’ of any language that represent the various notes of this sound, do not have any form—i.e. they are ‘Nirakar’. Language is used to express an idea; OM expresses the idea known as Consciousness. Words and sound stand for life because dead entities don’t speak or make any sound. Therefore, Lord Shiva is a personified form of all forms of life in this creation—both the animate as well as the inanimate. He is the supreme transcendental Consciousness from which the rest of the creation evolved.]

You exist in the Turiya (transcendental) state of consciousness. [The ‘consciousness’ has four states—(i) The waking state or Jagrat when the gross organs of the creature’s body are active; (ii) The dreaming state or Swapna when his gross organs are inactive but the subtle mind and sub-conscious are active; (iii) the deep sleep state or Sushupta when even the mind becomes inactive, and the (v) Turiya state

which is beyond the third state—hence is called the transcendental state of existence. This eclectic state is achieved by ascetics and self-realised persons only.]

You are beyond the reach (understanding and grasp) of Vaani (the faculty of speech; i.e. it is not possible to describe you or teach about you), Gyan (gnosis; knowledge based on reasoning and analytical thinking), and Indris (the sense organs of the body). [That is, no one can comprehensively understand you. The best way is to experience your presence in the form of the bliss obtained when one is blessed by the Holy Spirit you represent.]

You are the Lord of the mountains. [This is because Lord Shiva is supposed to live on high hills or mountains, submerged in deep meditation and contemplation, far away from the tumult of the mundane world and its accompanying horrors and delusions. His terrestrial abode is Mt. Kailash in the upper reaches of the northern Himalayan mountain ranges.] (3)

करालं महाकाल कालं कृपालं । गुणागार संसारपारं नतोऽहं ॥ ४ ॥

karālam mahākāla kālam kṛpālam. guṇāgāra sansārapāram natō'ham. 4.

Your form is ferocious and formidable. [This refers to his role as Rudra, the angry form as the concluder or annihilator of creation. He is fierce when he assumes this role—unrelenting, unforgiving and uncompromising. When sins, evil, demeanours and perversions reach a crescendo in creation, Lord Shiva becomes very angry. Despite all his efforts to spread wisdom and enlightenment, the creatures won't pay heed to him. So, like an annoyed king, this cosmic Emperor wishes to punish his mischievous subjects so that the pious and holy souls can live in peace. It is then that he becomes fierce. Otherwise, he is always calm and serenity personified; he is always depicted in the scriptures as well as iconography as a deity with close eyes sitting in meditative trance.]

Indeed, you are the Maha-kaal, the great God of Death personified. You are the death of even the God of Death. [All the Gods have a limited life-span. 'Death' is the most powerful force of creation. Birth is uncertain, but death is certain. 'Death' does not spare even the Gods who are supposed to be immortal. The 'Maha-kaal' form of Shiva refers to the supreme Brahm who exists even after the entire creation has been wiped out. 'Death' or 'Kaal' devours all living beings; Lord Shiva devours 'Kaal' itself. This is another way of saying that there is no one to devour or kill Shiva. Or, in other words, Shiva is eternal and without the fear of death. There is no God superior to him!]

You are Kripaal (merciful, compassionate, gracious, kind).

You are Gunaagaar (an abode of all virtuous qualities). ['Guna' = qualities and auspicious virtues; 'Aagaar' = abode.]

You transcend this world ('Sansaar-paaram'). [That is, you have a transcendental existence; you are eternally free from the bondage of birth and death; you are free from all the taints and delusions associated with this world.]

I reverentially bow my head before you ('Natoham'). (4)

तुषाराद्रि संकाश गौरं गभीरं । मनोभूत कोटि प्रभा श्री शरीरं ॥ ५ ॥

tuṣārādri saṅkāśa gauram gabhīram. manōbhūta kōṭi prabhā śrī śarīram. 5.

You are like the snow-covered mountains—fair in complexion, and extremely calm, quiet and serene as well as serious and sober. [The snow-covered mountains are white in colour. The body of Shiva is smeared with the ash of the fire sacrifice, giving it the appearance of fairness. The deep recesses of the lofty mountains are calm and serene, so is Lord Shiva. No worldly sounds of the plains reach these mountains; they are free from all pollutions, congestions, the hustle and bustle and the turmoil of mundane life that are the hallmarks of the plains. Likewise, Lord Shiva is too calm and tranquility personified.]

Your divine form is as beautiful, radiant and charming as millions of Kaamdeos (the God of love, cupid and charms). (5)

स्फुरन्मौलि कल्लेलिनी चारु गंगा । लसद्भालबालेन्दु कंठे भुजंगा ॥ ६ ॥

sphuranmauli kallōlinī cāru gaṅgā. lasadbhālabālēndu kaṅṭhē bhujāṅgā. 6.

You carry the nectar-like and pristine water of the holy river Ganges on your head, locked in the thick matted hairs¹.

Your forehead is adorned by the crescent moon², and serpents are wrapped around your neck³. (6)

[Note—¹The imagery and symbolism are absolutely fabulous. The Ganges emerges from a glacier in the Himalayas, and then its streams swirl, foam, toss and turn as they meander their way down the curves of the mountain and its gorges and valleys. The thick lock of hairs on Shiva's head symbolizes these turns and curves, the gorges and valleys of the Himalayas. The when Ganges descended upon earth, the Gods feared that its thunderous descent with its thunderbolt like strike will split or crack the earth into two. So they prayed Lord Shiva to accept the holy river on his head. The Lord willingly accepted it, because he knew, being the most enlightened God, that this river has its origin from the toe-nails of Lord Vishnu, one of the other forms of the Viraat Purush, the all-encompassing Lord God. So this was a rare opportunity—to taste the nectar and the ambrosia of eternity and bliss emanating directly from Lord Vishnu's holy feet.

²Lord Shiva has been depicted in the Purans as having a *crescent moon* on his forehead. The moon is said to have sixteen Kalaas or phases, symbolising the sixteen Kalaas or aspects out of the total of sixty four Kalaas of the supreme Brahm. These sixteen Kalaas represent the visible world which is one fourth part of the entire creation consisting of the remaining of the Kalaas of Brahm. The visible world is called 'one Pada' or one leg or one aspect or Kalaa of Brahm. So, Shiva is the Lord who presides over the entire visible part of creation, and this world is his ornamentation in the sense that the Lord appears to be so beautiful if we consider the beauty of Nature as the astounding beauty and the expert craftsmanship of Shiva on display.

The moon present on Shiva's forehead also stands for the various eclectic qualities called Kalaas that he possesses and which adorn him like the moon. Symbolically, the devotee is advised to follow the example of his chosen deity Lord Shiva and note the symbolism of the Moon on his head. These eclectic qualities should be as prominent as the moon on the head of Shiva and they should form an integral part of the character of the devotee if he wishes to place himself in the position of being called a sincere follower and worshipper of Lord Shiva. Now let us have a glimpse of these *Kalaas*. They are the various eclectic qualities or attributes that an exalted man should possess, and briefly they are the following—(i) Shraddha

(faith, believe, conviction, reverence, respect, devotion), (ii) Pran (life; the very essence of creation; the vibrations of life; the rhythm and essential functions pertaining to life), (iii) Akash (the all-pervading, all-encompassing sky or space element), (iv) Vayu (wind, air element), (v) Tej (energy, splendour, radiance, glory, might, majesty and fire element), (vi) Apaha (water element which is the all-important ingredient for life), (vii) 'Prithivi' (earth element which is the base or foundation for all mortal creation), (viii) Indriya (the organs of the body, both the organs of perception as well as of action), (ix) Mana (the mind and heart complex and their stupendous potentials), (x) Anna (food, the element without which life is simply not imaginable because it provides it with the basic nourishment and energy), (xi) Virya (semen, sperms, standing for courage, valour, potency, vitality and prowess), (xii) Tapa (austerity and penance, tolerance of hardship as a means of penitence, forbearance as well as carrying out strict religious vows in order to purify one's self) (xiii) Mantra (the ability to give good advise, the power to contemplate and think, concentrate and focus, logically arrive at a conclusion), (xiv) Karma (taking actions and doing deeds), (xv) Loka (worldly interactions and behaviours), and (xvi) Naam (good name, fame, reputation, honour and glory).

Reference should be made to the Chandogya Upanishad, 6/7/1-6 of Sam Veda tradition in this context.

³The significance of the *serpents* wrapped around his body—The coiled serpents around his body indicate the fact that he constantly reminds himself of imminent death because serpents are very poisonous and symbolise immediate death. This helps him to remain focused on his spiritual aim of self-realisation instead of being attracted by the material charms of this material world of sense objects and getting deluded by them. The serpents also signify that Shiva is the Lord of death; he is death personified. Since he is able to wrap the serpents around his body and they cannot harm him, it indicates the fact that he has conquered death. That is why he is called 'Mrityunjay', the conqueror of death.

Again, the coiled serpents represent the Kundalini, the coiled subtle energy center at the base of the spine which when activated can entitle the spiritual aspirant to experience a burst of stupendous spiritual energy which provides him a glimpse of his own divine powers as well as the powers of the cosmic Consciousness present inside his bosom as his Atma. This Kundalini is activated by doing numerous Yoga exercises as described in the Upanishads on the subject of Yoga.

The coiled serpents may also represent cycles of time in the macrocosm and the basic energy of life in the microcosm in the form of reproductive and procreative energy.

These reptiles are very ferocious, dangerous, poisonous, and a symbol of male potency. The symbolism is that Shiva is a very potent God who can be extremely ruthless and unforgiving towards sinful creatures. He has exercised extreme self control and has 'girdled' or readied himself in preparation for enduring the greatest of hardships and sufferance for self-realisation as well as to provide the world with liberation and deliverance. The serpents warn his enemies not to fool around with him. That is also why he has fire in one of his hands. This fire signifies his ability to reduce to ashes the entire physical world consisting of falsehood and sins as well as eliminate all impurities, imperfections, faults and shortcomings that cripple the creature's spiritual well being.

The Dakshin Murti Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse nos. 8, 10, 13, 15 and 19 affirms that Shiva is invariably wrapped by serpents.]

चलत्कुंडलं भ्रू सुनेत्रं विशालं । प्रसन्नाननं नीलकंठं दयालं ॥ ७ ॥

calatkuṇḍalaṁ bhrū sunētram viśālaṁ. prasannānanaṁ nīlakaṅṭhaṁ dayālaṁ.
7.

Large ear-rings dangle and sway majestically from your ears. Your eyes are broad and the eye-brows are magnificent to look at. You are cheerful, have a blue-tinged throat¹, and are most merciful and gracious. (7)

[Note—¹He is known as *Neelkanth* because he had drunk the horrible poison called Halaahal which emerged as a scorching froth at the time of churning of the ocean by the Gods and the Demons in search of Amrit or the ambrosia of life and eternity. The legend goes that Lord Shiva had drunk the fierce poison that emerged at the time of churning of the celestial ocean in the beginning of creation by the Gods and the Demons in search of Amrit, the nectar of eternity and bliss. As soon as this boiling poison came out, there was the fear of the entire creation being scalded by its heat and ferocity. So Lord Shiva took the name of Lord Ram and gulped it in one mouthful. But the Lord knew that if this poison entered his abdomen the whole creation will be annihilated nevertheless as it resided in his abdomen. This shows that Lord Shiva is none but the supreme Brahm in whose body the entire creation resides like the embryo lives in its mother's womb. Hence, the merciful Lord kept the poison in his throat, giving it a purple colour. [Refer: (i) Sharav Upanishad, verse nos. 11, 16. (ii) Mahabharat, Adi Parva, Canto 18. In its verse no. 18 it is stated that—(a) Lord Shiva had drunk the poison while invoking and repeating the holy Mantra, and of course that Mantra was the holy name of Lord Ram because the Lord is Shiva's patron deity, and (b) this is the reason why his throat became dark blue or purple, because he had retained the poison in his throat instead of gulping it down in his stomach. (iii) The same fact is endorsed in Tulsidas' Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 19. (iv) Tulsidas' Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, verse nos. 157-158 allude to Lord Shiva drinking the Halaahal poison.]

मृगाधीशचर्माञ्जरं मुण्डमालं । प्रियं शंकरं सर्वनाथं भजामि ॥ ८ ॥

mṛgādhiśacarmāmbaram muṇḍamālaṁ. priyaṁ śaṅkaraṁ sarvanāthaṁ
bhajāmi. 8.

You are wrapped in the hide of a lion, the king of animals. ['Mrig' = wild animals of the forest; 'Dhish' = king.]

You wear a necklace of skulls. [This symbolizes the fact that Lord Shiva is always aware of death and keeps this garland around his neck to constantly remind him of the futility of worldly life.]

You are the Lord of all in this world; you are dear to them. Oh Lord Shankar—I worship you, adore you, am devoted to you, and always remember you ('Bhajaami'). (8)

प्रचंडं प्रकृष्टं प्रगल्भं परेशं । अखंडं अजं भानुकोटिप्रकाशं ॥ ९ ॥

pracaṇḍaṁ prakṛṣṭaṁ pragalbhaṁ parēśaṁ. akhaṇḍaṁ ajaṁ
bhānukōṭiprakāśaṁ. 9.

You assume a fierce and formidable form ('Prachand'—in your form as Lord Rudra).

You are the supreme, the most exalted and the best God in creation ('Prakrishtha').

You are splendid and radiant ('Pragalambha').

You are the Supreme Being known as Parmeshwar ('Paresham').

You are Akhand (immutable, indivisible, whole, steady, constant and uniform).

You are Aja (i.e. you have no birth or beginning; you are eternal and infinite).

[Refer to verse no. 3 that says Lord Shiva is the personified form of OM.]

You are splendid and radiant as millions of suns put together. ['Bhanu' = sun; 'Koti' = million; 'Prakash' = illumination, light. This epithet for Lord Shiva assumes significance because he is deemed to be the most enlightened amongst the Gods. The 'illumination, light, splendour and radiance that is equivalent to the sun' is a metaphoric way of saying that the level of gnosis and enlightenment that Shiva has achieved is unmatched in this creation as the light of the sun which too is unrivalled in this world.] (9)

त्रयःशूल निर्मूलनं शूलपाणिं । भजेऽहं भवानीपतिं भावगज्जं ॥ १० ॥

trayaḥśūla nirmūlanam śūlapāṇim. bhajē'ham bhavānīpatiṁ bhāvagamyam.

10.

You can neutralize all the three types of horrors ('Traya-Shul') that torment the creature in this world. [These three horrors are the following—(i) Adhidaivic= torments caused by malignant stars; (ii) Adhibhautic = torments caused by worldly entities such as enemies and opponents; and (iii) Adhyatmic = torments caused on the spiritual front.]

You hold a trident ('Trishul') in your hands. [This 'trident' stands for these three horrors, and the ability of the Lord to neutralize them.]

I pay my obeisance, worship and adore ('Bhajeham') the Lord of Bhavaani ('Bhavaani' = Goddess Uma or Parvati, the Mother Goddess; 'Pati' = husband; Lord) with due faith, devotion and dedication ('Bhaava'). (10)

कलातीत कल्याण कल्पान्तकारी । सदा सज्जनानन्ददाता पुरारी ॥ ११ ॥

kalātīta kalyāṇa kalpāntakārī. sadā sajjanānandadātā purārī. 11.

You are beyond measurements and comparisons with any of the Kalaas¹ of creation.

You are the one who provides all auspiciousness and welfare ('Kalyaan') to the world, and are also the Lord who brings to an end the era of creation known as the Kalpa ('Kalpaanta-kaari'). [That is, on the one hand you take care of the welfare of the world, and on the other hand you end it also.]

You always give happiness ('Anand') to those who are gentle, simple, polite and honourable ('Sajjan'). [That is, those who are gentlemanly should have no cause of fear from you as the fierce God of Death who brings about the end of this world. It is only the wicked who need to harbour such fear.]

You are known as 'Purari'—the Lord who has vanquished and slayed the demon known as Tripuraa. [Or, it also might mean that 'you are the Lord who lives in the inner-self of the creature as his Atma. The word 'Pur' means an abode, and 'Purari' therefore means one who lives in this abode. According to the Upanishads, the supreme Brahm resides in the subtle heart of the creature as his Atma; Brahm

lives inside the gross body of the creature as his pure consciousness. This alludes to the fact that Lord Shiva is none else but the supreme transcendental Brahm himself.] (11)

[Note—¹Kalaa: See note of stanza no. 6 herein above.

They are also called the *sixteen Aakarshini Shaktis* of creation that makes the possessor of these virtues much sought after in society. The word 'Aakarshini' means one that attracts others, and the word 'Shakti' of course means power. These are the following—(i) the power possessed by Pran, the vital life-sustaining winds or airs which maintain the vibrations, the rhythm and the essential functions of life in this creation; (ii) the power that comes with having Shraddha, i.e. having the eclectic virtues of faith, believe, conviction, reverence, respect and devotion that one has for his chosen deity, for the Supreme Being, and for the aim of life one has set for himself; (iii) the power to be as vast, all-pervading and all-encompassing as the Sky element known as 'Akash'; (iv) the power that is equivalent to that possessed by the Wind or Air element known as 'Vayu' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of air; (v) the power that is known as 'Tej', literally meaning vigour, vitality, energy, dynamism etc. that are depicted by the Fire element known as 'Agni' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of heat and warmth; (vi) the powers equivalent to those possessed by the Water element known as 'Apaha' that is so essential for life and its sustenance, and its proof lies in the fact one would die for want of water; (vii) the powers that are equivalent to the earth element known as 'Prithivi' which is the base or foundation for all mortal creation, the power that helps one to sustain others and therefore it makes a person much sought after; (viii) the powers displayed by the various sense organs of the body, called the 'Indriya', because it is these organs that enable the creature to achieve stupendous and most astounding tasks that are even beyond imagination; (ix) the immense and most lauded power of the mind and sub-conscious known as the 'Mana' which has formidable potentials and reach, keeping the creature firmly held in its grip, and without which power noting can be done or any success achieved in any field whatsoever; (x) the power equivalent to that possessed by food or 'Anna' which is absolutely essential for survival and has such powerful force of attraction that people go long distances in search of food, even kill each other over it; (xi) the magnificent power to create and generate that is shown by the semen known as the 'Virya' which stands for courage, valour, potency, vitality and strength, vigour, dynamism etc., and anyone who possesses these glorious powers or virtues is surely much attractive and useful for others; (xii) the power that comes with doing 'Tapa', meaning austerity and penance, tolerance of hardship as a means of penitence, forbearance, carrying out strict religious vows in order to purify one's self, sufferance for some auspicious and noble cause, etc., virtues that make the person who possesses them have a magnetic appeal for others; (xiii) the powers inherent in the various mystical 'Mantras' which are great spiritual formulas with astounding potentials to fulfill all desires of the user; they are like keys to achieve success in any enterprise; it also refers to the ability to give good advise; the power to contemplate and think, concentrate and focus, and then logically arrive at a conclusion; the mystical powers that are an integral part of the Mantra and represent the various dynamic forces of Nature which could be invoked and harnessed by the creature and help him to utilise the latent cosmic energy, the strength, the dynamism and other magnificent powers incorporated in these Mantras for the benefit of creation at large; (xiv) the power to do various deeds and take actions, the strength, energy and stamina to perform even difficult tasks, the powers that are an integral part of the theory of doing Karma; (xv) the powers that makes a man so powerful that he can have control over the various worlds called the three Lokas, i.e. the mortal world where the creatures live on earth, the lower heaven called the Antariksha where the junior Gods and the Spirits of dead ancestors live, and the upper heaven or Brahm Loka where the senior Gods live; it also refers to the terrestrial

world, the heavens and the nether world, as well as the different worlds as experienced during the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep states of existence of the consciousness; and finally (xvi) the inherent power in one's good name, the power of 'Naam'; this gives the person fame, acclaim, authority and respect in society; it bestows reputation, honour and glory that a person so much seeks in this world. This power of good name and its value in terms of making the man famous and eternal in the memory of others is so attractive that everyone wishes to gain some good name for himself in this world. A person with good name attracts others towards himself.]

चिदानंदसंदोह मोहापहारी । प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो मन्मथारी ॥ १२ ॥

cidānandasandōha mōhāpahārī. prasīda prasīda prabhō manmathārī. 12.

You are eternally in a state of blessedness and blissfulness ('Chidanand').

You remove doubts, perplexities, confusions, vexations and delusions of all kinds. ['Haari' = to dispel, remove; 'Sandoha; Moha' = doubts and delusions.]

Oh Lord ('Prabho') who had conquered the invincible enemy symbolized by passions and desires that churn the mind and the heart, creating a state of flux, causing restlessness, anxiety, loss of peace and happiness ('Manmathaari'). Please be gracious upon me; be pleased with me. (12)

न यावद् उमानाथ पादारविन्दं । भजंतीह लोके परे वा नराणां ॥ १३ ॥

न तावत्सुखं शान्ति सन्तापनाशं । प्रसीद प्रभो सर्वभूताधिवासं ॥ १४ ॥

na yāvad umānātha pādāravindam. bhajantīha lōkē parē vā narāṇām. 13.

na tāvatsukham śānti santāpanāśam. prasīda prabhō sarvabhūtādhivāsam. 14.

As long as a person does not worship and have devotion for the holy feet of the Lord of Uma (i.e. Lord Shiva) he cannot ever expect to have any sort of peace and comfort either in this world (current life) or in the world hereinafter (the next world after death; the next life), and neither is it possible for them to find freedom from the agony, horrors and distress caused by the three Taaps (torments). [These three types of torments are listed in verse no. 10.]

Oh Lord who resides in the heart of all living beings (as their Atma, their soul)¹! Kindly be pleased with me, be gracious upon me. (13-14)

[Note—¹The very fact that the worshipper addresses Lord Shiva as the one who lives in the heart or the inner being of all creatures underlines the high level of his erudition and sagacity. The worshipper is paying his obeisance to the supreme transcendental Brahm when he offers his prayers to Lord Shiva.

Non-duality between Brahm, Atma and Shiva is affirmed in the Rudra Upanishad, verse no. 3, stanza no. 1-2. The non-duality or oneness between *Brahm and Shiva* has been expounded in (i) Krishna Yajur Veda's Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 32; Dakshin Murti or Dakshin Mukhi Upanishad. (ii) Atharva Veda's Atharva-shir Upanishad.

The Bhasma Jabal Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition was preached by Lord Shiva himself to sage Jabal Bhusund, and it highlights the fact that Lord Shiva is no ordinary God, or even a senior one being a member of the Trinity of Gods consisting of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Rudra the concluder, but is the supreme transcendental Brahm himself personified. *Shiva is the Supreme Being*

himself. Refer Bhasma Jabal Upanishad, Canto 1, paragraph no. 1; Canto 2, paragraph no. 3, 6-8.]

न जानामि योगं जपं नैव पूजां । नतोऽहं सदा सर्वदा शंभु तुज्यं ॥ १५ ॥

na jānāmi yōgam̐ japaṁ naiva pūjāṁ. natō'ham̐ sadā sarvadā śambhu tubhyaṁ. 15.

I do not know how to do Yoga (meditation), Japa (repetition of the holy name of the Lord and his Mantras), or Puja (worship). Oh Lord Shambhu¹ (Shiva)! I only know one thing—and it is to always bow before you. [That is, I am not an expert in any of the methods prescribed by the scriptures for one's spiritual welfare and for honouring the Supreme Being. I am not literate and wise enough to know them. I am a humble being, so the only thing I can do and know about is to bow most reverentially before you, unpretentiously and sincerely.] (15)

[Note—¹Shambhu—Lord Shiva is known as *Shambhu* as he is the one who remains uniform, unruffled and calm even under adverse situations. Shambhu is one who exists or is established in an enlightened state of highest consciousness (i.e. is 'Bhu') that is marked by perfect self control, complete neutrality, absolute tranquility, serenity, peacefulness and blissfulness (i.e. is 'Sham'). Refer Atharvashikha Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Kandika 3.]

जरा जन्म दुःखौघ तातप्यमानं । प्रभो पाहि आपन्नमामीश शंभो ॥ १६ ॥

jarā janma duḥkhaugha tātapyamānaṁ. prabhō pāhi āpannamāmiśa śambhō. 16.

Oh Lord Shambhu! Please save me from the horrifying agonies that accompany old age (death) and birth (i.e. from the endless cycle of birth and death). [In other words, be merciful to grant me Mukti or liberation and deliverance from the cycle of transmigration. Please ensure my emancipation and salvation inspite of the fact that I do not know how to offer formal forms of worship to you—see verse no. 15.]

Oh Lord God ('Prabho; Isha')! I come to seek shelter with you; please accept me.' (16)

श्लोक. रुद्राष्टकमिदं प्रोक्तं विप्रेण हरतोषये । १७ ॥

ये पठन्ति नरा भक्त्या तेषां शङ्भुः प्रसीदति ॥ १८ ॥

ślōka.

rudrāṣṭakamidam̐ prōktaṁ viprēṇa haratōṣayē. 17
yē paṭhanti narā bhaktayā tēṣāṁ śambhuḥ prasīdati. 18.

Shloka—This hymn known as 'Rudra Ashtak¹' was pronounced by the Vipra (Brahmin) in honour of Lord Har (Shiva). Those people who read it or use it to offer their obeisance to Lord Shiva, please the Lord; Lord Shiva is gracious upon them and

pleased with them. (Sholka nos. 17-18). [This hymn precedes Doha no. 108 of Uttar Kand, Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas.]

[Note—¹The word 'Ashtak' means 'eight'. This hymn is called 'Ashtak' because it contains eight verses of two lines each, totaling sixteen lines in all.]

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(3) Shiva Manas Pooja

(śivamānasapūjā)

The 'Shiva Manas Pooja' is a hymn used for offering mental prayers and worship to Lord Shiva.

शिवमानसपूजा

रत्नैः_कल्पितमासनं_हिमजलैः_स्नानं_च_दिव्याम्बरं_नानारत्नविभूषितं_मृगमदामोदाङ्कितं_चन्दनम्_।
जातीचम्पकबिल्वपत्ररचितं_पुष्पं_च_धूपं_तथा_दीपं_देव_दयानिधे_पशुपते_हृत्कल्पितं_गृह्यताम्_॥१॥

śivamānasapūjā

ratnaiḥ kalpitamāsanam himajalaih snānam ca divyāmbaram
nānāratnavibhūṣitam mrgamadāmōdāṅkitam candanam.
jāticampakabilvapatraracitam puṣpaṁ ca dhūpaṁ tathā
dīpaṁ dēva dayānidhē paśupatē hrṭkalpitaṁ gr̥hyatām..1..

Oh Lord (Shiva) who is a treasury of mercy and kindness, the Lord known as Pashupati! Please accept my mental prayers and offerings. I hereby offer you a throne studded by precious gems to sit upon. I bathe you with cool water; or I offer cool water for the purpose of ablution to you. I offer you divine clothes decorated with many types of magnificent gems. I offer you scented sandalwood mixed with musk. I offer you palm-full of flowers such as Juhi (Jasmine) and Champa (Michelia champacca) along with leaves of the Bilva (wood-apple) tree. I also mentally offer you fragrance known as Dhup (incence), and show you ceremonial light by earthen-lamps. (1)

सौवर्णे_नवरत्नखण्डरचिते_पात्रे_घृतं_पायसं_भक्ष्यं_पञ्चविधं_पयोदधियुतं_रम्भाफलं_पानकम्_।
शाकानामयुतं_जलं_रुचिकरं_कर्पूरखण्डोज्ज्वलं_ताम्बूलं_मनसा_मया_विरचितं_भक्त्या_प्रभो_
स्वीकुरु_॥२॥

sauvarṇē navaratnakhaṇḍaracitē pātrē ghr̥taṁ pāyasaṁ
bhakṣyaṁ pañcaavidhaṁ payōdadhiyutaṁ rambhāphalaṁ pānakam.
yākānāmayutaṁ jalaṁ rucikaraṁ karpūrakhaṇḍōjjvalaṁ
tāmbūlaṁ manasā mayā viracitaṁ bhaktyā prabhō svīkuru..2..

I am offering to you five types of food-offerings in the way of a sweet pudding made of milk and rice to which curd and pure clarified butter has been added, in a golden pot embedded and embellished with newly cut gems. I also offer you food and refreshment in the form of plantain fruits, a sweetened drink and many types of vegetables, as well as cool and sweet water made fragrant with addition of camphor. Then I offer you betel leaves (as a mouth freshner).

Oh Lord! I am offering all these to you mentally. Please accept them. (2)

छत्रं_चामरयोर्युगं_व्यजनकं_चादर्शकं_निर्मलं_वीणाभेरिमृदङ्गकाहलकला_गीतं_च_नृत्यं_तथा_।
साष्टाङ्गं_प्रणतिः_स्तुतिर्बहुविधा_ह्येतत्समस्तं_मया_सङ्कल्पेन_समर्पितं_तव_विभो_पूजां_गृहाण_
प्रभो_॥३॥

chatraṁ cāmarayōryugaṁ vyajanakaṁ cādarśakaṁ nirmalaṁ
vīṇābhērimrdaṅgakāhalakalā gītaṁ ca nṛtyaṁ tathā.
sāṣṭāṅgaṁ praṇatiḥ stutirbahavidhā hyētatsamastaṁ mayā
saṅkalpēna samarpitaṁ tava vibhō pūjāṁ grhāṇa prabhō..3..

I welcome you and offer you the ceremonial umbrella, two whisk, a hand-held fan, a clean mirror, various musical instruments such as the Veena (Indian lute), Bheri (kettle-drum), Mridunga (tabor; tambourine; timbrel) and Dundubhi (a big kettle-drum). I also welcome you by singing auspicious songs (hymns) and dancing (in happiness). I pay my respects to you by prostrating myself before you, and chanting many hymns.

Lord! Please be kind to accept my mental form of worship. (3)

आत्मा_त्वं_गिरिजा_मतिः_सहचराः_प्राणाः_शरीरं_गृहं_पूजा_ते_विषयोपभोगरचना_निद्रा_
समाधिस्थितिः_।
सञ्चारः_पदयोः_प्रदक्षिणविधिः_स्तोत्राणि_सर्वा_गिरो_यद्यत्कर्म_करोमि_तत्तदखिलं_शम्भो_
तवाराधनम्_॥४॥

ātmā tvaṁ girijā matiḥ saharāḥ prāṇāḥ yārīraṁ grhaṁ
pūjā tē viṣayōpabhōgaracanā nidrā samādhisthitiḥ.
saṅcāraḥ padayōḥ pradakṣiṇavidhiḥ stōtrāṇi sarvā girō
yadyatkarma karōmi tattadakhilāṁ śambhō tavārādhanam..4..

Oh Shambhu (Shiva)! You represent my Atma (the pure conscious soul; the true 'self'); Parvati (Shiva's consort) represents my Buddhi (intellect); your Ganas (attendants) represent my Prans (vital winds/airs); my body is your shrine; desire for all sorts of objects of the world and their enjoyment is symbolic of your worship (i.e. when I worship you I imagine I am enjoying the best in the world; whatever I desire is for the purpose of serving you and offering worship to you); my sleep represents the spiritual state of Samadhi (the trance-like state of transcendental existence when the person is unaware of the surrounding world); all my movements are equivalent to going around you in a ritual known as doing circumambulation during formal forms of worship of a deity; and all that I speak, all my words are like hymns sung in your honour.

In other words, oh Lord, whatever I do is a form of a symbolic worship and offering to you. My whole life and each of its deeds and actions are deemed to be one or the other form of worship offered to you. (4)

करचरणकृतं_वाक्कायजं_कर्मजं_वा_श्रवणनयनजं_वा_मानसं_वापराधम्_।
 विहितमविहितं_वा_सर्वमेतत्क्षमस्व_जय_जय_करुणाब्धे_श्रीमहोदव_शम्भो_॥५॥
 इति_श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यविरचिता_शिवमानसपूजा_समाप्ता_।

karacaraṇakṛtaṁ vākkāyajaṁ karmajaṁ vā śravaṇanayanajaṁ vā mānasaṁ
 vāparādham.

vihitamavihitaṁ vā sarvamētatksamasva jaya jaya karuṇābdhē śrīmahādeva
 śambhō..5..

iti śrīmad śaṅkarācāryaviracitā śivamānasapūjā samāptā.

Lord! Whatever wrong or sins I may have committed with my hands, legs, words/speech, body, deeds/actions, ears, eyes or mind/heart, whether they are known or unknown, evident or hidden—I beg you to please forgive me for them.

On Lord Maha-deva Shambhu! You are an ocean of mercy, kindness, compassion and grace. Glory to you; glory to you!’ (5)

Thus ends the hymn of ‘Shiva’s mental form of worship’ composed by Shankaracharya.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(4) Shiv-aparaadh-kshamaapan Stotra

(śrīśivāparādhakṣamāpanastōtram)

Sri Shiv-aparaadh Kshamaa-pan Stotra—This hymn is used to request Lord Shiva to forgive and pardon all the wrong-doings and sins committed by the living being inadvertently or by perforce, and from the adverse consequences of which he is suffering.

श्रीशिवापराधक्षमापनस्तोत्रम्

आदौ कर्मप्रसङ्गात् कलयति कलुषं मातृकुक्षौ स्थितं मां विण्मूत्रामेध्यमध्ये क्वथयति नितरां
जाठरो जातवेदाः ।
यद्यद्वै तत्र दुःखं व्यथयति नितरां शक्यते केन वक्तुं क्षन्तव्यो मेऽपराधः शिव शिव शिव भो
श्रीमहादेव शम्भो ॥१॥

śrīśivāparādhakṣamāpanastōtram

ādau karmaprasaṅgāt kalayati kaluṣaṁ mātr̥kukṣau sthitaṁ mām
viṅmūtrāmēdhyamadhyē kvathayati nitarām jāṭharō jātavēdāḥ.
yadyadvai tatra duḥkhaṁ vyathayati nitarām yakyatē kēna vaktuṁ
kṣantavyō mē'parādhaḥ śiva śiva śiva bhō śrīmahādēva śambhō..1..

First of all, the consequences of my past misdeeds have made me lie tormented in the mother's abdomen (womb). Then I am further tormented with hunger and thirst as I lie surrounded in filth of urine and stool there. Who can describe the countless horrors and miseries that one faces there (mother's womb) continuously?

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (1)

बाल्ये दुःखातिरेको मललुलितवपुः स्तन्यपाने पिपासा नो शक्तश्चेन्द्रियेभ्यो भवगुणजनिता
जन्तवो मां तुदन्ति । नानारोगादिदुःखाद्बुद्धनपरवशः शङ्करं न स्मरामि । क्षन्तव्यो ० ॥२॥

bālyē duḥkhātirēkō malalulitavapuḥ stan'yapānē pipāsā
nō śaktaścēndriyēbhyō bhavaguṇajanitā jantavō māṁ tudanti.
nānārōgādiduḥkhādrudanaparavaśaḥ śaṅkaraṁ na smarāmi. kṣantavyō.. ..2..

Infancy was not much better. During this period there were a lot of miseries and anguish. The body used to remain smeared in dust and excreta of the body; there was a constant thirst which forced me to suck the breast (of the mother). The body and its organs had no power or strength to do anything; it made me completely dependent upon others and left me to their whims and mercy. Various types of insects and organisms, incited by the Maya of Shiva, used to bite and tease me. I used to cry continually because of the misery and pain caused by many types of diseases.

How unfortunate I am that even during these testing times I could not invoke the blessings of Lord Shiva and request his intervention to provide me with succour.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (2)

प्रौढोऽहं_यौवनस्थो_विषयविषधरैः_पंचभिर्मर्मसन्धौ_दष्टो_नष्टो_विवेकः_सुतधनयुवतिस्वादसौख्ये_
निषण्णः_।

शैवीचिन्ताविहीनं_मम_हृदयमहो_मानगर्वाधिरूढं_।_क्षन्तव्यो_०_।।३।।

prauḍhō'haṁ yauvanasthō viṣayaviṣadharaiḥ pañcabhirmarmasandhau
daṣṭō naṣṭō vivēkaḥ sutadhanayuvatisvādasaukhyē niṣaṇṇaḥ.
śaivīcintāvihīnaṁ mama hrdayamahō mānagarvādhirūḍhaṁ. kṣantavyō.. ..3..

When I grew up and became an adolescent, five types of serpents representing the attractions of the sense organs towards their respective objects in the material world began to torment me and they collectively bit me, causing me further miseries. [These five organs are the organs of perception such as eye which forced my mind to look at things not good for my moral well-being, the ear that forced my mind to hear such things that were not conducive to my peace and happiness, the tongue which forced my mind to taste things and long for them though they ruined my health, the nose which compelled me to indulge in things that gave out a sweet fragrance, and the skin which made me sensual and sexually pervert, desirous of enjoying worldly pleasures that gratified my organs.]

Intoxicated by the bite of these serpents I lost my mind and sense of wisdom, probity and propriety. As a result, I wallowed in the pleasures and comforts that are usually associated with acquisition of a wife, a son and wealth.

Even during this time I had not remembered you (i.e. worshipped and paid my respects to you), and instead roamed around full of pride and arrogance in my heart.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (3)

वार्द्धक्ये_चेन्द्रियाणां_विगतगतिमतिश्चाधिदैवादितापैः_पापै_रोगैर्वियोगैस्त्वनवसितवपुः_प्रौढिहीनं_
च_दीनम्_।

मिथ्यामोहाभिलाषैर्भ्रमति_मम_मनो_धूर्जटेर्ध्यानशून्यं_।_क्षन्तव्यो_०_।।४।।

vārd'dhakyē cēndriyāṇāṁ vigatagatimatiścādhidaivāditāpaiḥ
pāpai rōgairviyōgaistvanavasitavapuḥ prauḍhihīnaṁ ca dīnam.

mithyāmōhābhilāṣairbhramati mama manō dhūrjaṭērdhyānaśūn'yaṁ.
kṣantavyō.. ..4..

Even during my old age when my body and its organs and faculties are weak and feeble, my mind and intellect have slowed down, and I am being tormented by countless miseries arising out of the Trai-taaps, my accumulated sins, diseases and grief caused by so many separations from near and dear ones (who have either left or abandoned me and gone elsewhere, or have died)—I still do not remember you (Shiva). Instead, my mind and heart are shackled to false hopes and expectations, and I am being tormented by unfulfilled desires and wishes. Woe to me! I still do not remember Lord Shiva.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (4)

नो_शक्यं_स्मार्तकर्म_प्रतिपदगहनप्रत्यवायाकुलाख्यं_श्रौते_वार्ता_कथं_मे_द्विजकुलविहिते_ब्रह्ममार्गे_सुसारे_।

नास्था_धर्मे_विचारः_श्रवणमननयोः_किं_निदिध्यासितव्यं_।_क्षन्तव्यो०_॥५॥

nō śakyaṁ smārtakarma pratipadagahanapratyavāyākulākhyam
śrautē vārtā katham mē dvijakulavihitē brahmamārgē susārē.
nāsthā dharmē vicāraḥ śravaṇamananayōḥ kiṁ nididhyāsitavyam. kṣantavyō..
..5..

Being constantly tormented by so many horrors and miseries I do not find time to observe even the basic requirements of religious life and auspicious behaviour expected from a householder, what to talk of higher levels of auspicious, noble and righteous living that is ordained for a Brahmin in the scriptures, and which prepares one for realisation and attainment of Brahm. [That is, throughout life I was running from pillar to post pursuing my false agenda, and now that I have become old, neither would the bad old habits die nor does my weak body have the strength and the ability to observe religious sacraments and study the scriptures. I wasted my life in futility.]

I have no faith in religious practices; I have no inclination for hearing and studying the scriptures; and obviously I can't do meditation and contemplation. In this situation, oh Shiva, you are my only succour.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (5)

स्नात्वा_प्रत्यूषकाले_स्नपनविधिविधौ_नाहृतं_गाङ्गतोयं_पूजार्थं_वा_

कदाचिद्बहुतरगहनात्खण्डबिल्वीदलानि_।

नानीता_पद्ममाला_सरसि_विकसिता_गन्धपुष्पे_त्वदर्थं_।_क्षन्तव्यो०_॥६॥

snātvā pratyūṣakālē snapanavidhividhau nāhṛtaṁ gāngatōyam
pūjārtham vā kadācidbahutaragahanātkhaṇḍabilvīdalāni.
nānītā padmamālā sarasi vikasitā gandhapuṣpē tvadartham. kṣantavyō.. ..6..

I had never come to you to offer the holy water of river Ganges after my daily bath in the morning (i.e. I bothered about taking a bath myself but never bothered to bathe

you); I had never brought the leaves of the Vilva tree (wood-apple) from the forest to offer you for worship; and neither did I ever bring the lotus flower from the pond or some kind of other flowers or even the scent to offer you.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (6)

दुग्धैर्मध्वाज्ययुक्तैर्दधिसितसहितैः_स्नापितं_नैव_लिङ्गं_नो_लिप्तं_चन्दनाद्यैः_कनकविरचितैः_पूजितं_न_प्रसूनैः_।
धूपैः_कपूरदीपैर्विविधरसयुतैर्नैव_भक्ष्योपहारैः_।_क्षन्तव्यो_०_॥७॥

dugdhairmadhvājyayuktairdadhīsitasahitaiḥ snāpitaṁ naiva liṅgaṁ
nō liptaṁ candanādyaiḥ kanakaviracitaiḥ pūjitaṁ na prasūnaiḥ.
dhūpaiḥ karpūradīpairvividharasayutairnaiva bhakṣyōpahāraiḥ. kṣantavyō..
..7..

I had never washed (offered oblation and done ablution of) your Lingam with a mixture of honey, clarified butter, curd and sweetened milk, and had never applied a paste of sandalwood on it. I had also not offered worship to it using the flowers of the thorn-apple tree, scent, lamp, camphor and sweet things.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (7)

ध्यात्वा_चित्ते_शिवाख्यं_प्रचुरतरधनं_नैव_दत्तं_द्विजेभ्यो_हव्यं_ते_लक्षसंख्यैर्हुतवहवदने_नार्पितं_बीजमन्त्रैः_।
नो_तप्तं_गाङ्गतीरे_व्रतजपनियमै_रुद्रजाप्यैर्न_वेदैः_।_क्षन्तव्यो_०_॥८॥

dhyātvā cittē śivākhyam pracurataradhanam naiva dattam dvijēbhyō
havyam tē lakṣasaṅkhyair'hutavahavadanē nārpitam bījamantraīḥ.
nō taptaṁ gāṅgatīrē vratajapaniyamai rudrajāpyairna vēdaiḥ. kṣantavyō.. ..8..

I had not remembered you and your holy name 'Shiva', and I have never made charities. I had also not performed a fire-sacrifice using your Beej Mantra a hundred thousand times while making offerings to the sacred fire. I had neither done any Vratas (observing religious fastings) or Japa (repetition) with your Rudra Mantra, nor did I do any other type of religious deed on the banks of the holy river Ganges. [That is, I had never either bothered to worship you or even worried about my own spiritual welfare. Therefore, I am very stupid and sinful.]

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (8)

स्थित्वा_स्थाने_सरोजे_प्रणवमयमरुत्कुण्डले_सूक्ष्ममार्गे_शान्ते_स्वान्ते_प्रलीने_प्रकटितविभवे_ज्योतिरूपे_पराख्ये_।
लिङ्गज्ञे_ब्रह्मवाक्ये_सकलतनुगतं_शङ्करं_न_स्मरामि_।_क्षन्तव्यो_०_॥९॥

sthitvā sthānē sarōjē praṇavamayamarutkuṇḍalē sūkṣmamārgē
śāntē svāntē pralinē prakatītavibhavē jyōtirūpē parākhyē.
liṅgajñē brahmavākhyē sakalatanugataṁ śaṅkaram na smarāmi. kṣantavyō..

..9..

I do not ever attempt to do meditation and focus my attention on the subtle lotus of a thousand petals (i.e. the subtle heart) where it is believed that the nectar of bliss that comes with self-realisation lies (i.e. I have never tried to contemplate upon the Atma, the pure consciousness that is my true self, and realisation of which leads to extreme bliss and beatitude).

It is at the core of this subtle lotus that the vital winds known as the Prans hear the cosmic Naad (the cosmic sound that resonates in the core of the heart and is representative of the cosmic Consciousness)—and since I have failed to meditate upon it I have failed to hear it and derive its spiritual benefits.

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (9)

नग्नो निःसङ्गशुद्धस्त्रिगुणविरहितो ध्वस्तमोहान्धकारो नासाग्रे न्यस्तदृष्टिर्विदितभवगुणो नैव दृष्टः
कदाचित् ।

उन्मन्यावस्थया त्वां विगतकलिमलं शंकरं न स्मरामि । क्षन्तव्यो ० ।।१० ।।

nagnō niḥsaṅgaśud'dhastriguṇavirahitō dhvastamōhāndhakārō
nāsāgrē n'yastadrṣṭirviditabhavaguṇō naiva drṣṭaḥ kadācit.

unman'yāvasthayā tvām vigatakalimalam śaṅkaram na smarāmi. kṣantavyō..

..10..

I have never forsaken this artificial world, and had never meditated upon you by abandoning all external coverings represented by clothes—i.e. I have never led an austere life like that of a hermit or an ascetic. I had never discarded clothes and company (i.e. I had never left my attachments with the gross material world), and I had never been pure and pious. I have never risen above the effects of the three Gunas (the three basic qualities that drive all characteristics in this world, known as Sata Guna, the Raja Guna, and the Tama Guna)—i.e. I never became neutral and indifferent to the world.

I had never eliminated the darkness created by Moha (worldly attachments), and I had never reached the higher state of meditation in which the practitioner focuses his attention on the tip of the nose, becomes indifferent to the world, and is able to experience the presence of the Shiva Tattwa then. I do not also remember and meditate upon your auspicious and holy form that is pure and divine. Therefore, I have not attained and enjoyed the bliss of Shiva-realisation that comes in the higher state of spiritual existence known as Unmani state. [This refers to the state of consciousness wherein the creature is neutral and unaware of the body and the world around him, and instead remains engrossed in meditation and contemplation.]

Oh Shiva, Oh Shankar, Oh Mahadeva, Oh Shambhu!! Please be kind to forgive me for my sins and midemeanours. Forgive me; forgive me! (10)

चन्द्रोद्भासितशेखरे स्मरहरे गङ्गाधरे शंकरे सपैर्भूषितकण्ठकर्णविवरे नेत्रोत्थवैश्वानरे ।
दन्तित्वक्कृतसुन्दराम्बरधरे त्रैलोक्यसारे हरे मोक्षार्थं कुरु चित्तवृत्तिमखिलामन्यैस्तु किं कर्मभिः

।।११ ।।

candrōdbhāsitaśēkharē smaraharē gaṅgādhare śaṅkarē
 sarpairbhūṣitakaṅṭhakarnaṅavarē nētrōt'thavaiśvānarē.
 dantitvakkṛtasundarāambaradharē trailōkyasārē harē
 mōkṣārtham kuru cittavr̥ttimakhilāman'yaistu kim karmabhiḥ..11..

To achieve Moksha (spiritual emancipation and salvation; liberation and deliverance), one ought to focus his mind and the sub-conscious in meditation on Lord Shiva on whose forehead is glowing with the light of the crescent moon, who is an eliminator of all negativities caused by 'Darpa' (arrogance, haughtiness, deceit, conceit, wickedness, pretensions), who bears the holy river Ganges on his head (in the matted lock of hairs), who is a personified form of auspiciousness and well-being, whose neck and ears are adorned by serpents wrapped around them, fire spews out from whose (third) eye, who wraps his body with the thick hide of an elephant, and who represents the essence of the whole creation known as Triloki (the three worlds—terrestrial, heavens and nether).

What is the use of doing any other religious deed if Moksha is attainable so easily? (11)

किं वानेन धनेन वाजिकरिभिः प्राप्तेन राज्येन किं किं वा पुत्रकलत्रमित्रपशुभिर्देहेन गेहेन किम् ।
 ज्ञात्वैतत्क्षणभङ्गुरं सपदि रे त्याज्यं मनो दूरतः । स्वात्मार्थं गुरुवाक्यतो भज भज
 श्रीपार्वतीवल्लभम् ॥१२॥

kim vānēna dhanēna vājikaribhiḥ prāptēna rājyēna kim
 kim vā putrakalatramitrapaśubhirdēhēna gēhēna kim.
 jñātvaitatkṣaṇabhaṅguraṁ sapadi rē tyājyaṁ manō dūrataḥ.
 svātmārtham guruvākyatō bhaja bhaja śrīpārvatīvallabham..12..

What is the benefit of these worldly acquisitions such as wealth, horses, elephants and kingdom? Similarly, what is the benefit of having sons, a wife, friends, doestic animals, a (healthy) body and a home?

Oh my Mana (mind)! They are all transient and persishable, so discard them from a distance, and stop thinking about them. Instead, rely upon the advise given by a wise Guru (moral preceptor; the scriptures) by having devotion for and thinking of Lord Shiva who is the divine husband of the Mother Goddess, Parvati. This will help you to attain self-realisation and its attendant bliss, peace, happiness, beatitude and felicity. (12)

आयुर्नश्यति पश्यतां प्रतिदिनं याति क्षयं यौवनं प्रत्यायान्ति गताः पुनर्न दिवसाः कालो
 जगद्भक्षकः ।
 लक्ष्मीस्तोयतरङ्गभङ्गचपला विद्युच्चलं जीवितं तस्मान्मां शरणागतं शरणद त्वं रक्ष रक्षाधुना
 ॥१३॥

āyurnaśyati paśyatām pratidinaṁ yāti kṣayaṁ yauvanaṁ
 pratyāyānti gatāḥ punarna divasāḥ kālō jagadbhakṣakaḥ.
 lakṣmīstōyatarāṅgacapalā vidyuccalam jīvitaṁ
 tasmānmām śaraṅāgataṁ śaraṅada tvam rakṣa rakṣādhunā..13..

My age is running away fast—i.e. I am getting older with every passing day, and so is my youthfulness that is also waning rapidly with each passing day. The days that have gone by do not come back again; the Kaal (time and death factors) is gobbling up the world steadily. Laxmi (worldly wealth, prosperity and pomp) is as unsteady and ever-changing as the flowing current of water; life is as flickering, transient and unpredictable as the lightening (seen during the rainy season) in the sky, here now and vanished the other moment.

In this scenario, I have only one source of succour and solace, and it to seek shelter with Lord Shiva who is very graceful to those who seek refuge with him.

Hence, oh Lord Shiva, please protect me who has come to seek refuge with you. Protect me, protect me! (13)

करचरणकृतं_वाक्कायजं_कर्मजं_वा_श्रवणनयनजं_वा_मानसं_वापराधम्_।_विहितमविहितं_वा_
सर्वमेतत्क्षमस्व_जय_जय_करुणाब्धे_श्रीमहादेव_शम्भो_।।१४।

इति_श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यविरचितं_श्रीशिवापराधक्षमापनस्तोत्रं_सम्पूर्णम्_।

karacaraṇakṛtaṁ vākkāyajaṁ karmajaṁ vā śravaṇanayanajaṁ vā mānasaṁ
vāparādham.

vihitamavihitaṁ vā sarvamētatkṣamasva jaya jaya karuṇābdhē śrīmahādēva
śambhō..14..

iti śrīmad śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ śrīśivāparādhakṣamāpanastōtraṁ
sampūrṇam.

Whatever wrongs and sins that I may have done or committed, inadvertently or willingly, with my legs, hands, words/speech, body, deeds/actions, ears, eyes and mind/heart, whether they are known or unknown—Oh Lord who is an ocean of mercy and compassion, please be kind to forgive them all. Glory to you; glory to you!! (14)

Thus ends the hymn called the ‘śrīśivāparādhakṣamāpanastōtraṁ’ by Shankaracharya.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(5) Veda-saar Shiva Stavaha

(vēdasāraśivastavaḥ)

Veda-saar Shiva Stava—This hymn presents the essential form of the Divinity known as ‘Shiva’ that is endorsed in the Vedas.

वेदसारशिवस्तवः_

—
पशूनां_पतिं_पापनाशं_परेशं_गजेन्द्रस्य_कृत्तिं_वसानं_वरेण्यम्_।।
जटाजूटमध्ये_स्फुरद्गाङ्गवारिं_महादेवमेकं_स्मरामि_स्मरारिम्_।।१।।

vēdasāraśivastavaḥ

paśūnām patim pāpanāśam parēśam gajēndrasya kṛttiṁ vasānam varēṅyam.
jaṭājūṭamadyē sphuradgāṅgavāriṁ mahādēvamēkaṁ smarāmi smarārim..1..

He (Shiva) who is the protector of all living beings, who is the destroyer of sins, who is the Supreme Being known as Parmeshwar, the supreme Lord of creation, who wears the hide of an elephant, who is excellent, the most exalted and the best, and in whose lock of hairs on the head the holy river Ganges plays or frolics around—I bow most reverentially to such a divine Lord Mahadeva (the Great God Shiva) who is also the killer or vanquisher of Kaamdeo (passions and lust). (1)

महेशं_सुरेशं_सुरारार्तिनाशं_विभुं_विश्वनाथं_विभूत्यङ्गभूषम्_।।
विरूपाक्षमिन्द्रर्कवाहिनत्रिनेत्रं_सदानन्दमीडे_प्रभुं_पञ्चवक्त्रम्_।।२।।

mahēśam surēśam surārārtināśam vibhuṁ viśvanātham vibhūtyaṅgabhūṣam.
virūpākṣamindvarkavāhnitrinētraṁ sadānandamīḍē prabhuṁ
pañcavaktram..2..

He (Shiva) is the Great Lord (Mahesh), and the king of Gods (Suresh). He destroys the sorrows and miseries of Gods. He is almighty, omnipresent and the eternal Lord (Vibhu). He is the Lord of the entire world (Vishwa-naath). And he is decorated by a smear of ash (Vibhuti) from the fire sacrifice.

His three eyes are represented by the sun, the moon and the fire. Hence he has an unconventional form (Virupan). He is always cheerful and blissful (Sadaa-nand). And he has five mouths (Pancha-vaktra). (2)

गिरीशं_गणेशं_गले_नीलवर्णं_गवेन्द्राधिरूढं_गणातीतरूपम्_।
भवं_भास्वरं_भस्मना_भूषिताङ्गं_भवानीकलत्रं_भजे_पञ्चवक्त्रम्_॥३॥

girīśam gaṇēśam galē nīlavarṇam gavēndrādhirūḍham gaṇātītarūpam.
bhavam bhāsvaram bhasmanā bhūṣitāṅgam bhavānīkalatram bhajā
pañcavaktram..3..

He (Shiva) is the Lord of the mountains (Girish). He is the Lord of his attendants (Gaesh) as well as the father of Lord Ganesh. He has a blue-tinged throat. He rides a bull (known as Nandi). He has countless forms (being a personified form of the Supreme Being who has countless forms too).

He is the progenitor of the entire creation. He is an embodiment of light and illumination. He has ash of the fire sacrifice smeared all over his body.

I worship and pay my obeisance to such a Lord Shiva who has five mouths and is the divine consort of Parvati (the Mother Goddess). (3)

शिवाकान्त_शम्भो_शशाङ्गार्धमौले_महेशान_शूलिन्_जटाजूटधारिन्_।
त्वमेको_जगद्व्यापको_विश्वरूप_प्रसीद_प्रसीद_प्रभो_पूर्णरूप_॥४॥

śivākānta śambhō śasāṅgārdhamaulē mahēśāna śūlin jaṭājūṭadhārin.
tvamēkō jagadvyāpakō viśvarūpa prasīda prasīda prabhō pūrṇarūpa..4..

Oh Shambhu, the dear husband of Parvati! Oh the Lord who has the moon adorning his forehead! Oh the Great God known as Maheshwar! Oh the Lord who holds a trident! Oh the Lord who has matted lock of hairs on his head! Oh the Lord who has revealed himself in the form of the entire creation! Oh Lord—you are the only one who is present in the entire creation uniformly. Oh Lord who is whole, complete and immutable!

Be pleased with me; be pleased with me! (4)

परात्मानमेकं_जगद्बीजमाद्यं_निरीहं_निराकारमोङ्कारवेद्यम्_।
यतो_जायते_पाल्यते_येन_विश्वं_तमीशं_भजे_लीयते_यत्र_विश्वम्_॥५॥

parātmānamēkaṁ jagadbijamādyam nirīham nirākāramōṅkāravēdyam.
yatō jāyatē pālyatē yēna viśvam tamiśam bhajā līyatē yatra viśvam..5..

He (Shiva) is the Supreme Atma (Soul) of creation (and therefore known as the Parmatma), is one and only one of his kind (i.e. has a non-dual and eternal existence), is the primary and primordial cause of this creation or existence coming into being, has no desires as he is self-contented, has no specific form and shape, and is represented by the cosmic sound of OM (that is regarded as the universal sound symbol of the cosmic Consciousness and the supreme transcendental Brahm, the divine Being).

The whole world is not only created by him and protected by him but also merges in him at the time of its final dissolution.

Verily, I pay my obeisance and worship to such a great Lord known as 'Shiva'. (5)

न_भूमिर्न_चापो_न_वह्निर्न_वायु—र्न_चाकाशमास्ते_न_तन्द्रा_न_निद्रा_।
न_ग्रीष्मो_न_शीतं_न_देशो_न_वेषो_न_यस्यास्ति_मूर्तिस्त्रिमूर्तिं_तमीडे_॥६॥

na bhūmirna cāpō na vahnirna vāyurna cākāśamāstē na tandrā na nidrā.
na grīṣmō na śītaṁ na dēśō na vēṣō na yasyāsti mūrtistrimūrtiṁ tamīḍē..6..

[Though the entire world is deemed to be created in his image, and he has revealed himself in the form of each unit of creation without exception, still it is a mystery that—]

He is not the earth, not the water, not the fire, not the wind, not the sky; he is not the drowsiness, not the sleep.

He is not summer, not the winter. He has no particular abode or place where he resides specifically or to the exclusion of other places (because he is omnipresent and all-pervading). He has no specific forms or attire either.

Verily, I pay my obeisance and worship to such a great Lord known as ‘Shiva’ who is formless on the one hand, and known as Trimurti (the Lord with three forms) on the other hand. [The ‘Trimurti’ form of Shiva symbolizes the fact that the entire creation having three dimensions, three aspects or three phases of time, viz. the past, the present and the future, are revelations of one divine entity known as Shiva. In this sense ‘Shiva’ refers to the Supreme Being known as Brahm who has manifested himself in the form of this world having three dimensions.] (6)

अजं_शाश्वतं_कारणं_कारणानां_शिवं_केवलं_भासकं_भासकानाम्_।
तुरीयं_तमः_पारमाद्यन्तहीनं_प्रपद्ये_परं_पावनं_द्वैतहीनम्_॥७॥

ajam śāśvataṁ kāraṇaṁ kāraṇānāṁ śivaṁ kēvalaṁ bhāsakaṁ bhāsakānām.
turīyaṁ tamaḥpāramādyantahīnaṁ prapadyē paraṁ pāvanaṁ
dvaitahīnam..7..

He is without any birth (Aja) because he is eternal and infinite as the Truth (which also has these characteristics). He is constant and steady, being present uniformly everywhere; he is eternal and universal (Shaswat). He is the very cause that is at the root of all other causes in this creation. He is auspicious, holy, truthful and divine (Shiva). He is one of his only kind, being non-dual and matchless (Kewal). He is not only self-illuminated, splendid and radiant himself (Bhaasakm), but is the one who grants these virtues to others who shine in the reflection of his glory (Bhaasakaam).

He exists in the transcendental state of consciousness known as Turiya. He is untouched by and beyond the reach of darkness created by ignorance and delusions. He is without a beginning and an end.

Verily, I pay my obeisance and worship to such a great Lord (Shiva) who is most holy and divine, who is supreme and transcendental, and who has no trace of duality in him (i.e. there is no confusion or doubt about him). (7)

नमस्ते_नमस्ते_विभो_विश्वमूर्ते_नमस्ते_नमस्ते_चिदानन्दमूर्ते_।
नमस्ते_नमस्ते_तपोयोगगम्य_नमस्ते_नमस्ते_श्रुतिज्ञानगम्य_॥८॥

namastē namastē vibhō vīśvamūrtē namastē namastē cidānandamūrtē.
namastē namastē tapōyōgagamyā namastē namastē śrutijñānagamyā..8..

I pay my obeisance to and bow before the Lord who is almighty and eternal (Vibhu), and who is a personified form of the entire world (or is an embodiment of the whole world; the whole world being his image).

I repeatedly bow before the Lord who is an image of eternal bliss and consciousness.

I repeatedly bow before the Lord who is attained by doing Tapa (austerity and penances) and Yoga (meditation).

I repeatedly bow before the Lord who is attained by the knowledge of the Vedas (or is the Lord indicated and implied in the teaching of the Vedas). (8)

प्रभो_शूलपाणे_विभो_विश्वनाथ_महादेव_शम्भो_महेश_त्रिनेत्र_।
शिवाकान्त_शान्त_स्मरारे_पुरारे_त्वदन्यो_वरेण्यो_न_मान्यो_न_गण्यः_॥९॥

prabhō sūlapāṇē vibhō vīśvanātha mahādēva śambhō mahēśa trinētra.
śivākānta śānta smarārē purārē tvadan'yō varēṇyō na mān'yō na gaṇyaḥ..9..

Oh Lord; oh the one who holds the trident; oh the Lord who is almighty and eternal (Vibhu); oh the Lord of the world (Vishwanaath); oh the Great God known as Mahadeva; oh Shambhu; oh Mahesh, the Great Isha or Great Lord God with three eyes!

Oh the dear Lord (husband) of Shivaa (Parvati)! Oh the Lord who is calm and serene! Oh the Lord who had vanquished Kaam (lust and passions)! Oh the Lord of the world (Purari)!

There is no one more exalted, more worthy of respect and honour, and more important than you. (9)

शम्भो_महेश_करुणामय_शूलपाणे_गौरीपते_पशुपते_पशुपाशनाशिन्_।
काशीपते_करुणया_जगदेतदेक-स्त्वं_हंसि_पासि_विदधासि_महेश्वरोऽसि_॥१०॥

śambhō mahēśa karuṇāmaya sūlapāṇē gaurīpatē paśupatē paśupāśanāśin.
kāśīpatē karuṇayā jagadētadēka-stvaṁ hansi pāsi vidadhāsi
mahēśvarō'si..10..

Oh Shambhu; Oh Mahesh; Oh the merciful Lord; Oh the one who holds a trident; Oh the dear husband of Gauri (Parvati); Oh Pashupati (literally the 'Lord of animals, but implying the Lord who controls one's animal-like instincts and negative qualities); Oh the one who destroys one's spiritual shackles that tie down a person like an animal to this gross world!

Oh Lord of Kashi (Varanasi, the holy pilgrim city)! It is only you, the merciful one, who creates, sustains and then ultimately concludes this creation. Oh Lord, you are this world's only Lord, the undisputed Lord. (10)

त्वत्तो_जगद्भवति_देव_भव_स्मरारे_त्वय्येव_तिष्ठति_जगन्मृड_विश्वनाथ_।
त्वय्येव_गच्छति_लयं_जगदेतदीश_लिङ्गात्मकं_हर_चराचरविश्वरूपिन्_॥११॥
इति_श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यकृतो_वेदसारशिवस्तवः_सम्पूर्णम्_।

tvattō jagadbhavati dēva bhava smarārē tvayyēva tiṣṭhati jaganmr̥ḍa
viśvanātha.

tvayyēva gacchati layaṁ jagadētadīśa liṅgātmakaṁ hara
carācaraviśvarūpin..11..

iti śrīmad śaṅkarācāryakṛtō vēdasāra śivastavaḥ sampūrṇam.

Oh Lord! This entire world has its origin in you; you are its creator. This world is established in you; you are its foundation. And at the time of conclusion this world merges with you, dissolves in you.

It reminds one of your gross and visible form known as the Lingam. You are the Lord of this world like you being the Lord of the Lingam.

Oh Har (Shiva)! This world consisting of mobile and immobile creature (such as the animals and plants respectively) is nothing but your image, your manifestation.
(11)

Thus ends the hymn called ‘vēdasāra śivastavaḥ’ by Shankaracharya

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(6) Shiv-ashtak

(śivāṣṭakam)

The Shiva-Ashtak—The hymn known as ‘Shivastak’ consists of eight verses (Ashtak = 8) of two lines each.

शिवाष्टकम्_

—
तस्मै_नमः_परमकारणकारणाय_दीप्तोज्ज्वलज्ज्वलितपिङ्गललोचनाय_।।_
नागेन्द्रहारकृतकुण्डलभूषणाय_ब्रह्मेन्द्रविष्णुवरदाय_नमः_शिवाय_।।१।।

śivāṣṭakam

tasmai namaḥ paramakāraṇakāraṇāya dīptōjjvalajjvalitapiṅgalalōcanāya.
nāgēndrahārakṛṭakuṇḍalabhūṣaṇāya brahmēndraviṣṇuvaradāya namaḥ
śivāya..1..

I reverentially bow before the Lord (Shiva) who is the cause of all other causes (i.e. he is the one who gives rise to the first cause; he is the first spark that sets off a chain reaction—consisting of cause and effect). He has radiant eyes that glow with the golden or orange colour of fire.

He is adorned with necklaces made up of serpents coiled around his ears and neck. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) who also grants boons to other great Gods such as Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Indra who is the king of Gods.

[These Gods are the senior Gods in the pantheon of Gods, and are capable of granting boons independently. Lord Shiva is more powerful and exalted than them because they seek his blessings and patronage. Shiva grants them their wishes, and therefore is senior to them, because only a person who occupies a senior position in any hierarchy is entitled to grant permission and privileges to those lower down in the rung, and not vice-versa.] (1)

श्रीमत्प्रसन्नशशिपन्नगभूषणाय_शैलेन्द्रजावदनचुम्बितलोचनाय_।_
कैलासमन्दरमहेन्द्रनिकेतनाय_लोकत्रयार्तिहरणाय_नमः_शिवाय_।।२।।

śrīmatprasannaśaśipannagabhūṣaṇāya śailēndrajāvanacumbitalōcanāya.
kailāsamandaramahēndranikētanāya lōkatrayārtiharaṇāya namaḥ śivāya..2..

He (Lord Shiva) has the wonderful moon and the serpents as his only adornment and ornamentation. The daughter of the mountains (i.e. Parvati, his divine consort) kisses him on his eyes as a show of affection.

He has his abode in Mt. Kailash and Mt. Mahendra (which is the mountainous abode of Gods). I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) who also removes the three types of sorrows of the three worlds.

[The three types of sorrows are known as Trai-taap. They are Adhi-daivik—the one caused by malignant spirits and stars; Adhi-bhautik—the one caused by this mortal world and its creatures; and Adhyatmic—the one cause by spiritual ignorance and delusions.

The three worlds are the past, the present and the future. It also means the heaven, the terrestrial and the nether world or the hell.] (2)

पद्मावदातमणिकुण्डलगोवृषाय_कृष्णागरुप्रचुरचन्दनचर्चिताय_।

भस्मानुषक्तविकचोत्पलमल्लिकाय_नीलाब्जकण्ठसदृशाय_नमः_शिवाय_॥३॥

padmāvadātamaṇikuṇḍalagōvṛṣāya kṛṣṇāgarupracuracandanacarcitāya.
bhasmānuṣaktavikacōtpalamallikāya nīlābjakaṇṭhasadrśāya namaḥ śivāya..3..

He wears large ear-rings crafted from solidified nectar extracted from the core of the lotus flower, and from which a shower of radiant rays of brilliant light emerges. He has his body smeared with a paste made from aloe wood and sandalwood.

He is adorned with ash from the fire sacrifice, fully blooming lotus flowers, and jasmine. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) who also has a blue-tinged throat. (3) –

लम्बत्सपिङ्गलजटामुकुटोत्कटाय_दंष्ट्राकरालविकटोत्कटभैरवाय_।

व्याघ्राजिनाम्बरधराय_मनोहराय_त्रैलोक्यनाथनमिताय_नमः_शिवाय_॥४॥

lambatsapiṅgalajaṭāmukuṭōtkatāya danṣṭrākarālavikaṭōtkatābhairavāya.
vyāghrājinaṃbaradharāya manōharāya trailōkyanāthanamitāya namaḥ
śivāya..4..

He (Lord Shiva) looks awesome with the golden-coloured locks of long hairs dangling from his head, giving the impression that he is wearing an unconventional crown. He looks very formidable and terrible with strong jaws and sharp teeth—and this form of the Lord creates fear, and gives him the name ‘Bhairav’.

He is wearing the hide of a tiger. In spite of all these he looks very affable, pleasing and attractive. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) before whom even the senior-most Gods who rule over the three worlds themselves pay their obeisance by bowing before him. (4)

दक्षप्रजापतिमहामखनाशनाय_क्षिप्रं_महात्रिपुरदानवघातनाय_।

ब्रह्मेर्जितोर्ध्वगकरोटिनिकृन्तनाय_योगाय_योगनमिताय_नमः_शिवाय_॥५॥

dakṣaprajāpatimahāmakhanāśanāya kṣipraṁ mahātripuradānavaghātanāya.
brahmērijitōrdhvagakarōṭinikṛtanāya yōgāya yōganamitāya namaḥ śivāya..5..

He (Lord Shiva) is the one who had destroyed the sacrifice of Daksha-Prajapati (because he had insulted the Lord out of his stubborn rudeness, arrogance and haughtiness). [This incident is narrated in Ram Charit Manas or the Ramayana of Tulsidas, in its Baal Kand, from Doha no. 60 to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 65.]

He is the Lord who had quickly and easily killed the fierce demon named Tripuraasur.

He had also severed the upper fifth head of Brahma, the creator, because he had become exceedingly haughty and arrogant. [This incident is narrated in Devi Puran Mahabagwat, Canto 42, verse nos. 35-54.]

He (Shiva) is an embodiment of Yoga (meditation); he remains perpetually submerged in meditation and contemplation. He loves doing Yoga very much himself, and loves those who do Yoga. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva). (5)

संसारसृष्टिघटनापरिवर्तनाय_रक्षः_पिशाचगणसिद्धसमाकुलाय_॥

सिद्धोरगग्रहगणेन्द्रनिषेविताय_शार्दूलचर्मवसनाय_नमः_शिवाय_॥६॥

sansārasṛṣṭighaṭanāparivartanāya rakṣaḥ piśācagaṇasid'dhasamākulāya.
sid'dhōragagrahagaṇēndraniṣēvitāya śārdūlacarmavasanāya namaḥ śivāya..6..

He (Shiva) changes the world and the way it is created in different Kalpas (eras of creation). [That is, everytime a new method is adopted by the Lord to initiate the process of creation, and each creation is different from the one prior to it and the one that follows it in the next phase.]

He is surrounded by ghosts, phantoms and Siddhas (mystics).

I reverentially bow before a Lord (Shiva) who is being served by Siddhas, serpents, stars and Gods led by their king Indra, and who wears the hide of a tiger. (6)

भस्माङ्गरागकृतरूपमनोहराय_सौम्यावदातवनमाश्रितमाश्रिताय_॥

गौरीकटाक्षनयनार्धनिरीक्षणाय_गोक्षीरधारधवलाय_नमः_शिवाय_॥७॥

bhasmāṅgarāgakṛtarūpamanōharāya saumyāvadātavanamāśritamāśritāya.
gaurīkaṭākṣanayanārdhanirīkṣaṇāya gōkṣīradhāradhavalāya namaḥ śivāya..7..

He has adorned his body by smearing it with ash of the fire sacrifice. He provides support and protection to those who live peacefully in a pleasant forest. [This obviously refers to hermits, ascetics, sages etc. who live in hermitages located far away from the hustle and bustle of worldly life in the deep reaches of forests where they live a life of serenity and calm, peacefully doing meditation and contemplation as well as study of the scriptures and teaching their disciples. Lord Shiva is regarded as a patron God of ascetics and hermits. He is also the universal Guru—moral preceptor and guide for the whole world.]

He looks with a sideways glance at Gauri (Parvati; his divine consort) who is also looking at him affectionately at an angle. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) who has a complexion that is fair like the milk of the cow. (7)

आदित्यसोमवरुणानिलसेविताय_यज्ञाग्निहोत्रवरधूमनिकेतनाय_।

ऋक्सामवेदमुनिभिः_स्तुतिसंयुताय_गोपाय_गोपनमिताय_नमः_शिवाय_॥८॥

ādityasōmavaruṇānilasēvitāya yajñāgnihōtravaradhūmanikētanāya.

ṛksāmavēdamunibhiḥ stutisanyutāya gōpāya gōpanamitāya namaḥ śivāya..8..

He (Shiva) is being served by the Sun God (Aditya), the Moon God (Som), the Water God (Varun) and the Wind God (Anil). He lives in a subtle form in the fire-sacrifice and in the fumes arising out of it when offerings are made to the sacred fire.

He is praised by the Rik and the Sam Vedas, as well as by the exalted sages, ascetics and hermits. I reverentially bow before such a Lord (Shiva) who is worshipped as the Lord of Nandi (the Bull), and is the protector of cows (humble creatures). (8)

शिवाष्टकमिदं_पुण्यं_यः_पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ_।

शिवलोकमवाप्नोति_शिवेन_सह_मोदते_॥९॥

इति_श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यविरचितं_शिवाष्टकं_सम्पूर्णम्_।

śivāṣṭakamidam puṇyam yaḥ paṭhēcchivasannidhau.

śivalōkamavāpnōti śivēna saha mōdatē..9..

iti śrīmad śaṅkarācāryaviracitam śivāṣṭakam sampūrṇam.

Anyone who recites with devotion this ‘Shivashtak’ in front of Lord Shiva (i.e. his Lingam or portrait) is sure to please the Lord and attain Shiva-loka where he enjoys his stay with the Lord. [That is, such a person is blessed by Shiva and he finds access to the divine abode of Lord Shiva in the heaven, known as the ‘Shiva-loka’.] (9)

Thus ends the hymn called ‘śivāṣṭakam’ by Shankaracharya.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(7) Shiva Panchaakshara Stotra

(śrīśivapañcākṣarastōtram)

The ‘Shiva Pancha Akshar Stotra’—This hymn outlines the significance and meaning of the five letters or syllables that form the main Mantra of Lord Shiva. It is ‘Namaha Shivaya’ (I bow before Lord Shiva). [Na + Maha + Shi + Vaa + Ya = 5.]

श्रीशिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रम्_

नागेन्द्रहाराय_त्रिलोचनाय_भस्माङ्गरागाय_महेश्वराय_।_

नित्याय_शुद्धाय_दिगम्बराय_तस्मै_‘न’_काराय_नमः_शिवाय_।१।।

śrīśivapañcākṣarastōtram

nāgēndrahārāya trilōcanāya bhasmāṅgarāgāya mahēśvarāya.
nityāya yud'dhāya digambarāya tasmai `na' kārāya namaḥ śivāya..1..

He (Lord Shiva) who has a necklace of serpents in his neck, who has three eyes, for whom the ash is the only ointment that he applies as a paste to smear his body with, who is the Great God known as Maheshwar, who has the various directions as his clothes (i.e. who is wrapped by the sky), who is eternal and unchanging, who is pure and holy, and who is naked (i.e. has nothing to hide as he is honest, truthful and unpretentious).

Verily, I bow to this holy and divine form of the great God Shiva, a form that stands for the first letter ‘Na’ of the five-letter Mantra/hymn of the Lord. (1)

मन्दाकिनीसलिलचन्दनचर्चिताय_नन्दीश्वरप्रमथनाथमहेश्वराय_।_

मन्दारपुष्पबहुपुष्पसुपूजिताय_तस्मै_‘म’_काराय_नमः_शिवाय_।।२।।

mandākinīsalilacandanacarcitāya nandīśvarapramathanāthamahēśvarāya.
mandārapuṣṣabahupuṣṣasupūjitāya tasmai `ma' kārāya namaḥ śivāya..2..

He (Shiva) is worshipped with the water of the holy river Ganges (also known as ‘Manakini’) and with sandalwood, as well as with beautiful flowers of the Mandaar tree (coral tree) and other assorted trees. He is the Lord of Nandi (Bull) and other of Shiva’s attendants known as Pramatha. He is the Lord of Gods, the Maheshwar.

Verily, I bow to this holy and divine form of the great God Shiva, a form that stands for the second letter ‘Ma (or Maha)’ of the five-letter Mantra/hymn of the Lord. (2)

शिवाय_गौरीवदनाब्जवृन्द-सूर्याय_दक्षाध्वरनाशकाय_।

श्रीनीलकण्ठाय_वृळ्ध्वजाय_तस्मै_‘शि’_काराय_नमः_शिवाय_॥३॥

śivāya gaurīvadanābjavr̥nda-sūryāya dakṣādhvaranāśakāya.

śrīnīlakaṇṭhāya vṛṣadhvajāya tasmai `śi` kārāya namaḥ śivāya..3..

He is an image of auspiciousness, truthfulness, beauty, purity and holiness (‘Shiva’). He is like the sun that brings cheer and happiness on the lotus-like face of Gauri (Parvati, Shiva’s divine consort). He is the destroyer of the sacrifice of Daksha-Prajapati.

He is the Lord with a blue-tinged throat. His standard/flag has the emblem of the Bull. Verily, I bow to this holy and divine form of the great God Shiva, a form that stands for the third letter ‘Shi’ of the five-letter Mantra/hymn of the Lord. (3)

वसिष्ठकुम्भोद्भवगौतमार्य-मुनीन्द्रदेवार्चितशेखराय_।

चन्द्रार्कवैश्वानरलोचनाय_तस्मै_‘व’_काराय_नमः_शिवाय_॥४॥

vasiṣṭhakumbhōdbhavagautamārya-munīndradēvārcitaśēkharāya.

candrārkaṁvaiśvānaralōcanāya tasmai `va` kārāya namaḥ śivāya..4..

Great sages such as Vashistha, Kumbhaj (Agastya) and Gautam, as well as senior Gods as Indra (king of Gods) have worshipped his head (by offering flowers and sandalwood etc.). He has the sun, the moon and the fire as his three eyes. Verily, I bow to this holy and divine form of the great God Shiva, a form that stands for the fourth letter ‘Vaa’ of the five-letter Mantra/hymn of the Lord. (4)

यक्षस्वरूपाय_जटाधराय_पिनाकहस्ताय_सनातनाय_।

दिव्याय_देवाय_दिगम्बराय_तस्मै_‘य’_काराय_नमः_शिवाय_॥५॥

yakṣasvarūpāya jaṭādharāya pinākahastāya sanātanāya.

divyāya dēvāya digambarāya tasmai `ya` kārāya namaḥ śivāya..5..

He has assumed the form of a semi-god known as Yaksha. He has long hairs matted together in a knot resembling a crown on his head. He has the bow known as the Pinaak in his hands. He is the divine ancient Purush (the primordial Being). He remains naked (because he wears the sky and its directions as his clothes). Verily, I bow to this holy and divine form of the great God Shiva, a form that stands for the fifth letter ‘Ya’ of the five-letter Mantra/hymn of the Lord. (5)

पञ्चाक्षरमिदं_पुण्यं_यः_पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ_।

शिवलोकमवाप्नोति_शिवेन_सह_मोदते_॥६॥

इति_श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यविरचितं_शिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रं_सम्पूर्णम्_।

pañcākṣaramidaṁ puṇyaṁ yaḥ paṭhēcchivasannidhau.
śivalōkamavāpnōti śivēna saha mōdatē..6..

iti śrīmad śaṅkarācāryaviracitaṁ śivapañcākṣarastōtram sampūrṇam.

A person who recites this hymn, known as the ‘Shiva Panchaakshar’, before an image of Lord Shiva (Lingam or portrait), is able to attain the abode of the Lord and enjoy the Lord’s company there. [In other words, he goes to heaven known as the ‘Shivaloka’ where Lord Shiva resides himself.] (6)

Thus ends the hymn called ‘śivapañcākṣarastōtram’ composed by Shankaracharya

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(8) Dwaadash-jyotir Lingaani Stotra

(dvādaśajyōtirliṅgāni)

The Dwaadash Jyotirlingams—This hymn lists the twelve divine and holy Lingams (symbols) of Lord Shiva. [‘Dwaadash’ = 12]

-----द्वादशज्योतिर्लिङ्गानि-----

सौराष्ट्रे_सोमनाथं_च_श्रीशैले_मल्लिकार्जुनम्_।_उज्जयिन्यां_महाकालमोङ्कारममलेश्वरम्_॥१॥

dvādaśajyōtirliṅgāni

saurāṣṭrē sōmanātham ca śrīśailē mallikārjunam.
ujjayin'yām mahākālamōṅkāramamalēśvaram..1..

Sri Somnath in the state of Saurashtra; Sri Mallikaarjun on Mt. Sri-shail (near Madras in the state of Tamil Nadu); and Sri Mahakaal, Sri Omkareshwar and Amleshwar in Ujjain (in the state of Madhya Pradesh). (1)

परल्यां_वैद्यनाथं_च_डाकिन्यां_भीमशङ्करम्_।_सेतुबन्धे_तु_रामेशं_नागेशं_दारुकावने_॥२॥

paralyām vaidyanātham ca ḍākin'yām bhīmsaṅkaram.
sētubandhē tu rāmēśam nāgēśam dārukāvanē..2..

Sri Vaidyanath in Parli (in the state of Andhra Pradesh, and alternatively in a pilgrim town with the same name, i.e. ‘Vaidyanath’, in the state of Jharkhand); Sri Bhimshankar in a place known as Daakini (between Mumbai and Pune in the state of Maharashtra); Sri Rameshwaram on the shores of the ocean (located at the southern tip of India), the point where Lord Ram had constructed the bridge (to cross over to Lanka to fight and eliminate the demon king Ravana); and Sri Naageshwar in Daarukawan (in the state of Gujrat). (2)

वाराणस्यां_तु_विश्वेशं_त्र्यम्बकं_गौतमीतटे_।_हिमालये_तु_केदारं_घुश्मेशं_च_शिवालये_॥३॥

vārāṇasyām tu viśvēśam tryambakam gautamītatē.
himālayē tu kēdāram ghuśmēśam ca śivālayē..3..

Sri Vishwanath in Kashi (Varanasi, in the state of Uttar Pradesh); Sri Trayambak on the banks of river Gautami (Godavari, near Nasik in the state of Maharashtra); Sri Kedar in the Himalayas (in the north of India); and Sri Ghushmeshwar in the Shivaalaya (near the village of Berul that is near the railway station of Daulatabad). (3)

एतानि_ज्योतिर्लिङ्गानि_सायं_प्रातः_पठेन्नरः_।_सप्तजन्मकृतं_पापं_स्मरणेन_विनश्यति_॥४॥

ētāni jyōtirliṅgāni sāyaṁ prātaḥ paṭhēnnaraḥ.
saptajanmakṛtaṁ pāpaṁ smaraṇēna vinaśyati..4..

A person who takes the names of these twelve holy Jyotir-lingams of Lord Shiva in the morning and evening daily—the evil affects of the sins that he might have committed in his past seven lives are neutralized by such remembrance. (4)

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(9) Dwaadash-jyotir-linga Stotra

(dvādaśajyōtirliṅgastōtram)

The Dwaadash Jyotirlingam Stotra—This hymn is dedicated to praising the twelve Lingams of Lord Shiva, and lists their special subtle spiritual values and importance in a symbolic manner.

द्वादशज्योतिर्लिङ्गस्तोत्रम्_

सौराष्ट्रदेशे_विशदेऽतिरम्ये_ज्योतिर्मयं_चन्द्रकलावतंसम्_।_।
भक्तिप्रदानाय_कृपावर्तीर्णं_तं_सोमनाथं_शरणं_प्रपद्ये_॥१॥

dvādaśajyōtirliṅgastōtram

saurāṣṭradēśē viśadē'tiramyē jyōtirmayaṁ candrakalāvatansam.
bhaktipradānāya krpāvartīṇaṁ taṁ sōmanāthaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadyē..1..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has most mercifully revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam in the very charming and pleasant environ of the state of Saurashtra (Gujrat). This Lingam is self-radinat (with spiritual energy), is adorned by the crescent moon, and is a bestower of Bhakti (devotion). This holy Lingam is called 'Somanath'. (1)

श्रीशैलेशृङ्गे_विबुधातिसङ्गे_तुलाद्रितुङ्गऽपि_मुदा_वसन्तम्_।_।
तमर्जुनं_मल्लिकपूर्वमेकं_नमामि_संसारसमुद्रसेतुम्_॥२॥

śrīśailēśṛṅgē vibudhātisaṅgē tulādrituṅga'pi mudā vasantam.
tamarjunaṁ mallikapūrvamēkaṁ namāmi sansārasamudrasētum..2..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam situated on the summit of Mt. Sri-shail which is the best and the highest amongst the mountains. Gods continuously assemble there. Shiva lives there most cheerfully, and is like a bridge that helps the devotee cross the ocean-like world very easily by his grace and mercy. This holy Lingam is called 'Mallikaarjun'. (2) _

अवन्तिकायां_विहितावतारं_मुक्तिप्रदानाय_च_सज्जनानाम्_।_।
अकालमृत्योः_परिरक्षणार्थं_वन्दे_महाकालमहासुरेशम्_॥३॥

avantikāyām vihitāvatāram muktipradānāya ca sajjanānām.
akālamṛtyōḥ parirakṣaṇārthaṁ vandē mahākālamahāsūrēśam..3..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam at Avanti (Ujjain) so as to provide Mukti (liberation and deliverance from this gross mortal world) to gentlemen who are pious and righteous. He provides fearlessness from untimely death. This holy Lingam is called ‘Mahakaal’. (3)

[Note—The word ‘Kaal’ refers to death, and ‘Maha-kaal’ therefore means the Lord who is superior to Kaal. This form of Shiva is able to protect the devotee from the fear of death and its horrors. This verse ought to be correctly interpreted—‘freedom from the fear of death’ does not mean that the worshipper will not die a physical death, but it means that he does not have to cope with the pain and horrors that generally torment the dying creature, and that after physical death of the gross body his soul finds permanent freedom in as much as it does not have to take any new birth again.] _

कावेरिकानर्मदयोः_पवित्रे_समागमे_सज्जनतारणाय_।
सदैव_मान्धातृपुरे_वसन्त—मोङ्गारमीशं_शिवमेकमीडे_॥४॥

kāvērikānarmadayōḥ pavitrē samāgamē sajjanatāraṇāya.
sadaiva māndhātrpurē vasanta-mōṅkāramīśaṁ śivamēkamīḍē..4..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam situated at the meeting point of two great holy and auspicious rivers, the rivers Kaveri and Narmada, so as to continuously grant liberation and deliverance to gentlemen who are pious and pure. The divine and holy Lord lives there permanently. This Lingam is called ‘Omkareshwar’. (4)

[Note—The word ‘Omkareshwar’ means the Lord who is the Supreme Being, the Brahm, represented by the divine word OM. This OM itself is the cosmic sound that pervades uniformly throughout the length and breadth of the cosmos, and is said to be the vibrations caused in ether by ‘Consciousness’.] _

पूर्वोत्तरे_प्रज्वलिकानिधाने_सदा_वसन्तं_गिरिजासमेतम्_।
सुरासुराराधितपादपद्मं_श्रीवैद्यनाथं_तमहं_नमामि_॥५॥

pūrvōttarē prajvalikānidhānē sadā vasantaṁ girijāsamētam.
surāsūrārādhitapādapadmam śrīvaidyanāthaṁ tamahaṁ namāmi..5..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam situated in the east side of the country. The Lord’s Lingam here is like a fount of illumination, so glowing it is. The pleasant season of spring is perpetually present at this place where Lord Shiva happily with his divine consort Girija (Parvati, the daughter of the Himalayas). The Lingam here is called ‘Vaidyanath’. (5)

याम्ये_सदङ्गे_नगरेऽतिरम्ये_विभूषिताङ्गं_विविधैश्च_भोगैः_।
सद्भक्तिमुक्तिप्रदमीशमेकं_श्रीनागनाथं_शरणं_प्रपद्ये_॥६॥

yāmyē sadāṅgē nagarē'tiramyē vibhūṣitāṅgaṁ vividhaiśca bhōgaiḥ.
sadbhaktimuktipradamīśamēkaṁ śrīnāganāthaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadyē..6..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam in a very pleasant city located in the south of the country. This Lingam is adorned by countless adornments and is surrounded by all the comforts of this world. The Lord is the only one who grants the auspicious virtue of Bhakti (devotion) as well as attainment of Mukti (liberation and deliverance) to his devotees. This Lingam is called 'Sri-Naag-nath'. (6) _

महाद्रिपार्श्वे च तटे रमन्तं सम्पूज्यमानं सततं मुनीन्द्रैः ।
सुरासुरैर्यक्षमहोरगाद्यैः केदारमीशं शिवमेकमीडे ॥७॥

mahādripārśvē ca taṭē ramantaṁ sampūjyamānaṁ satataṁ munīndraiḥ.
surāsurairyakṣamahōragādyaiḥ kēdāramīśaṁ śivamēkamīḍē..7..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has established his divine Self in the form of a Lingam that is situated on one edge of the mighty mountain known as the Himalayas. This Lingam is always worshipped and served by great sages, hermits and ascetics, as well as by the Gods, the Asurs (demons), the Yakshas (junior Gods; the Spirits) and the serpents (reptiles and earth-bound creatures). This Lingam of Lord Shiva is called 'Kedar-nath' as it is the Lord of Mt. Kedar. (7) _

सह्याद्रिशीर्षे विमले वसन्तं गोदावरीतीरपवित्रदेशे ।
यद्दर्शनात्पातकमाशु नाशं प्रयाति तं त्र्यम्बकमीशमीडे ॥८॥

sahyādrīśīrṣē vimalē vasantaṁ gōdāvarītirapavitradeśē.
yaddarśanātpātakamāśu nāśaṁ prayāti taṁ trayambakamīśamīḍē..8..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has established his divine Self in the form of a Lingam on the summit of the pleasant mountain known as Sayhya. It is located on the charming banks of river Godavari. All sins are eliminated as soon as one has a divine glimpse of this Lingam. This Lingam is called 'Trayambakeshwar'. (8)_

सुताम्रपर्णीजलराशियोगे निबध्य सेतुं विशिखैरसंख्यैः ।
श्रीरामचन्द्रेण समर्पितं तं रामेश्वराख्यं नियतं नमामि ॥९॥

sutāmrparṇījalarāśiyōgē nibadhya sētuṁ viśikhairasaṅkhyaiḥ.
śrīrāmacandrēṇa samarpitaṁ taṁ rāmēśvarākhyāṁ niyataṁ namāmi..9..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam that was established, consecrated and offered worship by Lord Ram (the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Being) when he constructed the bridge using countless arrows on the mighty ocean in the southern tip of the land (India). This Lingam is called 'Rameshwaram'. (9)

[Note—The word ‘Rameshwaram’ means two things simltenously—one, the Lord (Shiva) whom Sri Ram worshipped, and second, the Lord (Shiva) who worships Sri Ram.]

यं_डाकिनीशाकिनिकासमाजे_निषेव्यमाणं_पिशिताशनैश्च_।।
सदैव_भीमादिपदप्रसिद्धं_तं_शङ्करं_भक्तहितं_नमामि_।।१०।।

yaṁ ḍākinīśākinikāsamājē niṣēvyamāṇaṁ piśitāśanaishca.
sadaiva bhīmādipadaprasid'dhaṁ taṁ śaṅkaraṁ bhaktahitaṁ namāmi..10..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam that is always worshipped by Dakinis and Shakinis in a dense forest. The Lord is always the well-wisher of his devotees. This Lingam is called ‘Bhimshankar’. (10)

[Note—The word ‘Bhimshankar’ refers to the formidable, awe-inspiring and strong Lord Shiva.]

सानन्दमानन्दवने_वसन्त—मानन्दकन्दं_हतपापवृन्दम्_।।
वाराणसीनाथमनाथनाथं_श्रीविश्वनाथं_शरणं_प्रपद्ये_।।११।।

sānandamānandavanē vasanta-mānandakandaṁ hatapāpavṛṇdam.
vārāṇasīnāthamanāthanāthaṁ śrīviśvanāthaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadyē..11..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who is an embodiment of bliss and beatitude himself, and has revealed his divine Self in the form of a Lingam that is also an embodiment of bliss and beatitude. The Lord is the destroyer of all forms of sins. He is the Lord of those who have no other support and succour. This divine Lingam is called ‘Vishwanath’. (11)

[Note—The word ‘Vishwanath’ means the Lord of the world.]

इलापुरे_रम्यविशालकेऽस्मिन्_समुल्लसन्तं_च_जगद्वरेण्यम्_।।
वन्दे_महोदारतरस्वभावं_घृष्णेश्वराख्यं_शरणं_प्रपद्ये_।।१२।।

ilāpurē ramyaviśālakē'smin samullasantāṁ ca jagadvarēṇyam.
vandē mahōdāratarasvabhāvaṁ ghrṣṇēśvarākhyāṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadyē..12..

I most respectfully bow before and take the shelter of Lord Shiva who is established in the form of a divine Lingam situated in a beautiful shrine at Ilaapur. This Lord is worshipped by the whole world. His nature is extremely magnanimous and generous. This Lingam is called ‘Ghrineshwar’. (12)

ज्योतिर्मयद्वादशलिङ्गकानां_शिवात्मनां_प्रोक्तमिदं_क्रमेण_।।
स्तोत्रं_पठित्वा_मनुजोऽतिभक्त्या_फलं_तदालोक्य_निजं_भजेच्च_।।१३।।
इति_श्रीद्वादशज्योतिर्लिङ्गस्तोत्रं_सम्पूर्णम्_।।

jyōtirmayadvādaśaliṅgakānāṁ śivātmanāṁ prōktamidaṁ kramēṇa.
stōtraṁ paṭhitvā manujō'tibhaktyā phalaṁ tadālōkya nijāṁ bhajēcca..13..

iti śrī dvādaśajyōtirliṅgastōtram sampūrṇam.

If a person recites this Stotra (hymn) dedicated to the twelve Jyotirlingams of Lord Shiva with great devotion and faith, then he gets the same rewards as derived by physically visiting and viewing these Lingams themselves. (13)

Thus ends the hymn called 'dvādaśajyōtirliṅgastōtram'.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(10) Shiva Taandav Stotra

(śivatāṇḍavastōtram)

The Shiva Taandav Stotra—This Stotra (hymn) is dedicated to Lord Shiva's cosmic dance form that represents creation, sustenance and destruction of creation. It is the most complex, and of all the hymns of Lord Shiva it is the most enchanting to hear when incanted by expert singers, as its lyrics are very emphatically bold, robust and rhythmic. The unique quality of this Stotra is that it was composed by Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. He was a great devotee of Lord Shiva, and used to offer daily prayers to him.

शिवताण्डवस्तोत्रम्

जटाटवीगलज्जलप्रवाहपावितस्थले_गलेऽवलम्ब्य_लम्बितां_भुजङ्गुतुङ्गमालिकाम्_।
डमडुमडुमडुमन्निनादवडुमर्वयं_चकार_चण्डताण्डवं_तनोतु_नः_शिवः_शिवम्_॥१॥

śivatāṇḍavastōtram

jaṭāṭavīgalajjalpravāhapāvitasthalē galē'valambya lambitāṁ
bhujāṅgatuṅgamālikām.
ḍamaḍḍamaḍḍamaḍḍamanninādavaḍḍamarvayaṁ cakāra caṇḍatāṇḍavaṁ
tanōtu naḥ śivaḥ śivam..1..

The Lord (Shiva) who wears a crown of dense matted hairs on his head from which falls the holy river Ganges, washing and bathing the Lord's throat around which a thick garland of serpents is dangling as its stream cascades down (to reach the plains of the land below), the Lord who dances ecstatically to the loud sound emerging from his Damaru (a hand-held tabor shaped like an hour-glass) that he shakes vigorously—let that divine Lord Shiva grant us our welfare and well-being. (1)

जटाकटाहसम्भ्रमभ्रमन्निलिम्पनिर्झरी—विलोलवीचिवल्लरीविराजमानमूर्द्धनि_।
धगद्धगद्धगज्ज्वलल्ललाटपट्टपावके_किशोरचन्द्रशेखरे_रतिः_प्रतिक्षणं_मम_॥२॥

jaṭākaṭāhasambhramabhramannilimpanirjharī-
vilōlavīcivallarīvirājamānamūrd'dhani.

dhagad'dhagad'dhagajjalalālāṭapaṭṭapāvakē kiśōracandraśēkharē ratiḥ
pratikṣaṇam mama..2..

The Lord (Shiva) whose head is adorned by the thick mat of coiled hairs that form a virtual cauldron in which the bubbling and frothing currents of river Ganges swirl vigorously, the Lord on whose forehead the fire is raging and leaping forth with a roaring sound, the Lord on whose head the newly formed moon (crescent moon) looks admirable—let me have infinite affection and devotion every moment of my life towards such a divine form of Lord Shiva. (2)

धराधरेन्द्रनन्दिनीविलासबन्धुबन्धुर—स्फुरद्दिगन्तसन्ततिप्रमोदमानमनसे_।_

कृपाकटाक्षधोरणीनिरुद्धदुर्धरापदि_क्वचिद्दिगम्बरे_मनो_विनोदमेतु_वस्तुनि_॥३॥

dharādhārēndranandinīvilāsabandhubandhura-
sphuraddigantasantatipramōdamānāmanasē.

kṛpākaṭākṣadhōraṇīnirud'dhadurdharāpadi kvaciddigambarē manō vinōdamētu
vastuni..3..

The Lord (Shiva) who feels exceedingly happy when he observes that all the directions are illuminated by the magnificent ornaments worn by the daughter of the mountains (i.e. Parvati or Uma who is his divine consort) when she is in a cheerful mood, the Lord by whose mere gracious glance the greatest and the gravest troubles and problems are dispelled or eliminated—let my mind and heart find their peace, happiness, succour and solace in Digambar form of the Lord (Shiva). [The word 'Digambar' means a naked form, a form which wears the sky as its only apparel. This form has immense symbolic value as it indicates that a Digambar is unpretentious and has nothing to hide.] (3)

जटाभुजङ्गपिङ्गलस्फुरत्फणामणिप्रभा—कदम्बकुङ्कुमद्रवप्रलिप्तदिग्वधूमुखे_।_

मदान्धसिन्धुरस्फुरत्त्वगुत्तरीयमेदुरे_मनो_विनोदमद्भुतं_बिभर्तु_भूतभर्तारि_॥४॥

jaṭābhujāṅgapiṅgalasphuratphaṇāmaṇiprabhā-
kadambakuṅkumadravapraliptadigvadhūmukhē.

madāndhasindhurasphurattvaguttarīyamēdurē manō vinōdamadbhutaṁ
bibhartu bhūtabhartari..4..

All the directions of the world are being illuminated by the diffused golden-hued light radiating out from the 'Manis'¹ present on the hoods of wonderful serpents that have raised their hoods as high as the equally wonderful lock of hairs on the Lord's head, swaying majestically there, and the thick hide of the elephant that the Lord wears on the upper part of his body as an overgarment gives the Lord's appearance a glazed and smooth sheen—let my mind and heart find happiness and joy by remaining engrossed in the remembrance of this Lord of Bhuts (living beings; ghosts; mortal creatures). (4)

[Note—¹Mani—It is believed that certain category of serpents effuse a sap from their heads that dries up to form a gem-like structure from which a divine glow effuses. Its colour is like that of pearl.]

सहस्रलोचनप्रभृत्यशेषलेखशेखर—प्रसूनधूलिधोरणीविधूसराङ्घ्रिपीठभूः_ L

भुजङ्गराजमालया_निबद्धजाटजूटकः_श्रियै_चिराय_जायतां_चकोरबन्धुशेखरः_ ॥५॥

sahastralōcanaprabhṛtyaśēṣalēkhaśēkhara-
prasūnadhūlidhōraṇīvidhūsarāṅghripīṭhabhūḥ.

bhujaṅgarājamālayā nibad'dhajāṭajūṭakaḥ śriyai cirāya jāyatām
cakōrabandhuśēkharaḥ..5..

The Lord (Shiva) whose footwear has become covered by the flowers and their petals that have fallen down from the heads of Indra (king of Gods) and other Gods when they bowed their heads before the holy feet of the Lord to pay their respects to him, the Lord whose majestic lock of hairs on the head is girdled on all the sides by a ring formed by the coiled body of Naag-raj, the king of serpents (i.e. Lord Seshnath)—let that Lord Chandrashekhar (the Lord who has the moon on his head, the moon that resembles a gem studded on his crown—i.e. Lord Shiva) be a bestower of everlasting wealth and prosperity for me. (5)

ललाटचत्वरज्वलद्भनञ्जयस्फुलिङ्गभा—निपीतपञ्चसायकं_नमन्निलिम्पनायकम्_ L

सुधामयूखलेखया_विराजमानशेखरं_महाकपालि_सम्पदे_शिरो_जटालमस्तु_नः_ ॥६॥

lalāṭacatvarajvalad'dhanan̄jayasphuliṅgabhā-nipītapañcasāyakam
namannilimpanāyakam.

sudhāmayūkhalēkhayā virājamānaśēkharam mahākapāli sampadē śirō
jaṭālamastu naḥ..6..

The Lord (Shiva) had destroyed the God of passions and lust known as Kaamdeo with the flames leaping out of the ferocious fire raging brilliantly in the altar represented by his forehead (i.e. from the fire spewing out of the third eye located in the middle of his forehead above the root of the nose), the Lord to whom Indra (king of Gods) regularly pays his respects, and the crown of locked hairs on whose head is adorned by the ever-changing form of the magnificent moon—let that Lord known as 'Mahakapali' (i.e. Lord Shiva with a broad and high forehead) be a source of my wealth and well-being. (6)

करालभालपट्टिकाधगद्गद्गज्ज्वल—द्भनञ्जयाहुतीकृतप्रचण्डपञ्चसायके_ L

धराधरेन्द्रनन्दिनीकुचाग्रचित्रपत्रक—प्रकल्पनैकशिल्पिनि_त्रिलोचने_रतिर्मम_ ॥७॥

karālabhālapaṭṭikādhagad'dhagad'dhagajjvala-
d'dhanan̄jayāhutīkṛtapraçaṇḍapañcasāyakē.

dharādhareṅdranandinīkucāgracitrapatraka-prakalpanaikaśilpini trilōcanē
ratirmama..7..

The Lord (Shiva) had offered the sacrifice of Kaamdeo (God of passions and lust) by burning him to ashes in the fire-pit of the blazing fire that rages on his broad and high forehead, and the only Lord who can expertly decorate the breast of the daughter of the mountains (i.e. goddess Parvati, his divine consort) with leaves and petals—let me

be focused on the Lord with three eyes, known as ‘Trilochan’, and let me remember him and meditate upon him. (7)

नवीनमेघमण्डलीनिरुद्धदुर्धरस्फुर—त्कुहूनिशीथिनीतमःप्रबन्धबद्धकन्धरः_ L
 निलिम्पनिर्झरीधरस्तनोतु_कृत्तिसिन्धुरः_कलानिधानबन्धुरः_श्रियं_जगद्धुरन्धरः_ ॥८ ॥

navīnamēghamaṇḍalīnirud'dhadurdharasphura-
 tkuhūniśīthinītamahṣrabandhabad'dhakandharaḥ.
 nilimpanirjharīdharastanōtu kṛttisindhuraḥ kalānidhānabandhuraḥ śriyaṁ
 jagad'dhurandharaḥ..8..

The Lord (Shiva) who has a dark-coloured throat¹ that is as dark as the night of the dark moon when the sky is covered with a thick blanket of dark clouds, the Lord who has the hide of an elephant wrapped around his body, and the Lord whose beautiful complexion shines/glows with the subtle light emanating from the magnificent moon present on his forehead—let that Lord known as ‘Ganga-dhar’ (i.e. the Lord who bears the holy river Ganges on his head) enhance my wealth and prosperity, and let it spread and grow. (8)

[Note—¹Lord Shiva’s throat is dark because he had gulped the poison that was produced at the time of churning of the celestial ocean by the Gods and the demons in search of Amrit, the elixir of eternity and bliss. Though Shiva had gulped the poison to prevent it from being spilled over and burning this creation, he had however kept it in his throat instead of actually allowing it to enter his stomach. The horrible and corroding poison had burnt the throat from the inside, and this resulted in its complexion turning black.]

प्रफुल्लनीलपङ्कजप्रपञ्चकालिमप्रभा—वलम्बिकण्ठकन्दलीरुचिप्रबद्धकन्धरम्_ L
 स्मरच्छिदं_पुरच्छिदं_भवच्छिदं_मखच्छिदं_गजच्छिदान्धकच्छिदं_तमन्तकच्छिदं_भजे_ ॥९ ॥

praphullanīlapaṅkajaprapaṅcakālimaprabhā-
 valambikaṅṭhakandalīruciprabad'dhakandharam.
 smaracchidaṁ puracchidaṁ bhavacchidaṁ makhacchidaṁ
 gajacchidāndhakacchidaṁ tamantakacchidaṁ bhajāē..9..

The Lord (Shiva) whose dark-coloured throat has the same hue as the petals of a dark-coloured lotus flower, and it resembles the throat of a deer, and the Lord who had vanquished Kaamdeo (the God of passions and lust), the demon Tripura, Bhava (the mortal world, thereby freeing the creature from its fear), the fire-sacrifice of Dakshaprajapati, the elephant, the demon Andhakaasur, and Yamraj (the God of Death) himself—verily, I worship and adore this Lord (Shiva). (9)

अखर्वसर्वमङ्गलाकलाकदम्बमञ्जरी—रसप्रवाहमाधुरीविजृम्भणामधुव्रतम्_ L
 स्मरान्तकं_पुरान्तकं_भवान्तकं_मखान्तकं_गजान्तकान्धकान्तकं_तमन्तकान्तकं_भजे_ ॥१० ॥

akharvasarvamaṅgalākālākadambamanjārī-
 raspravāhamādhurīvijṛmḥṇāmadhuvratam.
 smarāntakaṁ purāntakaṁ bhavāntakaṁ makhāntakaṁ
 gajāntakāndhakāntakaṁ tamantakāntakaṁ bhajāē..10..

The Lord (Shiva) who is like the bee that constantly drinks and the ever-increasing supply of sweet nectar overflowing from the core of the lotus flower represented by the charm and beauty of the daughter of the mountains (i.e. Parvati, Shiva's divine consort) who has no sense of pride and false airs of superiority at all (i.e. Parvati is simple, humble and courteous inspite of her being the Mother Goddess of creation), and is the one who had destroyed Kaamdeo (the God of passion and lust), the demon Tripura, Bhava (fear of the mortal world), the sacrifice of Daksha-Prajapati (because he had become arrogant and haughty), the elephant, the demon Andhakaasur and the God of death known as Yam—verily, I worship and adore the same Lord Shiva. (10)

जयत्वदभ्रविभ्रमभ्रमद्भुजङ्गमश्वस—द्विनिर्गमत्क्रमस्फुरत्करालभालहव्यवाद्_ L

धिमिद्धिमिद्धिमिद्ध्वनन्मृदङ्गतुङ्गमङ्गल—ध्वनिक्रममप्रवर्तितप्रचण्डताण्डवः_शिवः_॥११॥

jayatvadabhnavibhramabhramadbhujāṅgamaśvasa-

dvinirgamatkramasphuratkarālabhālahavyavāṭ.

dhimid'dhimid'dhimid'dhvananmr̥ḍaṅgatuṅgamaṅgala-

dhvanikramamapravartitapraçaṇḍatāṇḍavaḥ śivaḥ..11..

Glory to Lord Shiva on whose forehead the fierce fire that burns there iternally is being whipped and fanned by the hot breath that emanates with a fierce hissing sound from the swaying hood of the mighty serpent that slithers swiftly from side to side on the head of the Lord, and who is dancing the fierce 'Taandav Dance' (of death and destruction) at a slow pace, with gravity, somberness and intense seriousness of demeanours, to the beat of the 'Mridang' (a timbrel; or a kind of tambourine). (11)

दृषद्विचित्रतल्पयोर्भुजङ्गमौक्तिकस्रजो—गरिष्ठरत्नलोष्ठयोः_सुहृद्विपक्षपक्षयोः_ L

तृणारविन्दचक्षुषो_प्रजामहीमहेन्द्रयोः_समप्रवृत्तिकः_कदा_सदाशिवं_भजाम्यहम्_॥१२॥

dr̥ṣadvicitratālpayōrbhujāṅgamauktikastrajō-rgariṣṭharatnalōṣṭhayōḥ

suhṛdvipakṣapakṣayōḥ.

tṛṇāravindacakṣuṣō prajāmahīmahēndrayōḥ samapravṛttikaḥ kadā sadāśivaṁ

bhajāmyaham..12..

When will I understand and realise the great spiritual truth of 'non-duality' that would make me wise enough to grasp the essence (Tattva) of Lord Shiva as being the 'universal, uniform and non-dual Truth' of creation, as being the Lord who is the Supreme Being and the cosmic Consciousness that has been revealed in the form of this creation, that the Lord lives in each unit and entity of creation in a uniform manner irrespective of the physical form the individual units or entities take, and that there is nothing in creation that is not Shiva. In other words, whatever exists is a form of Shiva.

Therefore, when will I be able to worship and offer my obeisance to this Supreme Lord of creation by seeing him everywhere, in each unit and entity of creation, equally and without discrimination? When will I be wise and enlightened enough to see and worship my Lord in a stone as well as a soft bedsheet, in a serpent as well as a garland of pearls, in a collection of priceless gems and precious stones as well as a pod or ball of clay or earth, in a friend as well as in an enemy, in an unattractive blade of reed or grass as well as in a charming woman with beautiful eyes

that resemble a lotus flower, and a benevolent Lord who takes care of his subjects and is easily accessible to them as well as an emperor who rules over the vast earth (and therefore is inaccessible to a common man and is unconcerned about individual problems). (12)

कदा_निलिम्पनिर्झरीनिकुञ्जकोटरे_वसन्_विमुक्तदुर्मतिः_सदा_शिरःस्थमञ्जलिं_वहन्_।
विलोललोललोचनो_ललामभाललग्नकः_शिवेति_मन्त्रमुच्चरन्_कदा_सुखी_भवाम्यहम्_॥३॥

kadā nilimpanirjharīnikunjakōṭarē vasan vimuktadurmatih sadā
śiraḥsthamanjalim vahan.
vilōlalōlalōcanō lalāmabhālagnakah śivēti mantramuccaran kadā sukhī
bhavāmyaham..13..

When will I be overwhelmed with ecstasy and spiritual bliss as I remain focused on the most charming form of Lord Chandrashekhar who has a broad forehead on which the crescent moon looks admirable, after I have abandoned all my evil thoughts and demeanours while I live in a secluded forested area on the banks of the holy river Ganges, with hands held together above my head in a posture of prayer and submission, as well as with my eyes full of tears of affection for the Lord and having an intense eagerness to have a divine vision of the adorable Lord as I faithfully and constantly repeat his holy Mantra ‘Shiva-Shiva’? (13)

इमं_हि_नित्यमेवमुक्तमुत्तमोत्तमं_स्तवं_पठन्स्मरन्ब्रुवन्नरो_विशुद्धिमेति_सन्ततम्_।
हरे_गुरौ_सुभक्तिमाशु_याति_नान्यथा_गतिं_विमोहनं_हि_देहिनां_सुशङ्करस्य_चिन्तनम्_॥४॥

imam hi nityamēvamuktamuttamōttamaṁ stavam paṭhansmaranbruvannarō
viśud'dhimēti santatam.
harē gurau subhaktimāśu yāti nān'yathā gatim vimōhanam hi dēhinām
suśaṅkarasya cintanam..14..

In this way, any person who reads, remembers, repeats and chants this excellent hymn regularly on a daily basis remains always pure and holy. He is soon able to obtain Bhakti (devotion) for Lord Shiva who is the Guru (moral preceptor and guide) of even the Gods. Such a man never confronts adversities and situations that are detrimental for his well-being, whether spiritual or worldly. Verily this is a fact that having devotion for Lord Shiva and constantly remembering the Lord or meditating upon him eliminates all sorts of delusions and spiritual miseries of all living beings. (14)

पूजावसानसमये_दशवक्त्रगीतं_यः_शम्भुपूजनपरं_पठति_प्रदोषे_।
तस्य_स्थिरां_रथगजेन्द्रतुरङ्गयुक्तां_लक्ष्मीं_सदैव_सुमुखीं_प्रददाति_शम्भुः_॥५॥
इति_श्रीरावणकृतं_शिवताण्डवस्तोत्रं_सम्पूर्णम्_।

pūjāvasānasamayē daśavaktragītam yaḥ śambhupūjanaparam paṭhati
pradōṣē.
tasya sthirām rathagajēndraturāṅgayuktām lakṣmīm sadaiva sumukhīm
pradadāti śambhuḥ..15..

iti śrīrāvaṇakṛtaṃ śivatāṇḍavastōtraṃ sampūrṇam.

A person who invokes the blessings of Lord Shiva by using this Stotra composed by Ravana to worship Lord Shambhu after having completed his daily routine worship rituals in the evening pleases the Lord who bestows the worshipper with wealth and prosperity symbolized by chariots, elephants, horses etc. (representing all sorts of worldly comforts and material well-being comparable to a king's) that are stable and lasting. (15)

Thus ends the Shiva-Taandav Stotra composed by Ravana (the demon king of Lanka and one of the greatest devotees of Lord Shiva).

Thus ends the hymn called 'śivatāṇḍavastōtraṃ' by Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(11) Sri Pashupatashtak Stotra

(śrīpaśupatyaṣṭakam)

Sri Pashupatya Ashtakam—This hymn has eight verses (‘Ashtakam = 8) dedicated to Lord Shiva in his form as the Lord of all living beings of the animal kingdom (Pashu = animal).

श्रीपशुपत्यष्टकम्

—
ध्यानम्

ध्यायेन्नित्यं महेशं रजतगिरिनिभं चारुचन्द्रावतंसं रत्नाकल्पोज्ज्वलाङ्गं परशुमृगवराभीतिहस्तं
प्रसन्नम् ।
पद्मासीनं समन्तात्स्तुतममरणैर्व्याघ्रकृत्तिं वसानं विश्वाद्यं विश्वबीजं निखिलभयहरं पञ्चवक्त्रं
त्रिनेत्रम् ।१।।

śrīpaśupatyaṣṭakam
dhyānam

dhyāyēnnityam mahēśam rajatagirinibham cārucandrāvantasam
ratnākalpōjjvalāṅga paraśumrgavarābhītihastam prasannam.
padmāsīnam samantātstutamamaragaṇairvyāghrakṛttim vasānam
viśvādyam viśvabījam nikhilabhayaharam pañcavaktram trinētram..1..

One must meditate upon and focus his attention on the holy and divine form of Lord Mahesh (literally meaning the Great Isha or the Great Lord—an epithet of Shiva) whose radiance is like a mountain of silver, who wears the crescent moon as his ornament, whose body is illuminated by the light emanating from gem-studded adornments of various kinds and descriptions, whose two hands hold an axe and a deer while the other two hands are held in postures of Var (granting boons) and Abhaya (granting fearlessness), who is ever cheerful and happy, who sits on a seat of lotus flowers (or—who sits in the lotus posture), who is being offered prayers by the Gods who stand encircling him, who wears the hide of a tiger, who was present at the beginning of creation, who is the initiator or progenitor of this world, who is the seed from which this universe has emerged, who is the eliminator of all fears and torments, and who has five mouths (heads) and three eyes. (1)

स्तोत्रम्

पशुपतिं_द्युपतिं_धरणीपतिं_भुजगलोकपतिं_च_सतीपतिम्_।
 प्रणतभक्तजनार्तिहरं_परं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥१॥

stōtram

paśupatiṁ dyupatiṁ dharaṇīpatiṁ bhujagalōkapatim ca satīpatim.
 praṇatabhaktajanārtiharam param bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..1..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva who is the Supreme Lord of all living beings as well as of the earth, the heaven and the nether world of serpents, who is the dear husband of the daughter of Daksha (i.e. Parvati), who removes the miseries and troubles of those who have taken his refuge and shelter as well as are his devotees, who is the Supreme Being himself, and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (1)

न_जनको_जननी_न_च_सोदरो_न_तनयो_न_च_भूरिबलं_कुलम्_।
 अवति_कोऽपि_न_कालवशं_गतं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥२॥

na janakō jananī na ca sōdarō na tanayō na ca bhūribalaṁ kulam.
 avati kō'pi na kālavaśaṁ gataṁ bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..2..

Oh human beings! No one can save a living being who is under the grip of Kaal (death, time and adverse circumstances)—neither the father, nor the mother, the brother, the son, or one's strength and powers of the family can be of any help whatsoever. Therefore, it is wise for you to have devotion and affection for the Lord (Shiva) who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (2)

मुरजडिण्डिमवाद्यविलक्षणं_मधुरपञ्चमनादविशारदम्_।
 प्रमथभूतगणैरपि_सेवितं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥३॥

murajaḍiṇḍimavādyavilakṣaṇaṁ madhurapañcamanādaviśāradam.
 pramathabhūtagaṇairapi sēvitaṁ bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..3..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva who is an expert in playing the drum, timbrel and the tambourine, who is an expert singer who can sing with all finery and sweetness all the notes and tones of music, who is being served by ghosts and spirits, and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (3)

शरणदं_सुखदं_शरणान्वितं_शिव_शिवेति_शिवेति_नतं_नृणाम्_।
 अभयदं_करुणावरुणालयं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥४॥

śaraṇadaṁ sukhadam śaraṇānvitam śiva śivēti śivēti nataṁ nr̥ṇām.
abhayadaṁ karuṇāvaruṇālayam bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..4..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva before whom all men bow their heads while muttering the holy name 'Shiva-Shiva-Shiva' reverentially, who gives happiness to those who have taken his shelter and refuse, who grants joy and fearlessness, who is an ocean of mercy and compassion, and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (4)_

नरशिरोरचितं_मणिकुण्डलं_भुजगहारमुदं_वृषभध्वजम्_।
चितिरजोधवलीकृतविग्रहं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥५॥

naraśirōracitam maṇikuṇḍalam bhujagahāramudam vṛṣabhadhvajam.
citirajōdhavalīkṛtavigrahaṁ bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..5..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva who wears skulls dangling from his ears in the form of large ear-rings and garlands made of serpents, whose body is smeared with ash taken from a burnt funeral pile, whose flag has an emblem of a bull (Nandi), and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (5)_

मखविनाशकरं_शशिशेखरं_सततमध्वरभाजि_फलप्रदम्_।
प्रलयदग्धसुरासुरमानवं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥६॥

makhavināśakaram śaśīśekharam satatamadhvarabhāji phalapradam.
pralayadagghasurāsuraṁānavam bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..6..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva who had destroyed the sacrifice of Daksha-Prajapati (because he had become arrogant and haughty), on whose head the moon looks adorable, who always grants rewards to those who do fire sacrifices, who burns to ashes all forms of creation including the Gods, the demons and the humans in the great fire of doomsday (representing the conclusion of one phase of creation), and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (6)

मदमपास्य_चिरं_हृदि_संस्थितं_मरणजन्मजराभयपीडितम्_।
जगदुदीक्ष्य_समीपभयाकुलं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥७॥

madamapāsya ciram hr̥di sansthitam maraṇajanmajarābhayapīḍitam.
jagadudīkṣya samīpabhayākulam bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim..7..

Oh human beings! Look at this world tormented by a continuous fear from the cycle of birth, old age and death. This fear is staring right in your face too. Hence, you must discard arrogance and haughtiness that you have accumulated over time in your heart, and instead offer your sincere worship to Lord Shiva who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (7)

हरिविरञ्चिसुराधिपपूजितं_यमजनेशधनेशनमस्कृतम्_।
 त्रिनयनं_भुवनत्रितयाधिपं_भजत_रे_मनुजा_गिरिजापतिम्_॥८॥

harivirañcisurādhīpapūjitaṁ yamajanēśadhanēśanamaskṛtaṁ.
 trinayanam̐ bhuvanatritayādhipaṁ bhajata rē manujā girijāpatim̐..8..

Oh human beings! Worship Lord Shiva who is worshipped even by Vishnu (the sustainer of creation), Brahma (the creator) and Indra (the king of Gods), before whom Yam (the God of death) and Kuber (the treasurer of Gods) bow their heads reverentially, who has three eyes, who is the supreme Lord of the three worlds (consisting of the heaven, the earth and the nether world), and who is the dear husband of Girija (the daughter of the mountains, i.e. Uma-Parvati). (8)

पशुपतेरिदमष्टकमद्भुतं_विरचितं_पृथिवीपतिसूरिणा_।
 पठति_संश्रुणुते_मनुजः_सदा_शिवपुरीं_वसते_लभते_मुदम्_॥९॥
 इति_श्रीपृथिवीपतिसूरिविरचितं_श्रीपशुपत्यष्टकं_सम्पूर्णम्_।

paśupatēridamaṣṭakamadbhutaṁ viracitaṁ pṛthivīpatisūrīṇā.
 paṭhati sanśṛṇutē manujaḥ sadā śivapurīm̐ vasatē labhatē mudam̐..9..

iti śrīpṛthivīpatisūriviracitaṁ śrīpaśupatyāṣṭakaṁ sampūrṇam.

A person who regularly reads and hears this eight-verse hymn composed by Suri, the Lord of earth (a great King), and dedicated to Lord Pashupati (Shiva)—verily, such person is able to live in the divine abode of Shiva known as ‘Shiva-puri’ and become happy and contented. (9)

Thus ends the hymn called ‘śrīpaśupatyāṣṭakaṁ’ dedicated to Lord Shiva.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(12) Sri Vishwa-naath Astakam

(śrīviśvanāthāṣṭakam)

Sri Vishwanaath Ashtak—This hymn consisting of eight verses of two lines each is dedicated to Lord Shiva as the Supreme Lord of this world. [Vishwa = the entire world; Nath = Lord; Ashtak = 8.]

श्रीविश्वनाथाष्टकम्_

—
गङ्गातरङ्गरमणीयजटाकलापं_गौरीनिरन्तरविभूषितवामभागम्_ L
नारायणप्रियमनङ्गमदापहारं_वाराणसीपुरपतिं_भज_विश्वनाथम्_॥१॥

śrīviśvanāthāṣṭakam

gaṅgātaraṅgaramaṇīyajaṭākālāpaṁ gaurīnirantaravibhūṣitavāmabhāgam.
nārāyaṇapriyamanaṅgamadāpahāraṁ vārāṇasīpurapatīṁ bhaja
viśvanātham..1..

One must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi (a pilgrim town said to be the terrestrial abode of Shiva), whose crown of matted hairs look wonderful as the swift currents of river Ganges swirl and splash around them, whose left side is always adorned by Gauri (his divine consort and mother goddess Parvati-Uma), who is very dear to Narayan (Lord Vishnu, the sustainer of creation and the a manifested form of the Supreme Being known as Brahm), and who had destroyed the arrogance and pride of Kaamdeo (the God of passions and lust). (1)

वाचामगोचरमनेकगुणस्वरूपं_वागीशविष्णुसुरसेवितपादपीठम्_ L
वामेन_विग्रहवरेण_कलत्रवन्तं_ L_वाराणसी_॥२॥

vācāmagōcaramanēkaguṇasvarūpaṁ vāgīśaviṣṇusurasēvitapādapīṭham.
vāmēna vīgrahavarēṇa kalatravantāṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..2..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who cannot be described in words, who has countless forms and virtues, whose footwear is worshipped and served by such exalted Gods as Brahma, Vishnu and other Gods, and whose divine wife is always present to his left.

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (2)

भूताधिपं_भुजगभूषणभूषिताङ्गं_व्याघ्राजिनाम्बरधरं_जटिलं_त्रिनेत्रम्_ L
पाशाङ्कुशाभयवरप्रदशूलपाणिं_ L वाराणसी०_ ॥३॥

bhūtādhīpaṁ bhujagabhūṣaṇabhūṣitāṅgaṁ vyāghrājinaṁbaradharaṁ jaṭilaṁ
trinētram. pāśāṅkuśābhayavarapradaśūlapāṇiṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..3..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who is the Lord of ghosts and phantoms, whose divine body is adorned by serpents which form his ornaments, who wears the hide of a tiger as his attire, who has a snare, a goad and a trident in his hands besides holding them in the posture of Var and Abhaya (granting boons and fearlessness respectively), and who wears a crown of matted hairs on his head and has three eyes.

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (3)

शीतांशुशोभितकिरीटविराजमानं_भालेक्षणानलविशोषितपञ्चबाणम्_ L
नागाधिपारचितभासुरकर्णपूरं_ L वाराणसी०_ ॥४॥

śītāṁśuśobhitakirīṭavirājamānaṁ bhālēkṣaṇānalaviśoṣitapañcabāṇam.
nāgādhīpāracitabhāsurakarṇapūraṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..4..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva whose head is adorned by a crown (of matted hairs) that is illuminated by the glorious light of the crescent moon, who had burnt Kaamdeo with the fire spewing out of the third eye located on his forehead, and from whose ears dangle large ear-rings made of huge serpents with a glistening skin that shines when the Lord moves his head.

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (4)

पञ्चाननं_दुरितमत्तमतङ्गजानां_नागान्तकं_दनुजपुङ्गवपन्नगानाम्_ L
दावानलं_मरणशोकजराटवीनां_ L वाराणसी०_ ॥५॥

pañcānanaṁ duritamattamataṅgajānāṁ nāgāntakaṁ
danujapuṅgavapannagānām.
dāvānalaṁ maraṇaśōkajarāṭavīnāṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..5..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who is akin to a lion that vanquishes and kills very easily a mad and intoxicated elephant symbolized by sins and misdeeds of a creature, who is like Garud (the vehicle of Lord Vishnu; the eagle or falcon) that devours all the serpents representing the demons (i.e. evil, pervert, cruel and sinful creatures) of the world, and who is equivalent to the fierce Davanal (forest fire) that destroys the dense forest symbolized by all the horrors associated associated with old age, death and sorrows that are an inseparable part of life in this world.

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (5)

तेजोमयं_सगुणनिर्गुणमद्वितीय—मानन्दकन्दमपराजितमप्रमेयम्_।
नागात्मकं_सकलनिष्कलमात्मरूपं_। वाराणसी०_॥६॥

tējōmayam saguṇanirguṇamadvītiya-mānandakandamaparājītamapramēyam.
nāgātmakam sakalanīṣkalamātmārūpaṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..6..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who is an embodiment of splendour and radiance, who is Saguna as well as Nirguna (i.e. Shiva encompasses all aspects of creation—the grosser aspect that has attributes and forms, as well as that aspect that is subtle, without attributes and formless), who is Advitiya (unique, matchless, without comparison, without parallel), who is Anand-Kanda (the very source of bliss and happiness), who is Aparajeet (invincible, almighty) and Atulniya (uncomparable, matchless).

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who bears serpents on his body, whose divine form represents and embodies all aspects of creation (Sakal), but at the same time it is free from the taints and blemishes or faults and shortcomings that are an integral part of the same creation (Nishkal), and is the Lord who represents the Atma (the soul, the essence, the fundamental truth, the cosmic Consciousness) of this creation.

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (6)

रागादिदोषरहितं_स्वजनानुरागं_वैराग्यशान्तिनिलयं_गिरिजासहायम्_।
माधुर्यधैर्यसुभगं_गरलाभिरामं_। वाराणसी०_॥७॥

rāgādidōṣarahitam svajanānurāgaṁ vairāgyaśāntinīlayam girijāsahāyam.
mādhuryadhairyasubhagaṁ garalābhirāmaṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..7..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who is free from such faults and shortcomings as having Raag (attachments, infatuations, longings) and Dwesh (envy, jealousy, animosity, hatredetc. (that invariably taint all other creatures of this creation), who is always kind and compassionate towards his devotees, who is an abode/treasury of the magnificent spiritual virtues of Vairagya (renunciation, detachment, dispassion towards all material things and sense objects of this mortal world) and Shanti (peace, tranquility and serenity), who is always accompanied by Girija (his divine consort Parvati-Uma, the divine Mother Goddess), who looks very affable and charming with his grand virtues of Dhairya (patience, courage, resilience, forbearance and tolerance) and Madhurya (sweet temperament and friendly nature), and who looks very attractive with his dark-tinged throat showing signs of the poison located there (that he had drunk at the time of the churning of the ocean to prevent the poison from scalding this creation and burning it down).

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (7)

आशा_विहाय_परिहृत्य_परस्य_निन्दां_पापे_रतिं_च_सुनिवार्य_मनः_समाधौ_।

आहाद_हृत्कमलमध्यगतं_परेशं_।_वाराणसी०_॥८॥

āśā vihāya parihr̥ṭya parasya nindāṁ pāpē ratim ca sunivārya manaḥ
samādhau.

āhāda hr̥ṭkamalamadhyagataṁ parēśaṁ. vārāṇasī.. ..8..

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva after having abandoned all hopes and expectations from any other entity in this world, after having discarded the tendency to criticize and find faults with others, and after having turned oneself away from sins and misdeeds.

One must worship and have devotion for Lord Shiva who shines in the subtle lotus present in one's subtle heart (inner-self) by focusing the mind and the sub-conscious on the transcendental state of existence of consciousness that is attained during Samadhi (higher stages of undiluted and undisturbed meditation that becomes permanent in as much as the practitioner lives in this state of transcendental existence every moment of his life).

[In other words, one must worship Lord Shiva with full devotion and concentration, and after having pulled his mind and sub-conscious away from the temptations of the material world of sense objects. In the state of Samadhi, the worshipper draws immense bliss and experiences beatitude and felicity that are the characters of the true 'self' known as the Atma. This Atma is nothing but pure consciousness; it is self-illuminated like the glow-worm, and it lives in the heart of all living beings. The Atma is the only unequivocal Truth of this existence. It is beautiful and pure because it is the 'truth', and it represents Shiva-Tattwa—the spiritual essence known as 'Shiva', the truth and reality of existence. Rest of the world is false and gross, and if Shiva is removed from this world, nothing worthwhile remains.]

Verily, one must have devotion for and worship Lord Shiva who is the Lord of the entire world, the Lord of the Gods, and the Lord of Varanasi. (8)

वाराणसीपुरपतेः_स्तवनं_शिवस्य_व्याख्यातमष्टकमिदं_पठते_मनुष्यः_।_

विद्यां_श्रियं_विपुलसौख्यमनन्तकीर्तिं_सम्प्राप्य_देहविलये_लभते_च_मोक्षम्_॥९॥

vārāṇasīpurapatēḥ stavanaṁ śivasya vyākhyātamaṣṭakamidaṁ paṭhatē
manuṣyaḥ.

vidyāṁ śriyaṁ vipulasaukhyamanantakīrtim samprāpya dēhavilayē labhatē ca
mōkṣam..9..

A person who hears, reads and recites this eight-stanza Stotra dedicated to Lord Shiva who is the Lord of Varanasi is able to attain Vidya (knowledge and erudition), Sri (material prosperity and wealth), an immense amount of happiness and cheer (Vipul Saukhya), and infinite Kirti (success, fame, good name, majesty and aura of greatness) while he is alive, and attains Moksha (salvation and emancipation) at the time of leaving the body (i.e. at the time of death). (9)

विश्वनाथाष्टकमिदं_यः_पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ_।_

शिवलोकमवाप्नोति_शिवेन_सह_मोदते_॥९०॥

इति श्रीमहर्षिव्यासप्रणीतं श्रीविश्वनाथाष्टकं सम्पूर्णम् ।

viśvanāthāṣṭakamidam yaḥ paṭhēcchivasannidhau.
śivalōkamavāpnōti śivēna saha mōdatē..10..

iti śrīmaharṣivyāsapraṇītaṁ śrīviśvanāthāṣṭakaṁ sampūrṇam.

A person who recites this Stotra called 'Vishwanaathaa-shtak' in front of Lord Shiva (i.e. in front of his symbol known as the Lingam or his portrait) is able to attain the divine abode of Lord Shiva and live happily with the Lord there. (10)

Thus ends the hymn called 'śrīviśvanāthāṣṭakaṁ' composed by sage Veda Vyas.

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(13) Maha Mritunjaya Mantra

13. The Maha Mritunjaya Mantra of Lord Shiva is invoked to tide over fear of death, as when suffering from some serious disease or an imminent attack from one's enemy. It is said to be very powerful though it is very brief. Its short form is an aid for quick recital in cases of emergencies. But since it is a Tantric form of Mantra, great care must be taken while reciting it, for if any of the syllable is mispronounced or done with disbelief, it is said to be more harmful than being useful.

ॐ हौं जूं सः। ॐ भूः भुवः स्वः।

ॐ त्रयम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।

उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात्।।

ॐ स्वः भुवः भूः ॐ। ॐ सः जूं हौं।

aum hraum̄ jūm̄ saḥ / aum bhūrbhuvah̄ svah̄ /

Om tryambakam yajāmahe sugandhim puṣṭi-varadhanam |

urvārukam-iva bandhanā mṛtyormukṣīya māmṛitāat ||

aum svah̄ bhuvah̄ bhūr / aum saḥ jūm̄ hraum̄ aum̄m̄ /

OM Salutations! We worship (adore, honour and revere—‘yajāmahe’) the three-eyed Lord (Shiva; “tryambakam”) from whom a divine fragrance of holiness effuses (sugandhim), and who nourishes and nurtures all beings (puṣṭi-varadhanam).

Even as the ripened (or a large sized) cucumber or melon (‘urvārukam’), with the help of the gardener, is freed from its bondage (or a birth-tie to the creeper or the vine to which is attached from birth—bandhanā), may the Lord liberate us from the bounds of death for the sake of providing us with immortality (mṛtyormukṣīya māmṛitāat).

[This stanza can be read in the following two manners also—(i) ‘Oh Lord! I am bound down to the vine (symbolising this mortal perishable world of birth and death) just like a cucumber or melon is to its vine. Please liberate me from this shackle and give me eternal freedom.’

(ii) ‘Oh Lord! I am suffering from a big fear (from disease or some other cause which is as big as a cucumber or melon). Please free me from this dread and liberate me just as the cucumber is freed from its bondage to the creeper (by the gardener who plucks it and sets it free).’]

[Note—In this hymn, the cucumber or the melon is compared to the suffering person, the size of the cucumber to the gravity of his problems, and the vine or the creeper to the problem itself. The gardener is Lord Shiva. Just as the gardener frees the cucumber from its bondage to the creeper by simply picking it up and cutting off its tether by which it is attached to the stem, the worshipper requests Lord Shiva to free him from his problems and miseries.

In some Hindu religious books, the complete mantra is preceded by ‘aum hraum̐ jūm̐ saḥ / aum bhūrbhuvah̐ svaḥ’, and followed by ‘aum svaḥ bhuvah̐ bhūr / aum saḥ jūm̐ hraum̐ aum̐’, which is its Tantric version.

There are at least two versions of the “Tryambakam Mantra” found in the Rudrashtadyayi and in the Shukla/Krishna Yajur Veda. The versions are similar with variation in a few syllables: aum tryambakaṁ yajāmahe sugandhim̐ pativedanam, urvārukam-iva bandhanānmṛtyormukṣīya māmutaḥ.

"Aum Jum Sah" is the Mahamrityunjaya Bīja mantra.

‘OM’ is an address for the Supreme Being, the most exalted One. It is used to salute the Lord.]

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The Legend of Lord Shiva BOOK 2

The Sacred Hymns of Lord Shiva

(14) Neelkantha Aghorastra Stotra

The 'NeelKantha Aghorastra Stotra' is an esoteric hymn that is employed in occult forms of worship to destroy sins and their horrendous consequences, to make wealth and prosperity stable, to have health and freedom from diseases, to overcome fever, to prevent premature death, to fight tuberculosis and other infectious diseases such as leprosy, and to get rid of fear of ghosts and evil spirits.

विनियोगः— ॐ अस्य श्री भगवान् नीलकण्ठ सदा—शिव—स्तोत्र मंत्रस्य श्री ब्रह्मा ऋषिः, अनुष्टुप छन्दः, श्री नीलकण्ठ सदाशिवो देवता, ब्रह्म बीजं, पार्वती शक्तिः, मम समस्त पाप क्षयार्थं क्षेम—स्थै—आयु—आरोग्य—अभिवृद्धयर्थं मोक्षादि—चतुर्वर्ग—साधनार्थं च श्री नीलकण्ठ—सदाशिव—प्रसाद—सिद्धयर्थे जपे विनियोगः ।

viniyogaḥ

ōm asya śrī bhagavāna nīlakaṅṭha sadā-śiva-stōtra mantrasya śrī brahmā ṛṣiḥ, anuṣṭhupa chandaḥ, śrī nīlakaṅṭha sadāśivō dēvatā, brahma bījaṃ, pārvatī śaktiḥ, mama samasta pāpa kṣayārthaṃ kṣēma-sthair-āyu-ārōgya-abhivr'ddhayarthaṃ mōkṣādi-caturvarga-sādhanārthaṃ ca śrī nīlakaṅṭha-sadāśiva-prasāda-sid'dhayaarthē japē viniyogaḥ.

This esoteric Stotra has Brahma as its Rishi (i.e. it was first conceptualized by the creator Brahma); its composing style is known as Anushtup Chanda; the deity worshipped by it is Lord Neelkantha (i.e. Lord Shiva with the blue throat); its Beej (seed) is Brhma, the Supreme Being and the cosmic Consciousness (i.e. it has its origin in the vibrations produced by the cosmic Consciousness); and its Shakti (power and dynamic energy) is Parvati (i.e. it is made effective by the blessings of Mother Goddess Parvati, the divine consort of Lord Shiva).

This hymn is invoked for the welfare of the worshipper and help him get rid of his problems such as making it possible to destroy his sins, make his wealth and health steady, help him overcome diseases and torments associated with old age, help him attain liberation and deliverance, and so on.

All the four sections of the society, viz. the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras benefit by its invocation and repetition. This pleases Lord Shiva with the blue throat.

ऋष्यादि—न्यासः— श्री ब्रह्मा ऋषये नमः शिरसि । अनुष्टुप छन्दसे नमः मुखे । श्री नीलकण्ठ सदाशिव देवतायै नमः हृदि । ब्रह्म बीजाय नमः लिंगे । पार्वती शक्त्यै नमः नाभौ । मम

समस्त_ पाप_ क्षयार्थ_ क्षेम—स्थै—आर्यु—आरोग्य—अभिवृद्धयर्थ_ मोक्षादि—चतुर्वर्ग—साधनार्थ_ च_ श्री_ नीलकण्ठ—सदाशिव—प्रसाद—सिद्धयर्थे_ जपे_ विनियोगाय_ नमः_ सर्वांगे_ ।

r̥ṣyādi-nyāsaḥ

śrī brahmā r̥ṣayē namaḥ śīrasi. anuṣṭupa chandasē namaḥ mukhē. śrī nīlakaṇṭha sadāśiva dēvatāyai namaḥ hr̥di. brahma bijāya namaḥ liṅgē. pārvatī śaktyai namaḥ nābhau. mama samasta pāpa kṣayārthaṁ kṣēma-sthair-āyu-ārōgya-abhivr̥ddhayarthaṁ mōkṣādi-caturvarga-sādhanārthaṁ ca śrī nīlakaṇṭha-sadāśiva-prasāda-siddhayarthē japē viniyō viniyōgāya namaḥ sarvāṅgē.

Now, the process of doing Anga Nyas is being described. [The ‘Anga Nyas’ is a method to purify the different parts of the body by invoking a part of the Mantra in each such part, and also to establish the Mantra’s inherent power there to give it constant protection.]

The head is touched by while pronouncing the phrase ‘Sri Brahma’. That is, let my head be protected by Brahma, the creator.

Let the Anushtup Chanda empower my mouth.

Let Lord Neelkanth who is the Lord of all the Gods live and protect my heart. I bow before him.

I invoke Brahm on my genitals—i.e. let my sperms (‘Beej’) be empowered by the cosmic power of generation.

Let Parvati bless my navel, and let the Mother Goddess nourish and protect me as she did while I was in her womb. [The navel is also the center of the Nabhi Kand from where all the important Naadis or nerves and veins branch out in the body; it is also the place where the placenta is attached while the creature is still in the mother’s womb, symbolizing a duct that helps inject vital nutrients in the body.]

Let all my sins be destroyed; let me have stable and ever increasing wealth, prosperity and health; let me not die prematurely; let me find liberation and deliverance.

I am offering prayers to Lord Neelkantha with this Stotra to honour and please him so that all my wishes be fulfilled.

—

स्तोत्र

ॐ _ नमो_ नीलकण्ठाय, _ श्वेत—शरीराय, _ सर्पालंकार_ भूषिताय, _ भुजंग_ परिकराय, _ नागयज्ञोपवीताय, _ अनेक_ मृत्यु_ विनाशाय_ नमः। युग_ युगान्त_ काल_ प्रलय—प्रचंडाय, _ प्रज्वाल—मुखाय_ नमः। दंष्ट्राकराल_ घोर_ रूपाय_ हूं_ हूं_ फट_ स्वाहा। ज्वालामुखाय, _ मंत्र_ करालाय, _ प्रचण्डार्क_ सहस्रांशु_ चण्डाय_ नमः। कर्पूर_ मोद_ परिमलांगाय_ नमः।

—

stōtra

ōm namō nīlakaṇṭhāya, śvēta-śārīrāya, sarpālānkāra bhūṣitāya, bhujāṅga parikarāya, nāgayajñōpavitāya, anēka mṛtyu vināśāya namaḥ. yuga yugānta kāla pralaya-pracaṇḍāya, prajvāla-mukhāya namaḥ. danṣṭrākarāla ghōra

rūpāya hūm hūm phaṭa svāhā. jvālāmukhāya, mantra karālāya, pracaṇḍārka sahastrānsū caṇḍāya namaḥ. karpūra mōda parimalāṅgāya namaḥ.

Om salutations to Lord Neelkantha (blue-throated Lord Shiva) who has a fair complexion, is adorned by serpents wrapped around his body, has huge pythons serving him as attendants, wears snakes as the sacred thread across his shoulders, and is the Lord who overcomes death. I bow before him.

At the end of the era, he starts the process of conclusion of the existing world in a fierce doomsday scenario, with fire spewing from his mouth. He assumes a fierce form with horrifying teeth. I offer my oblations to him—Hum, Hum, Phat Swaha.

Tongues of flame leap from his mouth; his Mantra is also awesome; and he assumes the form of thousands of deathly spirits. I bow before him. I offer him worship with camphor and sweets for my auspicious welfare. I bow before him. —

ॐ ई ई नील महानील वज्र वैलक्ष्य मणि माणिक्य मुकुट भूषणाय हन हन हन दहन दहनाय ह्रीं स्फुर स्फुर प्रस्फुर प्रस्फुर घोर घोर तनुरूप चट चट प्रचट प्रचट कह कह वम वम बंध बंध घातय घातय हुं फट् ॐ ह्रां ॐ ह्रीं ॐ ह्रीं स्फुर अघोर रूपाय रथ रथ तंत्र तंत्र चट चट कह कह मद मद दहन दाहनाय ह्रीं स्फुर स्फुर प्रस्फुर प्रस्फुर घोर घोर तनुरूप चट चट प्रचट प्रचट कह कह वम वम बंध बंध घातय घातय हुं फट् जरा मरण भय हूं हूं फट् स्वाहा ।

ōm īm īm nīla mahānīla vajra vailakṣya maṇi māṇikya mukuṭa bhūṣaṇāya hana hana hana dahana dahanāya hrīm sphura sphura prasphura prasphura ghōra ghōra tanurūpa caṭa caṭa pracaṭa pracaṭa kaha kaha vama vama bandha bandha ghātaya ghātaya huṁ phaṭ ōm hrām ōm hrīm ōm hrīm sphura aghōra rūpāya ratha ratha tantra tantra caṭa caṭa kaha kaha mada mada dahana dāhanāya hrīm sphura sphura prasphura prasphura ghōra ghōra tanurūpa caṭa caṭa pracaṭa pracaṭa kaha kaha vama vama bandha bandha ghātaya ghātaya huṁ phaṭa jarā maraṇa bhaya hūm hūm phaṭa svāhā.

[This part of the Stotra consists of magical words that are used during black-magic rituals or occult forms of worship. So, only a brief outline of their meaning is given below—]

Om salutations to Lord who has a blue coloured throat like the colour of the vast sky as well as the blue water of the ocean that reflects this colour. He has a crown studded with gems. He is fierce so much so that he burns everything with his wrath. His form and countenance are fierce. Though of a terrible form, the Lord can help one to overcome fear of death. I offer my oblations to him.

अनन्ताघोर ज्वर मरण भय क्षय कुष्ठ व्याधि विनाशाय, शाकिनी डाकिनी ब्रह्मराक्षस दैत्य दानव बन्धनाय, अपस्मार भूत बैताल डाकिनी शाकिनी सर्व ग्रह विनाशाय, मंत्र कोटि प्रकटाय पर विद्योच्छेदनाय, हूं हूं फट् स्वाहा । आत्म मंत्र सरंक्षणाय नमः ।

anantāghōra jvara maraṇa bhaya kṣaya kuṣṭha vyādhi vināśāya, śākinī ḍākinī brahmarākṣasa daitya dānava bandhanāya, apasmāra bhūta baitāla ḍākinī śākinī sarva graha vināśāya, mantra kōṭi prakatāya para vidyōcchēdanāya, hūm hūm phaṭa svāhā. ātma mantra saṅrakṣaṇāya namaḥ.

The Lord has an infinite form and helps the worshipper to overcome the greatest of horrors and fear arising out of the gravest of fevers, death, destruction, tuberculosis, leprosy, and other degenerative diseases. He helps overcome fear from ghosts, phantoms, demons, hobgoblins and evil spirits, as well as from malignant stars, and harmful thousands of Mantras. Hum, Hum, Phat Swaha. I bow before him and say this hymn to afford protection to my Atma, my soul.

ॐ ह्रां ह्रीं ह्रौं नमो भूत डामरी ज्वाल वश भूतानां द्वादश भूतानां त्रयोदश षोडश प्रेतानां पंच दश डाकिनी शाकिनीनां हन हन । दहन दारनाथ ! एकाहिक द्वयाहिक त्रयाहिक चातुर्थिक पंचाहिक व्याघ्र पादान्त वातादि वात सरिक कफ पित्तक काश श्वास श्लेष्मादिकं दह दह छिन्धि छिन्धि श्रीमहादेव निर्मित स्तंभन मोहन वश्याकर्षणोच्चाटन कीलना द्वेषण इति षट् कर्माणि वृत्य हूं हूं फट् स्वाहा ।

ōm hrām hrīm haum namō bhūta ḍāmarī jvāla vaśa bhūtānām dvādaśa bhūtānām trayōdaśa ṣōḍaśa prētānām pañca daśa ḍākinī śākinīnām hana hana. dahana dāranātha! ēkāhika dvayāhika trayāhika cāturthika pañcāhika vyāghrā pādānta vātādi vāta sarika kapha pittaka kāśa śvāsa ślēṣmādikam daha daha chindhi chindhi śrīmahādēva nirmita stambhana mōhana vaśyākaraṇaṅcātana kīlanā dvēṣaṇa iti ṣaṭa karmāṇi vṛtya hūm hūm phaṭa svāhā.

Om salutations! I bow before the Lord of ghosts, phantoms and hobgoblins of all denominations. Lord, destroy them, destroy them. Burn them of merciful Lord. Destroy the horrors arising out of all sorts of creatures—whether one, two, three, four and five toed, from lions and tigers, from wind and storms, from diseases caused by disturbed vital winds in the body that results in cough, bile, breathlessness, asthma and so on. Destroy them; burn them.

This Stotra designed to worship the Greatest God known as Sri Mahadev is to honour him and pay obeisance to him. I am surrounded by the consequences of my deeds; please protect me and destroy the circle of deeds that surround me. Hum, Hum Phat Swaha.

वात—ज्वर मरण—भय छिन्न छिन्न नेह नेह भूतज्वर प्रेतज्वर पिशाचज्वर रात्रिज्वर शीतज्वर तापज्वर बालज्वर कुमारज्वर अमितज्वर दहनज्वर ब्रह्मज्वर विष्णुज्वर रूद्रज्वर मारीज्वर प्रवेशज्वर कामादि विषमज्वर मारी ज्वर प्रचण्ड घराय प्रमथेश्वर ! शीघ्रं हूं हूं फट् स्वाहा ।

vāta-jvara maraṇa-bhaya chinna chinna nēha nēha bhūtajvara prētajvara piśācajvara rātrijvara śītajvara tāpajvara bālajvara kumārajvara amitajvara dahanajvara brahmajvara viṣṇujvara rūdrajvara mārijvara pravēśajvara

kāmādi viṣamajvara mārī jvara pracaṇḍa gharāya pramathēśvara! śighraṁ
hūm hūm phaṭa svāhā.

Destroy, tear apart and crush to smithereens all my fears of diseases arising out of rheumatism and fever, as well as the constant fear of death, ghosts, spirits, blood thirsty phantoms, rheumatic-fever, fever accompanied by chill, fever with high temperature, fever of children, of grown ups, fever that does not abates, fever that burns the internal organs like they were on fire, Brahm fever, Vishnu fever, Rudra fever (i.e. torments created when these Gods become angry), and Kaam-fever (high agitations, restlessness, temperature and blood pressure generated by passions and lust etc.).

Oh Lord of the ghosts and Pramaths (special category of creatures who are Shiva's attendants)! Destroy soon these and all other fierce fevers that burn me. I offer worship to you—Hum, Hum, Phat Swaha.

ॐ_नमो_नीलकण्ठाय,_दक्षज्वर_ध्वंसनाय_श्री_नीलकण्ठाय_नमः।

ōm namō nīlakaṇṭhāya, dakṣajvara dhvansanāya śrī nīlakaṇṭhāya namaḥ.

Om salutations to Lord Neelkanth; I bow before you. I once again bow before Lord Neelkantha who had once destroyed the sacrifice of Daksha Prajapati (when he had become haughty).

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