

ஸ்ரீமாரதாபுஜங்கம்

{॥ ஸ்ரீமாரதாபுஜங்கம் ॥}

Composed by Shri Chandrashekhara Bharathi Swami of Shringeri.

INTRODUCTION:- These following verses are in praise of Sharada

Devi, the presiding deity at the famous temple at Shringeri in

Karnataka state. They were composed by Shri Chandrashekhara Bharathi

Swami who adorned the Sharada Peetam as its 34th pontiff. He was

a great scholar, and a spiritual Everest. The numerous devotees

who visited Shringeri considered him to be an incarnation of the

Sharada Devi. They used to unburden their woes and problems in his

presence and seek his blessings for their relief. He was greatly

moved by their sufferings which are the consequence of straying

away from the path of dharma and their inability to seek the Lord's

grace by praying to Him. To help them in this matter he composed

many stotras (hymns). These hymns are couched in simple language

so that everyone can recite them. This Sharada Bhujangam is one

such hymn. Herein the saint identifies himself with a lay person

who is suffering because he is burdened with many problems. So,

he prays to the Sharada Devi to take pity on him and grant relief

from the sufferings.

Sharada Devi:- The Goddess Sharadha Devi

is generally worshipped as the goddess of learning and speech.

She is known by the popular name of Sarasvathi and as the wife of

Brahma the god of creation. But, as in the case of all stotrams,

She is depicted here as the Supreme Being capable of giving the

ultimate goal, the supreme bliss (mokSham). The upanishad says that

the Supreme Being alone that appears in many forms like Brahma, Siva,

Vishnu, Indra etc. ஸ ப்ரஹ்ம ஸ பரிவஸ்ஸ ஹரிஸ்ஸேந்த்ரஸ்ஸோக்ஷரஃ
பரமஸ்வராட் || (Narayana suktam.)

Thus, Sarasvathi has

these names in Her 108 namavali -

ஸர்வதேவஸ்துதா = She is worshipped by all gods, சதுர்வர்க-

பலப்ரதா = She will

grant all the four goals and so on. The Mooka kavi says this in his

Mookapanchasati (500 verses in praise of Kamakshi) in the Arya Shatakam

(40).

Beginsmallshloka

வதநாரவிந்த-வக்ஷா-வாமாங்கதட-வஸ்வதீபூதா ।

புருஷத்ரிதயே த்ரேதா புரீத்ரிபா த்வமேவ காமாக்ஷி ॥

Endshlokab

This verse

states that Kamakshi alone is there as the wife of Brahma resident

in His face, of Vishnu

in His chest and Siva in lap on His left side. Another verse in the

same century (78)

salutes Devi saying She is Saraswathi and in that form She appears

as the wife of Brahma, and also has the names Katyayani, Kali,

Kamakoti Kala, Bharati, Bhairavi, Bhadhra, Shakini, Shambhavi, Shiva.

Beginsmallshloka

வித்யே விதாதவிஷயே காத்யாயிநி காலி காமகோடி கலே ।

பாரதி பைரவி பத்ரே ஸாகிநி ஸரீபவி ஸிவே ஸ்துவே பவதீம் ॥

Endshlokab

Lord Krishna says that He (the Supreme Being) alone appears as all deities. Any worship offered to any form and name goes to Him alone and He alone grants the wishes of the worshippers through that form. But such worshippers of these various forms do not realise the truth.

Beginsmallshloka

யோ யோ யர் யர் தந் பக்தஃ ம்ரத்தயா஽ர்சிதுமிச்சதி ।
தஸ்ய தஸ்யாசலர் ம்ரத்தர் தாமேவ விததம்யஹம் ॥ BG(7-21).

Endshlokab

Whichever form a devotee wishes to worship with faith, I make the faith more firm.

Beginsmallshloka

ஸ தயா ம்ரத்தயா யுக்தஃ தஸ்யாராதநமீஹதே ।
லபதே ச ததஃ காமாந் மயைவ விஹிதாந்ஹிதாந் ॥ BG(7-22).

Endshlokab

Possessed of that faith, he engages in the worship of that form and he obtains his desires that are indeed granted by Me alone.

Thus,

the Supreme being alone that is worshipped as Sharada Devi represents Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva is said in one of Her names in the 108 names (நாமாவலிஃ) as :

ப்ரஹ்ம-விஷ்ணு-ஸிவாத்மிகா । The list of 108 names also have the names

ஸாரதா, ரமா, ஸிவா-(ஸிவாபேதா ஸிவா), சண்டிகா,
சாமுண்டி, வாராஹீ । She can be worshipped by all, though each one may have different desires, and She will fulfill all those desires.

The translation given is not exact, but general enough to convey

the meaning of the verses. Some comments are also provided. The following abbreviations are used in the comments. 1- VS – Sri Vishnu Sahasranama with Sri Sankaracharya's commentary. 2 – LS – Sri Lalita Sahasranamam with the commentary of Sri Bhaskararaya. 3 – BG – Srimad Bhagavadgita with Sri Sankaracharya's commentary. 4 – BH – Srimad Bhagavatam. 5 – AS – Atmarpanastuti by Sri Appayya Dikshitar. 6 – SX – Sri Shivaparadha kShamapana stotram by Shri Shankaracharya. 7 – KU – Kathopanishad.

Now, let us go to the stotram proper. The poet prays that the wonderful form of Shri Sharada Devi, that is resplendent and radiates kindness should be present in his mind.

Beginsmallshloka

புராநேக-ஐந்மார்ஜிதாகண்யபுண்யைஃ
யதாப்தீ மயா ஸாரதாபிக்யபாக்யம் ।
தயார்த்ரீ குருத்தீஸஸீகப்தசக்ர-
ஸ்திதீ தத்ஸதா மந்மந்ஸயாவிரஸ்து ॥ க ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- May the great fortune that shines by the name Sharada, which is soaked in compassion, is seated in the Sri Chakra installed by the great guru Sri Sankaracharya, and obtained by me as the result of meritorious deeds performed by me in countless previous births be present in my mind all the time. Note:- Sharada Devi is called by the poet as "the great fortune that shines by the name Sharada" – ஸாரதாபிக்யபாக்யம் । The reason is that, as said earlier, it is the Supreme Being that is worshipped at Shringeri as Sharada. The scriptures say that the Supreme Being is beyond our senses. It is beyond sound, touch, form, smell etc. It is beyond

words and thought also. அமரப்தம்ஸ்பர்மருபமவ்யயீ ததாரஸீ
நித்யமகந்தவச்ச யத் | KU (1-3-15). The question, then is,
how can one worship It or meditate on It? It seems to be an abstract
concept and perhaps uninteresting also. To facilitate worship, It
is said to be available in five forms. They are பர, வ்யூஹ,
விபவ, அந்தர்யாமி, அர்ச்சா | The first two forms are available in
places like Vaikunta or Kailasa and so are not accessible for us for
worship. So also, the avatars or incarnations like that of Rama or
Krishna are also not available to us today. We are not able to feel
the antaryami or the godhead available as the divinity within us.
Very rarely, perhaps one in a few millions is able to curb the
tendency of the mind to flow outwards
and turn it to the God residing in our hearts. Yama, the Lord of
death says this.

Beginsmallshloka

பராஞ்சி காநி வ்யதணத் ஸ்வயீபூஃ
தஸ்மாத் பராங்பம்யதி நாந்தராத்மந் |
கம்சித்தீரஃ ப்ரத்யகாத்மாநமைக்ஷத்
ஆவத்தசக்ஷாரமதத்வமிச்சந் || KU (2-1-1).

Endshlokab

Realising the limitations of the people, God, who is the very embodiment of
compassion, has made Himself available for worship in every form and
in particular in consecrated images where His presence is invoked and
worshipped with faith and reverence. This is in the form of archa
or idols and images. They may be installed in homes or temples and
worshipped. Krishna talks about worship of the Lord in the form of
idols in His advice to Uddhava. (Book 11 of Bhagavatam) Rituals in

worship are only an aid in keeping our mind focussed and serious. But the essence of the worship of the image is the intense feeling that God is presenting Himself in the image. Sage Naradha says (Bhakti sutra No.16) that deep involvement in performing puja to images etc., is a sign of devotion. பூஜாதிஷ்வநுராக இதி பாராமர்யம் | Prahladha mentions devotion to be of nine types.

Beginsmallshloka

ஸ்ரவணீ கீர்தநீ விஷ்ணோஃ ஸ்மரணீ பாதஸேவநம் |
அர்சநீ வந்தநீ தாஸ்யீ ஸக்யமாத்மநிவேதநம் || BH(7-5-23).

Endshlokab

We may note that அர்சநம்

worshipping Him in images is given a high place in the above list.

Just as we can use a small electrical plug point in our house to tap all the power we want for our use, so also, a worshipper can use the small image he worships to draw all that he wants and also unlimited satisfaction from it. We have to put the switch ON for the power to flow from the plug point. Devotion is the switch that makes the image to yield the devotee's wishes. Such a puja is specially suited for the harried householders in these days when they may have only limited time for worship. Great acharyas and saints have worshipped the Lord in images. The list includes Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Chaitanya, Meera and Ramakrishna. Saints in charge of various maths perform elaborate pujas to idols in their maths. These saints are spiritually much advanced themselves and need not do any puja for their own upliftment. But they do the pujas to inculcate upon the numerous people who come to visit them the need to perform pujas. To them the image is not an insentient figure but

a living prescence. To the saint composer Thiagaraja, the Supreme Being as Rama was very much present in the idol he worshipped. He could not think of being away from Him even for a short while as Rama, the Prince of Ayodhya was resident in his house. So when he was invited by the king of Tanjore to come to Tanjore he declined the invitation saying service to his Rama was more important and gave him greater happiness than any amount of wealth. Similarly, the great acharya Vedanta Desika refused to leave Kanchipuram when he was invited to Vijayanagar. He said that the Lord Varadaraja in the temple was the greatest wealth one can have. A devotee offers flowers, leaves water and some food to the Lord in the image. What he can offer in his puja is naturally limited. And even these are really not his but given by the Lord only. The worshipper should be aware of this and pray to God to accept the meagre offering and bless him. A poor farmer who gets a chance to meet a great king may offer only some fruits and vegetables grown by him in his field; but the great ruler will accept them with grace and reward him. Likewise God graciously accepts what little a devotee offers. A seed sown in a good soil grows into a healthy plant and returns greatly augmented results to the cultivator. So also what is offered to Him, He gives back in abundance. God has said that if a devotee offers a Tulsi leaf, flower, fruit or even a little water with love and devotion He accepts the offering with great satisfaction.

Beginsmallshloka

பத்ரீ புஷ்பி பலி தோய் யோ மே பக்த்யா ப்ரயச்சதி ।
ததஹீ பக்த்யுபஹதமம்நாமி ப்ரயதாத்மநஃ ॥ BG(9-26).

Endshloka

Thus the stress is on devotion. The kindly Lord accepts with pleasure

even such small offerings being present in an idol. Just as the electricity flows out of the humble plug point in the house, God's grace flows out of the diminutive image worshipped in the house or temple. The Supreme Being is present in the idol. Sri Vedanta Desika says that Lord Srinivasa available to us at Tirupati is the Supreme Being extolled by the scriptures. ம்ருதிமிரஸி விதீப்தே ப்ரஹ்மணி ம்ரீநிவஸே பவது மம பரஸ்மிந் ஸேமுஷி பக்திருபா I. Thus the idols worshipped in the temples and by us in our own humble house is our interface with the Supreme Being. Is it not a sign of our immense luck, then, that the Supreme Being that can grant us our wishes and salvation too if we ask for it is available to us so easily? So it is that Sharada Devi is called by the poet as "the great fortune that shines by the name Sharada" - ஸாரதாபிக்யபாக்யம் I. In the Narayaneeyam (verse No.1) also the poet Narayana Namboodri exclaims with wonder that the Supreme Being that cannot be directly described by the scriptures and which is the form of liberation itself shines at Guruvayoor (as the idol of Krishna) as the good fortune of the people.

Beginsmallshloka

அஸ்பஷ்டீ தஷ்டமாத்ரே புநருருபுருஷார்தாத்மகீ ப்ரஹ்மதத்த்வீ
தத்தாவத்பாதி ஸாக்ஷாத் குருபவநபுரே ஹந்த பாகயீ ஜநாநாம் II

Endshloka

One does not get the fortune to see and worship Shri Sharada at Shriringeri unless he is immensely fortunate. Usually people are very interested to visit hill stations, beaches and similar places where they can relax and have some fun. The problem with such visits is that they will come to end in a few days or weeks and one is back

from where one started (i.e) to one's regular routine. Thus such "pleasures" are short lived. The time, emoney and effort spent in such travels is better spent when we spend it in visiting holy places like Shringeri and see the shrine of Sharada Devi. Such a visit will wash off the sins. This fact is not understand because the results are not patent. That is why it is said that one should have done meritorious deeds (punyam) in innumerable births to have Her darshan. So She is known as துர்கமா (LS -189) = One who is difficult to attain. To have Her in our minds all the time is very difficult as our minds are replete with thoughts about ourselves and our family, friends, fortunes and problems. To make it to focus on God requires long and constant practice. In addition we will require God's grace also. This is said later on in this poem.

What greatly enhances the glory of the temple of Sharada is the fact that the icon of the Devi was installed by the none other than the great Sankaracharya himself. This fact is mentioned in the following verse from the Kamalajadayithashtakam (கமலஜதயிதாஷ்டகம்) composed in praise of the Devi by Shri Narasimha Bharati Swami, the 33rd pontiff of the peetam.

பெரிசுமலசுலோகா

கல்யாணதௌ பார்வதீமஃ ப்ரவரஸுரகண-ப்ரார்திதஃ ம்ரௌதவர்த்ம
ப்ராபல்யீ நேதுகாமோ யதிவரவபுஷாகத்ய யரீ மங்கமலே ।
ஸஸ்தாப்யார்சரீ ப்ரசக்ரே பஹ,விதநுதிபிஃ ஸாத்வமிந்த்வர்தகுடா
வித்யரீ ம,த்தரீ ச புத்தீ கமலஜதயிதே ஸத்வரீ தேஹி மஹ்யம் ॥ ௨ ॥

௭ndshloka

Meaning:- Lord Siva, the consort of Parvati, who was requested by the the gods at the beginning of the dark age of Kali to save the

world, decided to do so by reviving the path shown by the vedas. He incarnated Himself with the body of a great renunciant (sanyasi) and coming down to Sringeri. He installed You – Sharada Devi. He worshipped You, who wear half the moon as an ornament, by several hymns. Please bless me quickly with wisdom and pure intellect. But, what all that is said above need not make one think that She is beyond reach and discourage him from worshipping Her. She is described here as தயார்த்ரா | or dripping with compassion. She is the very embodiment of mercy. தயாமுர்திஃ = தயைவ முர்திஃ ஸ்வரூபீ யஸ்யாஃ | LS(581).

The poet talks of his own lowly status – one without any spiritual education – and prays for Devi's grace by surrendering to Her. By saying he is lowly etc., we have to understand that the author, who is a great scholar and saintly person is speaking on behalf of those who may be lacking spiritual education and practices. He is showing us the way to pray.

Beginsmallshloka

ந மந்த்ரீ ந யந்த்ரீ ந வா ஸ்தோத்ரரீதி
விஜாநே஽ம்ப வக்து ச மத்துஃகரீதிம் |
த்வதீக்ரிப்ரணம்ரோ ந பாத்ரீ ம,சஃ ஸ்யா-
திதி த்வரீ ப்ரபத்யே தவைவ ப்ரஸாதாத் || ௨ ||

Endshloka

Meaning:-I do not know mantam or yantram or how to say something in praise of You. I do not know how to express my grief also. As someone who has prostrated at Your feet will not be affected by sorrow any more, I am surrendering to You by Your grace only.

Note:-

Mantram மீத்ரம் is a formula or prayer sacred to a deity:

(e.g.) Om namah Shivaya ஓ நமஃ ஸிவாய | Yantram யீத்ரம்

is an amulet, a mystical diagram used as an amulet. One can get Her grace by worshipping Her by mantras or yantras or by chanting hymns that state Her glories. Or else one should be able to express one's problems in a manner that will move Her. If one is not capable of doing anyone of these one should surrender to Her. This is said in the following verse in the Devi Aparadhaxamapana stotram (ஸ்ரீதேவ்யபராத-க்ஷமாபண-ஸ்தோத்ரம்).

Beginsmallshloka

ந மந்த்ரீ நோ யந்த்ரீ ததபி ச ந ஜானே ஸ்துதிமஹோ
ந சாஹ்வாந் த்யாந் ததபி ச ந ஜானே ஸ்துதி-கதாஃ ।
ந ஜானே முத்ராஸ்தே ததபி ச ந ஜானே விலபந்
பரீ ஜானே மாத-ஸ்த்வதநுஸரணீ க்லேபஹரணம் ॥ (1)..

Endshlokab

Even to do this one requires Her grace. As an example, we see that there are many people who reside near a temple. But we find that on any day, only a handful few are inclined to visit the temple and worship the Lord. What is preventing others from doing such a simple job that costs no money? The answer is they lack the Lord's grace.

Does this mean that God is capricious so that He showers His grace on chosen few and withholds it from others? No, His grace is available to all, but some are not receiving it because of their own deficiencies.

A person with vision clouded due to some disease of the eyes does not see objects lit by sun light clearly. This is not because of any fault of the light, but of the defect in his eyes only. Similarly, one whose mind is clouded with negative qualities such as selfishness, anger,

avarice, jealousy cannot receive His grace though He is very much within everyone. The person with the diseased eyes can see properly after he gets rid of the malady by getting appropriate treatment from a qualified doctor. Similarly, a person with his mind sick with negative qualities should get rid of those qualities first. Then his mind cleansed of the impurities will be able to receive God's grace.

Beginsmallshloka

பவாம்போதி-மக்நீ பவாத்யைஃ ஸுதூர்
விஸஷ்டி மஹாபாப-கேஹாயமாநம் ।
விவேகாதி-ஹீநீ தயாநீரதே தே
மமாத்மாந-மம்பரீக்ரியுக்மே஽ர்பயாமி ॥ ௩ ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- I am fallen in the ocean of samsara (cyclic existence). I am distanced by Siva and others. I am verily the repository of great sins and devoid of qualities like discrimination. Such a one I am, I now submit myself at Your feet.

Note:- One who feels helpless to get out of the cycle of repeated birth and death (known as samsara), however lowly he be, may surrender to the Lord and get relief. He is reputed to be the source of great relief to the devotees and specific remedy for the dreadful disease of samsara for which there is no other known cure. Kulasekara says this in Mukundamala (27)

Beginsmallshloka

பக்தாத்யந்தஹிதௌஷதீ பவபயப்ரத்வீஸநைகௌஷதீ
ஸ்ரேயஃப்ராப்திகரௌஷதீ பிப மநஃ ஸ்ரீகஷ்ணதிவ்யௌஷதம் ॥

Endshlokab

He has these names that express this truth. ஓளஷதம் । -

ஸீஸாரரோகபேஷஜத்வாத் ஓளஷதம் । He is the specific remedy for the disease samsara. VS(287). And பேஷஜம் - ஸீஸாரரோகஸ்யௌஷத்

பேஷஜம் । VS(578). So, one has to approach Sharada Devi to get

relief from the grave illness known as samsara. She being the very

embodiment of kindness, will accept such a person also and help him.

Krishna says that one might have never thought of God and lead a

life of a sinner. But when he decides to change his ways, the kindly

God is ready to accept him and uplift him.

பீளின்ஸ்ஸலோகா

அபி சேத் ஸுதூராசாரோ பஜதே மாமநந்யபாக் ।

ஸாதுரேவ ஸ மந்தவ்யம் ஸம்யக்வ்யவஸிதோ ஹி ஸம் ॥ (BG-9-30).

ஏன்டஸ்லோகா

A conflagration reduces to ashes a piece of

straw thrown into it in a trice. Similarly, Devi destroys the sins

of Her devotees in no time. She makes them pure. She helps them

to tide over the cycle of birth and death. So, She has these names.

பீளின்ஸ்ஸலோகா

பாபநாமரிநீ - பாபி நாமயதி ஸ்வீயவித்யயா ஜபாதிநா பக்தாநாமிதி ததா ।

யதேஷீகாதூலமக்நௌ ப்ரோதீ ப்ரதூயேதைவமேவாஸ்ய பாப்மநம்

ப்ரதூயந்தே" இதி ம்ருதேம் । LS(168).

ஏன்டஸ்லோகா

பவநாமரிநீ - பவ்

ஸீஸாரீ நாமயதீதி ததா । LS(175).

The devotee says he is

distanced by Shiva and others (பவாத்யம் ஸுதூரம் விஸஷ்டி ।)

The Lord is omnipresent, He is present everywhere. So, one can

never be away from Him. This being so, how can the author say he is distanced by God? This may be explained by an example. Suppose one wants to listen to a particular program on his radio. But he is not receiving that program, but some other program. What does he do? He simply tunes his receiver to the correct station. He need not carry the receiver to any other place to hear the program because the radio waves are all over the place. Once it is properly tuned, he will hear the program immediately. In this way the program is very near to him. As long as the receiver is not properly tuned the program is not available and is as good as being far away. Thus, the program is both near and far away. Similarly, God is all over the place. Yet, he is near to some and far away for others. One has only to tune his mind to God to receive His grace. Tuning one's mind to God is done by devotion or bhakti. Devi is attained by devotion. So, She has the name பக்திகம்யா - பக்த்யா ஸீராதநேந கம்யா । LS(119).

The divine sage Naradha is well known as a great devotee of the Lord. He told Vyasa that he roams about the worlds singing Lord's glories. His mind is constantly tuned to Him. So The Lord readily reveals Himself in his mind as if summoned by him. BH(1-6-34).

பெரிசுமலசுலோகா

பரகாயதஃ ஸ்வவீர்யாணி தீர்தபாதஃ ப்ரியம்ரவாஃ ।
ஆஹுத இவ மே மீக்ரீ தர்மநீ யாதி சேதஸி ॥

ஏந்ஸுலோகா

Currently our minds are tuned to the outside world and are receiving wrong signals – relating to mundane affairs.

Because of this we are not able to receive signals

from God who is very near to us, in fact within us only. But the wise

men (desiring to reach God) direct their minds to Him and receive His signals clearly. Lord Yama says this in Kathopanishad. KU(2-1-1).

Beginsmallshloka

பராஞ்சி காநி வ்யதணத் ஸ்வயம்பூ-
ஸ்தஸ்மாந்பராங்பஸ்யதி நாந்தராத்மந் ।
கம்சித்தீர- ப்ரத்யகாத்மாநமைக்ஷ-
தவத்தசக்ஷாரமதத்வமிச்சந் ॥

Endshlokab

Sometimes one may not receive the program properly even when the station is correctly tuned. This indicates that some thing is wrong with the set and not the program. May be, some of the componenents are defective; or rusty. So also one might have studied the shastras; but if his mind finds it difficult to tune to Him we may conclude that there is nothing wrong with God, but it is the mind that is defective. It may be covered by a thick coating of sins. The poet says this as மஹாபாப-கேஹாயமாநம் । "he is polluted with terrible sins". Such a mind will be agitated and cannot tune to God. Yama makes this clear in Kathopanishad. (1-3-24).

Beginsmallshloka

நாவிரதோ துய்சரிதந்நாஸாந்தோ நாஸமாஹித-
நாஸாந்தமாநஸோ வாபி ப்ரஜ்ஞாநேநைநமாப்நுயாத் ॥

Endshlokab

He says that one, though he has a sharp mind, cannot reach to God if he has not given up evil conduct, or does not have a calm mind or if his senses are not under control. The scriptures state that the qualities said by Yama are got

by acquiring the four basic qualifications known as ஸாதந சதுஷ்டய ஸீபத்திஃ । These are to be acquired by one who wants to take to the spiritual path. They are described in detail in texts like Viveka Chudamani. The text Tattvabodha defines them as follows. ஸாதநசதுஷ்டயீ கிம்? நித்யாநித்யவஸ்துவிவேகஃ । இஹாமுத்ரார்தபலபோகவிராகஃ । ஸமாதிஷ்ட்கஸீபத்திஃ । முமுகுஷத்வீ சேதி । The capacity to discriminate between the permanent and the impermanent, dispassion to the enjoyment of the fruits of one's actions here in this world and hereafter (in the higher worlds like heaven), the six accomplishments (inner wealth) beginning with shama (ஸம) and the yearning for liberation. The details are available in this text and Viveka Chudamni. These four qualifications purge the mind of pollutants like anger, jealousy, avarice and bless the student with a keen razor sharp intellect that is capable of understanding the subtle teachings of spiritual texts imparted by the teacher. Having got a pure mind by the above said practices one will be able to tune his mind to God and receive His signals clearly and without disturbance. The devotion will be fruitful. Else the devotion cannot bring any result and God will be far away from him.

Aquiring these qualifications is a long and arduous process. This is said by the sage Patanjali in his Yogasutra. ஸது தீர்க்கால-நைரந்தர்ய-ஸத்காராஸேவிதோ தட்பூமிஃ । (1-14).

The practitioner will face numerous obstacles, mainly from within. The mind is not used to any discipline. So, any attempt to discipline it will be firmly resisted. We have the stories of the sage Viswamitra who had to face serious impediments even when he repaired to forests to practise penance. One is advised to pray and seek God's help to

surmount the obstacles. Krishna assures that He will help His devotee

in this process. மச்சித்தஃ ஸர்வதுர்காணி மத்ப்ரஸாதாத் தரிஷ்யஸி ।

BG(18-58).

Keeping this in mind, the poet surrenders to Devi,

who is ready to help such disadvantaged people, for success in

this endeavour.

மரீர் ஸ்வதந்தர் ததாஃகாணி ஸர்வா-

ண்யஹோ கீ கரோமி க்வ யாம்யம்பிகே வா ।

மயா போஷ்யமாணாநி மத்வம்யதர் ந

ப்ரயாந்தயஞ்ஜஸா மத்வமே தாநி தந்யாஃ ॥ ச॥

Meaning:- My mind and other organs are insubordinate and I am

not able to bring them under my control. I feel helpless. What

shall I do? You only have to make them come under my control.

Note:-We take so much care of this body that has all the organs,

including the mind. But they are ungrateful in that they do not

obey our wishes. In spite of our best efforts they pull us in

the directions they want to go. It is very difficult to control them

and make them follow our wishes.

பெரிசுலோகம்

யததோ ஹ்யபி கௌந்தேய புருஷஸ்ய விபம்சிதஃ ।

இந்த்ரியாணி ப்ரமாதீநி ஹரந்தி ப்ரஸபி மநஃ ॥ BG(2-60).

இசுலோகம்

In such a situation. How can we offer them at the

feet of the Lord? Only She should make them come under our control

when we can submit them at Her feet. Patanjali says in his Yogasutra

that meditating on the Lord is an easy way to gain control over

the mind. ஈம்வரப்ரணிதாநாத்வா । (1-22).

Beginsmallshloka

கதாசிச்ச தே பாதபத்மஸ்ய பூஜர்
ஸ்மதீ தர்ஸநீ வா விதந்யுஸ்த்விமாநி ।
விஜநந்நஹீ தாநி ரக்ஷாமி மாதஃ
மஷ நைவ வக்ஷ்யாமி ஸீக்ரீ ப்ரஸீத ॥ ௩ ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- I have been nurturing my bodily organs -like the limbs and mind in the fond hope that one day they will be useful in worshipping Your lotus-like feet, or think of You or have Your vision. This is the truth. So, Mother, please be kind to me.

Note:- Our shastras

declare that the human birth is very special as it is got after numerous births. Such a precious thing should not be frittered away in chasing petty and short lived pleasures. It should be used to attain the highest goal of life which is liberation or mokSha. And attaining liberation is possible only in human birth. However the human body is fragile as one does not know when death will cut short the life. So the wise one should not waste time but use his body and try for liberation in this life itself. Krishna gives this advice to His friend Uddhava.

Beginsmallshloka

லப்த்வா ஸுதுர்லபமிதீ பஹ,ஸ்பவாந்தே
மாநுஷ்யமர்ததமநித்யமபீஹ தீரஃ
தூர்ணீ யதேத ந பதேதநுமத்யு யாவ-
ந்நிஃஸ்ரேயஸாய விஷயஃ கலு ஸர்வதஃ ஸ்யாத் ॥ BH(11-9-29).

Endshloka

In view of this devotees have been telling themselves (by advising their limbs) to engage in the worship of the Lord. The devotee Kulasekhara asks his tongue to sing His glories, his mind to think of Him, His hands to engage themselves in worshipping Him, his ears to listen to listen to His stories, his eyes to see Him, his legs to visit His temples, his nose to smell the tulasi leaves used in His worship and his head to bow to Him. This is something like autosuggestion.

Beginsmallshloka

ஐஹவே கீர்தய கேஸவ், முரரிபி சேதோ பஜ, ம்ரீதர்
பாணித்வந்த்வ ஸமர்சயாச்யதகதாஃ-ம்ம்ரோத்ரத்வய த்வ் மனா
கஷ்ணீ லோகய லோசநத்வய, ஹரேர்கச்சாங்-க்ரியுக்மாலய்
ஐக்ர க்ராண முகுந்தபாததுலஸீ மூர்தந் நமாதோக்ஷஜம் ॥

Endshloka

Now, the saint says how, at different stages in our life, he lost control of our sense organs with the result that he did not think of the Mother at any time. He also gives the reasons therefor in the next three verses. The stages mentioned are the childhood, youth and old age. These verses bring to our mind the following popular verse in the Bhaja Govindam (7) of Shri Shankaracharya.

Beginsmallshloka

பாலஸ்தாவத் க்ரீடாஸக்தஃ தருணஸ்தாவத் தருணீஸக்தஃ ।
வத்தஸ்தாவ-ச்சிந்தா-ஸக்தஃ பரே ப்ரஹ்மணி கோபி ந ஸக்தஃ ॥

Endshloka

The carefree child is lost in play. The youth is lost in his sweetheart's charms. The old man broods

over his anxieties. Thus, there is none who thinks of the Lord.

Āeginsmallshloka

மயா பாலபாவ-ஸ்திதேநரீபிகே த்வத்-
பதரீபோஜயுகம் ஸ்மதீ நைவ ஜாது ।
க்ஷமஸ்வாபராதீ தயா-வாரிராபோ
த்வதந்யச்சரண்யீ ந மே ஸாரதே஽ஸ்தி ॥ கூ॥

Āndshlokab

Meaning:- O! Mother! As a child I was playful and so did not think
of You. O Sharada! Ocean of mercy! please excuse my folly. I have no
one to turn to for protection.

Shri Shankaracharya goes one stage

earlier (i.e.) babyhood. He says that as a baby, he was interested in
only feeding from his mother and was helpless to protect himself even
from tiny insects that bit and harrassed him. In addition he had no
control over his sense organs like the mind and limbs and so was he
was steeped in ignorance. He was also a victim of many diseases and
was crying. So, where is the question of thinking of the Lord? He
begs the Lord to pardon his mistake. SX(2).

Āeginsmallshloka

பால்யே துஃகாதிரேகாத் மல-லுலித-வபுஃ ஸ்தந்யபாநே பிபாஸஃ
நோ ஸக்தம்சேந்த்ரியேப்யோ பவ! மல-ஜநிதா ஜந்தவோ மரீ துதந்தி ।
நாநா-ரோகாதிதுஃகாத் ருதித-பரவஸஃ ஸங்கரீ ந ஸ்மராமி
க்ஷந்தவ்யோ மே஽பராதஃ ஸிவ ஸிவ ஸிவ போஃ ஸ்ரீமஹாதேவ ஸ்போ! ॥

Āndshlokab

Note:- Next, the poet talks about his youthhood.

Āeginsmallshloka

ததா யௌவநே மத்தசித்தோஹமாஸ்
த்வதீயீ பதாப்ஜீ ஸ்மதீ நைவ நைவ ।
க்ஷமஸ்வாபராதீ விதி-ப்ரேமகாந்தே
ந புத்ரே மநாகப்யுபேக்ஷா ஜநந்யாஃ ॥ ௭ ॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- Similarly, I was full of energy and hot headed as an youth. I did not think of Your feet even for a short while. O Sharada, the dear consort of Brahma, You should excuse my mistake. A mother will not ignore a child.

Note:- Shri Shankaracharya says that as a well developed youngster his mind was whisked away by senses. He lost his discretion and was lost in sense pleasures provided by money and the company of family, relatives etc. He was full of vigour and proud. He did not think of anything connected with the Lord.

So, he begs the Lord to pardon his mistake. SX (3).

Beginsmallshloka

ப்ரௌடோஹீ யௌவநஸ்தோ விஷய-விஷதரீ பஞ்சபிர்மர்ம-ஸந்தௌ
தஷ்டோ நஷ்டோ விவேகஃ ஸுத-தந-யுவதி-ஸ்வாத-ஸௌக்யே நிஷண்ணஃ ।

ஸைவே சிந்தா-விஹீநீ மம ஹதயீ அஹோ மாந-கர்வாதிரூட்
க்ஷந்தவ்யோ மேஃபராதஃ ஸிவ ஸிவ ஸிவ போஃ ஸ்ரீமஹாதேவ ஸ்போ! ॥

Endshloka

The poet says that "a mother will not ignore a child" - ந புத்ரே
மநாகப்யுபேக்ஷா ஜநந்யாஃ । and overlook the mistakes committed. The
தேவ்யபராத-க்ஷமாபண-ஸ்தோத்ரம் Devi-Aparadha- kShamapana Stotram

has a similar verse wherein the poet talks of the various acts of omission and commission committed by him due to ignorance of rules of proper conduct (dharma) and sheer laziness etc.. He asks the Mother

to pardon them saying there may be a vile son, but never a bad mother.

Āeginsmallshloka

விதேரஜ்ஞாநேந த்ரவிண-விரஹேணாலஸதயா
விதேயாஸக்யத்வாத்தவ சரணயோ-ர்யாச்யுதிரபூத் ।
ததேதத் கூந்தவ்ய் ஜநநி ஸகலோத்தாரிணி ஸிவே
குபுத்ரோ ஜாயேஅத க்வசிதபி குமாதா ந பவதி ॥

Endshlokab

Now, the poet explains as to why he could not even think of Devi in his old age.

Āeginsmallshloka

ஜராரோக-ஸ்பீடிதாங்கோ ஜராயர்
கதீ வா ஸ்மரேய் பதீ ஸாரதாம்ப் ।
கூமஸ்வாபராதீ ஸமஸ்தீ மதீய்
கூமாதூத-ஸர்வீ ஸஹாகர்வ-கர்வே ॥ அ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- In the old age, when my body would have become decrepit and host to a variety of diseases, O Sharada! how will I be able to remember Your feet? You, who excel the mother earth in forbearance should overlook my failings. Shri Shankaracharya talks of the same thing as given here. SX(4).

Āeginsmallshloka

வார்தக்யே சேந்த்ரியாணர் விகல-கதிமதம்சாதிதைவாதி-தாபைஃ

ப்ராப்தை ரோகைர்வியோகை-வ்யஸந-கஸ்தநோர்ஜஞப்தி-ஹீந் ச தீநம் ।
மித்யா-மோஹாபிலாஷை-ர்பவதி மம மநோ தூர்ஜடைர்ஜஞாந-ஸூந்யீ
க்ஷந்தவ்யோ மே஽பராதஃ ஸிவ ஸிவ ஸிவ போஃ ஸ்ரீமஹாதேவ ஸ்போ! ॥

Endshloka

Note:-One can understand that in the three stages mentioned above
one may not be able to exercise control over himself: in his childhood
when one is not mature and also in the old age when the body would
have become enfeebled and the mind, as a consequence would have lost
its will power. So it is proper to beg forgiveness for the mistakes
committed in these ages.

But what is the explanation for the
lapses committed in between these ages? The response is, that as
a fond mother, She should overlook his failings.

Beginsmallshloka

த்வதீயீ பதாப்ஜீ ஸதா பூஜயேயீ
ததா ஸ்ஸ்மரேயீ ச பஸ்யேயமேவம் ।
ஸமிச்சீம்ச மத்பூர்வ-துர்வாஸநாபிஃ
பலாதாஹதீ மந்மநஃ கீ கரோமி ॥ சு॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- Truly speaking, I want to worship Your feet, think of
them and look at them all the time. But the problem is that my mind is
being forcibly pulled away as the result of evil tendencies that have
been accumulated in my previous births. What shall I do?

Note:-

We have accumulated tendencies from our earlier births, They exert a
powerful influence on our minds with the result that we tend to act

in a way different from how we would like to. Krishna states this

clearly. ஸதஸ் சேஷ்டதே ஸ்வஸ்யாஃ ப்ரகதேர்ஜ்ஞாநவாநபி \\\
ப்ரகதீ யாந்தி பூதாநி நிக்ரஹஃ கீ கரிஷ்யதி || BG(7-12).\\

The poet anticipates that one may say that accumulated tendencies are the result of your own acts, and ask what can anyone do in this matter, he gives the answer in the following verse.

Beginsmallshloka

யதி த்வீ வதஸ்யம்ப தே பூர்வ-கர்ம
த்வயைவ ப்ரயத்நேந ஜேதவ்யமேவம் ।
ததா மய்யஜஸ்ரீ கபா ஸ்விதேயா
ப்ரயத்நீ கரோம்யேவ தத்ராபி ஸம்யக் || ௧௦||

Endshlokab

Meaning:- If You were to say that the tendencies acquired by me are to be my conquered by my own efforts, even then You should extend Your mercy in this effort of mine unceasingly. I will, then, make strong effort to win over my tendencies.

Note:- The

fact is that though one may realise that his past tendencies prevent him from channelising his mind to Devi, he will be unable to control them. Therefore one requires Her grace to support his efforts and make them successful. What is impossible to achieve if one has Her support? Shri Sankaracharya makes a similar request in Sivanandalahari. (41). He prays to Lord Siva to order that all his bodily organs, like tongue, mind, head, feet, hands, eyes and ears should engage themselves in His worship. Then only he will be cleansed of his sins and be fit for liberation.

Beginsmallshloka

பாபோத்பாத-விமோசநாய ருசிரைம்வர்யாய மத்யுஞ்ஜய
ஸ்தோத்ர-த்யாந-நதி-ப்ரதக்ஷிண-ஸபர்யாலோகநாகர்ணநே ।
ஜிஹ்வா-சித்த-ஸிரோ஽ங்க்ரி-ஹஸ்த-நயந-ஸ்ரோத்ரைரஹீ ப்ரார்திதோ
மமாஜ்ஞாபய தந்நிருபய முஹ, -ர்மாமேவ மா மே஽வசஃ ॥

Endshlokab

The Acharya prays in the last line that the Lord should repeatedly make his mind engage in His worship. தந்நிருபய முஹ,ஃ । Why say "repeatedly"? The reason is that our mind is and had been attached to the attractions of the world for many births. Even if the kindly Lord extends His hand for us to hold and we also grasp it, we will not be able to retain our hold for long. The pull of these attractions is very strong and will tear away our mind back to ourselves, our family, possessions etc. We have to be alert and watch the situation. The moment we feel our hold on the Lord is weakening, we have to renew our effort and tighten the grip. This effort is thus to be done repeatedly till we find that our hold is firm and no more weakening. It is for this reason that the devotee Dhruva also prayed to the Lord that his mind should repeatedly seek the company of holy men. BH(4-9-11).

பக்தி முஹ,ஃ ப்ரவஹதரீ த்வயி மே ப்ரஸங்கோ
பூயாதநந்த மஹதாமமலாஸ்யாநாம் ।

The poet puts forward an ingenious reason why Devi should come to his help even if he does not pray for it.

Beginsmallshloka

யதி த்வீ மதீயரீ ஸ,சீ நாபநுத்யாஃ

ததா துஃக-வஹ்நி-ப்ரதப்தே஽ந்தரங்கே ।
மதீயே ஸ்திதாயா-ஸ்தவாப்யம்ப கேதோ
பவேதித்யஹ் சிந்தயா-஽஽ர்தோ஽ஸ்மி பூயஃ ॥ கக ॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- If You do not deign to dispel my sorrow, then, O Mother,
I am worried that You too will be afflicted, since You are residing
in my heart that is hot with the fire of grief.

Note:- It may be

said that let me suffer as said above. But the Lord is resident in
the hearts of all beings. ஈஸ்வரஃ ஸர்வபூதாநரீ ஹத்தேமோ஽ர்ஜுந
திஷ்டதி । BG(18-61). In this case, where the author says his
heart is full of sorrow, the sorrow will surely affect Devi also
who is residing in his heart. No doubt Devi is the embodiment of
bliss. Yet, because of Her association with one who is intensely
suffering, She too will get a share of the suffering. Also since She
is all pervading, She cannot also get away from the author's heart
to some other clean place. Because of this reason, the author points
out that She has to alleviate the distress of the author if She wants
to escape any suffering.

The scripture say that Ignorance about
the true nature of the Self is the cause of all the sufferings one
goes through. So, the poet now prays to Devi to remove the nescience.

Beginsmallshloka

வதந்தீஹ ஸாஸ்த்ராணி ஸத்யம்சிதாத்மா
஽த்வயம்சாந்யதார்தீ ஸமஸ்தீ மஷேதி ।
ததாப்யம்ப மோஹோ ந மே விப்ரநஷ்டோ
சடித்யம்ப தீ நாய்யாநந்த-மூலம் ॥ கஉ ॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- The scriptures declare that the individual soul is eternal, of the form of wisdom and non-dual (that is it is one without a second thing) while every thing else is unreal (will disappear with the dawn of realisation of the truth), and embodiment of sorrow. Still, my ignorance is not removed. O Mother! You have to dispel the ignorance that is the root of all sorrows.

Note:-

Our scriptures state that through God's grace alone one gets a desire for the supreme wisdom referred to above arises. For example, the Avadhuta Gita says - ஈஸ்வராநுக்ரஹாதேவ ப்ஸாமத்வைதவாஸநா । மஹத்பயபரித்ராணாத்விப்ராணாமுபஜாயதே ॥ \

This grace of God has to be combined with one's own effort which is a must. Sarasvathi has the name ப்ரஹ்மஜ்ஞாநைகஸாதநா = The only means of getting the wisdom that reveals the supreme being. So the poet prays to Devi for Her grace to gain the wisdom. The Lord had said that He will, out of compassion, remove the ignorance of His devotees and by granting them the supreme wisdom. BG(10-11).

Beginsmallshloka

தேஷாமேவாநுகீபார்தமஹ்மஜ்ஞாநஜீ தமஃ ।
நாமயாம்யாத்மபாவஸ்தோ ஜ்ஞாந-தீபேந பாஸ்வதா ॥

Endshloka

May be the ignorance is not removed in this birth as the poet has prayed for. He prays that he should be blessed with the remembrance of Devi in his last moments. This remembrance of the Goddess will

ensure that he will not be born again and suffer the pangs of samsara

– the cycle of birth and death.

Beginsmallshloka

யதா தண்டதத்ப்ரேஷிதாஃ பீமதூதாஃ
மஹாபாபிநீ மரீ ஸமாக்ரஷ்டுமாராத் ।
ஸமாயந்தி தஸ்மிந் ஹி காலே தயாப்தே
மதீயே மநஸ்யாவிரேதி த்வமம்ப ॥ கந ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- When the frightful messengers sent by Yama, the god of death come to take me, a great sinner, away, I beseech You, the ocean of mercy, to appear in my mind.

Note:- The author,

having admitted that he is unable to shed his ignorance, now prays that he may be granted the privilege of having the thought of Devi in his last moments. Being a sinner, Yama's servants will come to drag him away to their master's presence to for judgement. This will be a terrifying moment for anyone. One will not know what to do at that time. Krishna had said that one will reach Him if one has the thought of the Lord at his final moments. He adds that one will also reach whatever (if it is not God) he is thinking of at the time of death. B.G(8-5,6).

Beginsmallshloka

அந்தகாலே ச மாமேவ ஸ்மரந்முக்த்வா கலேவரம் ।
யஃ ப்ரயாதி ஸ மத்பாவீ யாதி நாஸ்த்யத்ர ஸீமயஃ ॥

யீ யீ வாபி ஸ்மரந்பாவீ த்யஜத்யந்தே கலேபரம் ।
தீ தமேவைதி கௌந்தேய-ஸ்ஸதா தத்பாவ-பாவிதஃ ॥

Endshlokab

In view of this

devotees had prayed to God to grant them His remembrance (and not of anything else) in their last moments. The devotee Kulasekhara addresses Krishna Himself who had said this. He prays that his mind should attach itself to Him now itself and not wait till his last moments. He wonders how he will be able to remember Him at the time of death as he is likely to be choked with phlegm and will be struggling to breathe.

Beginsmallshloka

கஷ்ண த்வதீயபதபங்கஜபஞ்ஜராந்தஃ அத்யைவ மே விஸது
மாநஸராஜஹீஸஃ ।

ப்ராணப்ரயாணஸமயே கபவாதபித்தைஃ கண்டாவரோதநவிதௌ ஸ்மரணீ
குதஸ்தே ॥ (9).

Endshlokab

So, the author

prays that he should be blessed with Her prescence in his mind in his final moments.

One may tell the poet that he had admitted to be a great sinner. Such being the case why he thinks that he will be blessed with the remembrance of the Goddess in his last moments, the answer given is that Devi is amenable to devotion.

Beginsmallshloka

மஹாபாபிநீ மரீ ஸமுத்தர்துமேவ
த்வயா புண்ய-பாபே பரோக்ஷே கதே ஹி ।
ந சேத்ஸர்வலோகோ விஜாநீயுரேந்
மஹாபாபிநீ த்வரீ ச வைஷம்ய-யுக்தாம் ॥ கசு॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- Only with an idea to uplift me, a great sinner, you have made the merits and sins one not perceptible to others. If it were not so, all would have known I am a great sinner and You as being favourably disposed to me.

Note:- The good and bad deeds

of a person produce (punyam) merits and (papam) sins respectively.

Every one will have to experience the results in the form of joy and sufferings in this or some other birth. The stock of one's merits and sins is invisible to the person concerned and to others also. It is known as அதிஷ்டம் (unseen). They can only be inferred by the experiences we undergo in our lives. Kalidasa uses this idea in his Raghuvamsam (1- 20). He says that the king Dilipa kept his plans secret. His countenance also did not give out what he had in his mind. They could only be inferred from the results like the impressions of the previous births.

Beginsmallshloka

தஸ்ய ஸ்வதமந்த்ரஸ்ய கூடாகாரேங்கிதஸ்ய ச ।
பலாநுமேயாஃ ப்ரார்பாஃ ஸீஸ்காராஃ ப்ராக்தநா இவ ॥

Endshloka

The past deeds leave their impressions on the mind of the individual. They continue to exert their influence in the current life also by making one act in a proper or improper way.

Beginsmallshloka

ஸதமீ சேஷ்டதே ஸ்வஸ்யாஃ ப்ரகதே-ர்ஜ்ஞாநவாநபி ।
ப்ரகதீ யாந்தி பூதாநி நிக்ரஹஃ கீ கரிஷ்யதி ॥ BG (3-33).

Endshloka

The poet says that he had committed countless sins. Devi, out of immense mercy has made these sins invisible to others. Had it been not been the case, people would have known he is a great sinner. They would have insulted or shunned him. This is proof enough that She is kind to a great sinner as also with good people. Krishna says that God is equally inclined to every one. He has no one whom He hates or loves.

Beginsmallshloka

ஸமோஹி ஸர்வபூதேஷு ந மே த்வேஷ்யோ஽ஸ்தி ந ப்ரியஃ ।
யே பஜந்தி து மரீ பக்த்யா மயி தே தேஷு சாப்யஹம் ॥ (Gita 9-29).

Endshloka

But, the Lord says that if one worships Him with devotion, then he is dear to Him and vice versa. This does not imply any partiality. This is like the case of the fire. It is available to all. If one chooses to come close to it, it gives him warmth. But, if one chooses to stay away from it, it does not give him warmth and as a result will be exposed to cold. This is no fault of the fire.

After talking about the compassion of Devi, the poet describes in the next four verses, the remarkable changes that devotion to Her brings about in a person and also the benefits of devotion.

Beginsmallshloka

ஸரீரே ஸ்வகே-ஹித்வமஸ்தீ ப்ரயாயா-
திதி த்வரீ ப்ரபந்நாஃ ஜநாஃ ஸாரதாம்ப ।
ஸமஸ்தேஷு வஸ்துஷ்வஹீதரீ பஜந்தே

கிமேதத்விசித்ரீ சிதாநந்த-ரூபே || கரு ||

Endshlokab

Meaning:- Those who worship You with the desire to give up the idea that "I am the body", instead get the idea "I am everything in the universe". How wonderful this is!

Note:- Those who worship

Devi with the desire that they should discard their identification with their body get it. The idea "I am the body" is a limited vision. This is replaced with the vastly expanded universal vision "I am every thing". One ceases to identify oneself with the body when one identifies with the soul or atma which is all pervading. This results in the idea "I am everything in the universe". This is said in Gita (6-29). ஸர்வபூதஸ்தமத்மாநீ ஸர்வபூதாநி சாத்மநி | \ ஈக்ஷதே யோக-யுக்தாத்மா ஸர்வத்ர ஸமதர்மநஃ || \

Naturally,

this is a very high stage in spiritual progress. Rarely one will find people who have got such a vision. Sage Narada tells about this to King Yudhishtira; that one should look upon deer, camels, donkeys, monkeys, rats, reptiles, birds and flies as his own children and asks what is it that distinguishes these from his children.

Beginsmallshloka

மகோஷ்ட்ர-கர-மர்காகு-ஸரீஸப்கக-மக்ஷிகாஃ ।
ஆத்மநஃ புத்ரவத் பஸ்யேத் தைரேஷாமந்தரீ கியத் || BH(7-14-8).

Endshlokab

Muka kavi says the same thing but some what differently. He points out

is happy. The famous mantra from the Isavasyopanishad(7) says this.

Beginsmallshloka

யஸ்மிந் ஸர்வணி பூதா-ந்யாத்மைவாபூ-த்விஜாநதஃ ।
தத்ர கோ மோஹஃ கஃ ஸோகஃ ஏகத்வமநுபயதஃ ॥

Endshlokab

Intense devotion to Her

yields such a vision. So, She has the name பேதநாபரிநீ - One
who destroys distinctions. LS(179).

Beginsmallshloka

மஹா-வ்யாதி-மாந்த்யை ததா நிஃஸ்வதாயாஃ
ப்ரணாமாய யே த்வரீ பஜந்தே நராஸ்தே ।
ஜவாச்சூலிநஃ ஸ்யும்ச கத்தி வஸாநாஃ
க ஏஷ ப்ரகாரஃ ப்ரபந்நேஷு தே஽ம்ப ॥ கசு ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:-Those who worship You for getting their serious disease
cured and similarly for getting rid of their poverty become possessors
of tridents and dressed in the hide of elephant. O Mother! is it
proper on Your part to conduct Yourself in this manner with those
who surrender to You?

Note: - The serious disease is samsara or
having to be born and die endlessly. By saying that the worshippers
come to hold a trident and be dressed in the hide of an elephant
indicates they get the form of Siva. Siva holds a trident and wears
the hide of an elephant. Devi and Siva are one. This was pointed out
earlier. ஸிவா = ஸிவாபேதா ஸிவா । She is not different from Siva,
so Devi has the name Siva. LS(53). The devotees become one like Devi.

This is known as ஸாஸூப்யம் or similar form and is one form of liberation.

ஃeginsmallshloka

ததா மோஹமாந்த்யை ஜநாஃ யே ப்ரபந்நாஃஃ
ததாஸ்யேக்ஷணா-த்ஸர்வ-லோகோ஽பி ஸத்யஃ ।
ப்ரமுஹ்யத்யவம்யீ விசித்ராம்புராஸௌ
மநோ மாமகீ ஸாரதே மக்நமாஸ்தே ॥ கௌ ॥

ஃndshlokab

Meaning:- In the same manner, people who see those who surrender to You to control delusion definitely get deluded. O Sharada! my mind is filled with wonder.

Note: – Delusion is the result of ignorance

about the true nature of one's Self. Those who pray to Devi gets his delusion removed. But those who come close to him become themselves deluded, meaning charmed by him because of his greatness got as a result of Devi's grace. The popular hymn Shyamala Dandakam also says this . யேந வா யாவகாபாகதிர்பாவ்யஸே, தஸ்ய வம்யா பவந்தி\ஸ்த்ரியஃ புருஷாஃ । Men and women will come under the control of the one who meditates on Your shining complexion, possessing the hue of the red lac.

ஃeginsmallshloka

கநத்தேஹ-பாதூத-ஸச்சாதகும்பரீஃ
லஸத்தார-ஹாராட்ய-வக்ஷஜகும்பாம் ।
ஸதா த்வரீ ஜநா யே ஹதப்ஜே ஸ்மரந்தி
ஸ்மரந்த்யேவ தே தேவி ஸாரீர-காந்த்யா ॥ கௌ ॥

ஃndshlokab

Meaning:- Those who meditate on You all the time as one having the complexion that is far superior to well polished gold, and with chest shining with chain that shines like a garland of stars become themselves Manmatha (cupid) with their outstanding beauty.

Note:-

By worshipping Devi one gets an exceedingly attractive form. Sharada Devi has an exceedingly beautiful form. She has the name சாருருபா - சாரு

ஸுந்தரீ ரூபி லாவண்யீ யஸ்யாஃ । LS(241). By intensely meditating on Her the devotee gets an attractive form. This is like the case of an iron ball dropped in the fire. After some time the ball imbibes all the qualities of the fire. It also glows and looks like a ball of fire. A devotee is drawn close to Her and imbibes Her qualities and gets a beautiful form. Next, the poet describes in the next four verses the state of mind of those who worship Devi.

Beginsmallshloka

கதா வா ஸுதாசூப-புஸ்தாக்ஷமாலா-@@
விபோதாசூபமுத்ராஃ கராபஜை-ர்ததாநாம் ।
முகம்ரீ-பராபூத-பூர்ணேந்து-பிபரீ
ஸதா த்வரீ ஸ்மரந்வீத-மோகோ பவேயம் ॥ கக॥

Endshloka

Meaning:- When will I be able to think of You, bearing in Your four hands, the pot of nectar, book, rosary and chin-mudra and face that outshines the full moon and be without sorrow all the time?

Note:-

This verse describes the form of Sharada Devi that is suitable for meditation. Being able to think of Her all the time will be the summum

அயே கௌரீநாத த்ரிபுரஹர ஸ்ரீபோ த்ரிநயந

ப்ரஸீதேதி க்ரோஸந்நிமிஷமிவ நேஷ்யாமி திவஸாந் || Vairagayashatakam (87).

Endshloka

Next, the poet talks about the fruit of meditating on the glorious form of Devi.

Beginsmallshloka

கராப்ஜே-சக்ஷமாலரீ வஹந்தீ ஸதா த்வரீ

பஜந்பங்ககீட-ப்ரகாரேண மாதஃ ।

கரே மே-சக்ஷமாலீ கரோம்யேவ நூந்

பரீ த்வந்மநஸ்த்வீ ஸதா தேஹி மஹ்யம் || ௨௧ ||

Endshloka

Meaning:- By meditating on You holding a rosary in Your lotus

like hand, all the time like a wasp confined in its nest, O Mother!,

I too have come to be holding a rosary in my hand. But, I pray to You

to make my mind to hold on firmly to You.

Note: It is a popular

notion that the wasp confines the worm that has come out of its egg

in a nest. It visits the nest frequently and stings the helpless

worm. The worm is thus tormented and keeps thinking of the tormentor,

the wasp, constantly in fear, with the result it metamorphoses itself

into a wasp. In the same way, the poet says that by constantly

thinking of Sharada Devi, he too have got himself transformed

into Her. The Avadhuta sage says this to King Yadhu in avadhuta

Gita. BH(11-14-22 and 23).

Beginsmallshloka

யத்ர யத்ர மநோ தேஹீ தாரயேத்ஸகலீ தியா ।

ஸ்நேஹாத்வேஷத்பயாத்வாபி யாதி தத்தத்ஸரூபதாம் ॥

Endshlokab

On whatever object a person concentrates his mind intensely, either through love or hate or fear, he attains the form of that very object.

Beginsmallshloka

கீடஃ பேஸஸ்கதீ த்யாயங்குட்யரீ தேந ப்ரவேஸரிதஃ ।
யாதி தத்ஸாத்மதரீ ராஜந் பூர்வரூபமஸ்த்யஜந் ॥

Endshlokab

The worm confined to its nest by the wasp keeps thinking of it till it attains a form resembling that of the insect. The poet, finally, describes the method of offering oneself totally to the Goddess.

Beginsmallshloka

தமௌ தர்ஸநே தே கரௌ பூஜநே ஸ்தரீ
ஸ்ருதீ த்வச்சரித்ர-ஸ்ருதௌ வாக்ஸ்துதௌ ஸ்யாத் ।
ஸிரஸ்த்வத்பதாப்ஜ-ப்ரணத்யேக-ஸக்தீ
பவத்வம்பிகே த்யாநஸக்தீ மநோ மே ॥ ௨௨ ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- Let my eyes be seeing You. Let my hands be engaged in worshipping You. Let my ears hear stories about You. My tongue should be describing Your glories. My head should always be saluting Your feet. My mind should be engaged in meditating on You.

Note:- Our scriptures say that the human life is very precious, but is fragile. Every available moment should be

used in thinking of God or hearing about Him so that our sins get washed away and we may escape the hands of Death. Sri Bhagavatam says that only the time spent in this manner is time lived well.

Beginsmallshloka

ஆயுர்ஹரதி வை ப்ஸாமுத்யந்நஸ்தீ ச யந்நஸௌ ।
தஸ்யர்தே யத் க்ஷணோ நீத் உத்தம்ஸ்லோகவார்தயா ॥ BH(2-3-17)

Endshloka

It talks repeatedly

about this and uses harsh words to condemn those who stray away from the path of devotion and waste their lives in other ways. In view of this Shri Sankaracharya makes a similar request to Lord Siva as the author of this poem in Sivanandalahari. (7).

Beginsmallshloka

மநஸ்தே பாதாப்ஜே நிவஸது வசஸ்தோத்ர-பணிதௌ
கரௌசாப்யர்சாயர் ஸ்ருதிரபி கதாகர்ணந-விதௌ ।
தவ த்யாநே புத்தி-ர்நயந-யுகல் மூர்தி-விபவே
பரக்ரந்தாந் கைர்வா பரமஸிவ ஜாநே பரமதஃ ॥

Endshloka

The Lord had said that He will take care of the welfare of those who are totally devoted to Him as described above. BG(9-22).

Beginsmallshloka

அநந்யா-ஸ்சிந்தயந்தோ மரீ யே ஜநாஃ பர்யுபாஸதே ।
தேஷர் நித்யாபியுக்தாநரீ யோகக்ஷேமீ வஹாம்யஹம் ॥

Endshloka

What about the large

majority of people who cannot do so? Their mind is still occupied with attachment to their family, friends, assets etc. and because of this they are not able to spend much time in thinking of God. Arjuna's was such a case. He was torn between love for his kith and kin and to his sense of duty. His mind was not fully mature for devotion to the exclusion of all other attachments. To him Krishna said that he should carry on performing his duties and also remember the Lord. With the mind so fixed on Him, he will progress spiritually and in course of time reach Him.

Beginsmallshloka

தஸ்மாத்ஸர்வேஷு காலேஷு மாமநுஸ்மர யுத்ய ச ।
மய்யர்பித-மநோ-புத்திர்மாமேவைஷ்யஸ்யஸ்யஸ்யஃ ॥ BG(8-7).

Endshlokab

Beginsmallshloka

புஜங்கப்ரயாதாக்ய-வத்தேந கப்தரீ
ஸ்துதீ யே நராஃ பக்தி-யுக்தாஃ படந்தி ।
ஸுவித்யரீ மதீ நிர்மலரீ சாரு-கீர்தீ
ப்ரயச்சாம்ப தேஷரீ புஜங்காப-வேணி ॥ உந ॥

Endshlokab

Meaning:- O Mother with the long plait resembling a winding snake,
You should bless those who read with devotion this hymn set to the
Bhujangaprayata meter, good education, clean intellect and good
reputation.

॥ ஓ தத்ஸத் ॥

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