

9. देवीभुजंगस्तोत्रम् / Devībhujāṅgastotram

Introduction:

This Stotra on Devi is written using Bhujanga meter (chandas) by Acharya similar to Sri Subrahmanya Bhujangam Stotra that we have seen earlier. Hence the name देवीभुजंगस्तोत्रम् / Devībhujāṅgastotram.

1. विरिञ्चादिभिः पञ्चभिलोकपालैः समूढे महानन्दपीठे निषण्णम्।

धनुर्बाणपाशाङ्कुशप्रोतहस्तं महस्त्रैपुरं शङ्कराद्वैतमव्यात् ॥

1. viriñcyādibhiḥ pañcabhirlokapālaiḥ samūḍhe mahānandapīṭhe niṣaṇṇam |
dhanurbāṇapāśāṅkuśaprotahastam mahastraipuram śaṅkarādvaitamavyāt ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This shloka describes Devi's transcendental form as Adi Parashakti, being the mother of Shiva.

विरिञ्चादिभिः पञ्चभिलोकपालैः समूढे महानन्दपीठे निषण्णम् /viriñcyādibhiḥ
pañcabhirlokapālaiḥ samūḍhe mahānandapīṭhe niṣaṇṇam

विरिञ्चिः- Virinchiḥ –Brahma;आदिभिः–adhibhiḥ - and others; पञ्चभिः - panchabhihi– five;
लोकपालैः–lokapalaiḥ - Protectors of the universe; समूढे– samūḍhe – brought together; महानन्द–
mahā ananda – great bliss; पीठे– pīṭhe – seat; निषण्णम्–niṣaṇṇam – seated.

Devi is seated on the seat of great bliss which is supported by the five protectors of the universe brought together including Brahma and others.

Notes:

Devi Tripurasundari resides in Sripuram on the peak of the Meru Mountain in the Chintamani Gruha. Adi Shankara, in this Shloka describes Devi's abode, Chintamani Gruha along with the glory of her seat (मंचा mancha). The four legs of her seat/ cot are supported by four Devatas viz, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Ishwara. The seat is Sadashiva. So, these five Devatas (unlike the Dikpalakas such as Indra, Agni, and Vayu etc.) are protectors of the entire universe as ordained by Devi, hereby referred to as "panchabhihi lokapalaiḥ".

Just as Devi, who is Maha Ananda, the seat on which she is seated is also referred to as Maha Ananda (Eternal Bliss), and these five great Devatas constitute and support the top seat and the four supporting legs.

धनुर्बाणपाशाङ्कुशप्रोतहस्तं/ dhanurbāṇapāśāṅkuśaprotahastam

धनुः - dhanuḥ - bow; बाण - bāṇa - arrow; पाश - pāśā - rope; अङ्कुश - aṅkuśa - goad; प्रोत- prota - holding; हस्तम् - hastam - hands.

Devi holds the bow, arrow, rope, and goad in her hands.

Notes:

The rope represents worldly attachments, and the goad is to bring senses and negative emotions under control, similar to a Mahout using the goad to control an elephant.

महस्त्रैपुरंशङ्कराद्वैतमव्यात् / mahastraipuramśaṅkarādvaitamavyāt

महःत्रैपुरं - mahah traipuram - unparalleled radiance of Tripurasundari; शङ्कर - śaṅkara - Shiva; अद्वैतम् - advaitam - not different from Shankara; अव्यात् - avyāt - may she protect me.

May the unparalleled radiance from Tripurasundari who is seated on the lap of Shankara, who is not different from Shankara protect me.

Notes:

In the first three lines of this Shloka, Adi Shankara describes Devi's seat and what she holds in her hands. Just as Maharloka, one of the fourteen worlds, which is before Brahma Loka known for its great shine due to the sages who perform tapas in that loka, there is a brilliant radiance coming from Tripurasundari who is seated on the lap of Shankara, and she is no different from Shankara.

Shankara is represented in four places - as Ishwara and Rudra, supporting legs of Devi's seat; as Sadāshiva as the seat itself; and as Shankara on whose lap Devi is seated.

Tripura (three cities) refers to the three states of Waking, Dream, and Deep Sleep (Jagrut, Swapna, Sushupti) or the three bodies Gross (Stūla) Subtle (Sukshma) and Causal (Kāraṇa). As Tripureshwari, the Ishwari of Tripura, Devi guides us beyond these three states and bodies.

Summary:

Let the Devi who is seated on the seat of great bliss which is supported by the five protectors of the universe including Brahma and others, holding the bow, arrow, rope, and goad, in her hands, radiating unparalleled brilliance, who is seated on the lap of Shankara, and who is no different from Shankara, protect me.

2. यदन्नादिभिः पञ्चभिः कोशजालैःशिरःपक्षपुच्छात्मकैरन्तरन्तः ।
निगूढे महायोगपीठे निषण्णं पुरारेरथान्तःपुरं नौमि नित्यम् ॥

2. yadannādibhiḥ pañcabhiḥ kośajālaiḥśiraḥpakṣapucchātmakairantarantaḥ |
nigūḍhe mahāyogapīṭhe niṣaṇṇaṃ purārerathāntaḥpuraṃ naumi nityam ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka, Adi Shankara describes Devi as consort of Shiva.

यदन्नादिभिः पञ्चभिः कोशजालैः शिरःपक्षपुच्छात्मकैरन्तरन्तः निगूढे महायोगपीठे निषण्णं /
yadannādibhiḥ pañcabhiḥ kośajālaiḥ śiraḥpakṣapucchātmakairantarantaḥ nigūḍhe
mahāyogapīṭhe niṣaṇṇaṃ

यत् - yat - that Jīva; अन्नादिभिः - Annadibhiḥ- Annamaya and the other kośas; पञ्चभिः - pañcabhiḥ - five; कोशजालैः - kośa jālaiḥ - web of kośas or sheaths; शिरः - śiraḥ - head; पक्ष - pakṣa - wings; पुच्छ - puccha - tail; आत्मकैः - ātmakaiḥ - trunk of the body; अन्तरन्तः - antarantaḥ - going further and further inside; निगूढे - nigūḍhe - secret; महायोग - maha yōga - great union or merger; पीठे - pīṭhe - seat; निषण्णं - niṣaṇṇaṃ - seated.

Devi is seated on the secret and difficult to attain seat of Maha Yoga. She is also seated within the Jīva hidden inside a web of five interlinked kośas such as Annamaya Kośa and others, each of these kośas described as having four parts head, wings, trunk, and tail similar to a bird.

Notes:

In the first Shloka, the seat of Devi was described as Maha Ananda. In this Shloka, the seat of Devi is described as Maha Yoga. Yoga is the merger of Jīva with Bhagavati or Paramātma. A mere glimpse at Devi's seat or even the Chintamani Gruha can bestow that yoga (merger with Devi). But reaching to the Chintamani Gruha or having a glimpse at the hidden seat of Devi is difficult to attain for a Jīva. Adi Shankara gets to the Vedantic concept of Devi's presence in Jīva. The Jīva does not have this vision, as Devi is hidden inside by the five kośas or sheaths, which are web-like interlinked.

The five sheaths or kośas are Annamaya Kośa (Food Sheath), Prānamaya Kośa (Vital Air Sheath), Manomaya Kośa (Mental Sheath), Vijnanamaya Kośa (Intellectual Sheath), and Ānandamaya Kośa (Bliss Sheath).

The Annamaya Kośa is the Gross (Physical) Body known as Stūla Śarīra (covered by the outer skin, and formed by bones, blood vessels etc.). Prānamaya, Manomaya, and Vijnanamaya Kośas constitute the subtle body or Sukshma Śarīra. Ānandamaya Kośa is the causal body or Kāraṇa Śarīra.

In Prānamaya Kośa, the prāna (vital breath) is imbued to every corner of the body according to the Vedantic Shastras. This contradicts with the western anatomy, where the vital energy (prana) is confined to the lungs. Without the vital energy from the Prānamaya Kośa, the body cannot perform any function. There are ten prānas in total according to Vedanta. The five main prānas are Prāna, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna. The five sub-pranās or upa-prānas are Nāga, Kurma, Krikara, Devadatta and Dhananjaya. These ten prānas constitute the vital airs and provide energy to all parts of the body. However, these kośas are illusionary, transient, and mortal. According to Vedanta, one should meditate on each kośa, negating the fact that these kośas are eternal, and reach to the innermost sheath where Devi is residing.

Manomaya Kośa consists of thoughts. Manas is not a physical part of the body, rather it is a flow of thoughts. In general, one associates thoughts with brain, but according to Vedanta it is the manas that has flow of thoughts which are imaginary and insignificant.

Vijnanamaya Kośa is the intellectual sheath. Like manas, the intellect also has no physical existence. Intellect arises from the study of shastras (sciences) and is sharpened by gaining knowledge as one moves around in the world. Manas (heart) and Vijnana (intellect) are interwoven to determine the action. When a thought arises in manas, the intellect would decide if it is in accordance with dharma.

Ānandamaya Kośa is called the causal body or kārana śarīra. It is the cause of current birth and further births because it carries vāsanās (the subtle form of desires). Jīvas carry vāsanās between the births through kārana śarīra, which has nothing to do with the manas or intellect. During deep sleep state (Sushupthi), all the four other kośas would be inactive (though prāna is functioning it does not give energy to act). So, during deep sleep state, the stūla and sūkshma śarīras are absent and only the kārana śarīra is known to be present. So, the pleasant experience from sound sleep comes through kārana śarīra, i.e. the Ānandamaya Kośa. The pleasant experience of Ānandamaya Kośa is not the Brahmānanda (eternal bliss) that Vedanta associates with Paramātma. The ānanda experience with Ānandamaya Kośa during deep sleep is a reflection of the Brahmānanda. There is a screen of māya (ignorance) between Brahmānanda and Ānandamaya Kośa. Why is the Ānandamaya Kośa said to be associated with māya (ignorance)? A common man could not summon ānanda at will, while a Jnani is ever immersed in Brahmānanda irrespective of his state or action. A Jnani is said to be in the state of nirvikalpa samādhi (ever in the state of bliss). However, a common man is neither in the eternal state of bliss (which comes from samādhi) like a Jnani, nor can summon the bliss.

Brahmānanda Valli, the second section of the Taittirīya Upanishad uses the example of a bird to describe these kośas. Each kośa is described in four parts - head, two wings (right and left sides), trunk, and tail. The human body has a head like a bird, two arms like the two wings of a bird, and a trunk (chest) like a bird, the tail in the case of the human body is the mūlādhara (base) chakra. The Upanishad states that the tail of each kośa is established in the next kośa (अन्तरन्तः - The tail of the Annamaya Kośa is established in the Prānamaya Kośa, the tail of Prānamaya Kośa is established in the Manomaya Kośa, the tail of the Manomaya Kośa is established in the Vijnanamaya Kośa, and the tail of Vijnanamaya Kośa is established in Ānandamaya Kośa) Finally

the tail of the Ānandamaya Kośa is established in Brahman (ब्रह्म पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा - brahma puccham pratishta). One should start with the outermost kośa (Annamaya Kośa) and proceed inwards.

Scholars interpret the above concept using the example of a yagnavedi. The yagnavedi (where Yagas are performed) is usually in the shape of a bird (like Garuda) and is called Garuda Shayanam. The Yagna Vedi is the outermost layer, followed by the Agni, then the Mantras, then the offering of Ahutis, then reaching Devatas invoked through the mantras, then Bhagavan, Saguna Brahman and finally Paramatma, Nirguna Brahman. The five Kośas can thus be metaphorically ascribed to Yagna Vedi for an easy understanding.

Parabrahman is spread all over the place and is also inside the body and therefore should not be confused with the 5 sheaths. One should be negating the five sheaths including that of Anāndamaya Kośato reach the Parabrahman, which is Devi.

पुरारेरथान्तःपुरं नौमि नित्यम् / purārerathāntaḥpuram naumi nityam

पुरारेः - Purāreh - Shiva as Tripurari, the destroyer of the three puras; अथ - atha - after that/now; अन्तःपुरं- Antaḥpuram - consort; नौमि - Noumi - I worship; नित्यम् - nityam - always.

I now worship, always, the visible form of Devi as the consort of Shiva.

Notes:

Adi Shankara describes the two different forms of Devi. In Shloka 1, Devi as Adi Parashakti was described as the mother of Shiva. Such transcendental form of Devi is beyond one's vision (According to Devi Bhagavatham, this vision is given to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva). Now in this Shloka, Devi is described in the visible form, as the consort of Shiva.

Summary:

I always worship Devi, the consort of Shiva, who is seated on a secret, yet difficult to attain seat of Maha Yoga, and who is also present secretly within the Jīva, hidden by the web of five interlinked kośas such as Annamaya Kośa and others, each kośa having parts of head, wings, trunk, and tail.

3. विरिञ्चादिरूपैः प्रपञ्चे विहृत्य स्वतन्त्रा यदा स्वात्मविश्रान्तिरेषा ।
तदा मानमातृप्रमेयातिरिक्तं परानन्दमीडे भवानि त्वदीयम् ॥

3. viriñcādirūpaiḥ prapañce vihr̥tya svatantrā yadā svātmaviśrāntireṣā |
tadā mānamātr̥prameyātiriktaṃ parānandamīḍe bhavāni tvadīyam ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes Devi's great bliss.

विरिञ्चादिरूपैः प्रपञ्चे विहृत्य / viriñcādirūpaiḥprapañce vihṛtya

विरिञ्चादि - viriñcādi- Brahma and others; रूपैः - rūpaiḥ - forms (of); प्रपञ्चे - prapañce - the universe that is made of five elements; विहृत्य - vihṛtya - leaving alone.

Devi takes the form of Brahma and other Devas to perform the functions of creation, preservation, and destruction of this universe made up of five elements, and who after entrusting the responsibility to these forms, remains independent.

स्वतन्त्रा यदा स्वात्मविश्रान्तिरेषा /svatantrā yadā svātma viśrāntireṣā

स्वतन्त्रा - swatantrā - independent; यदा - yadā - when; स्वात्म - swātma - (in Her) own atma; विश्रान्ति - viśrānti - takes rest; एषा - eṣā - this (blissful independent state).

Devi, who is independent, and transcendent as parānanda (eternal bliss), rests in the bliss of her own ātma after entrusting the responsibilities to Brahma and others.

Notes:

Each of the forms -Brahma, Vishnu etc., performs a function and derives ānanda through that function. Devi while entrusting her responsibilities to these forms, has a great bliss, which is independent and transcendent. Devi takes rest, after the work of creating, running the prapancha through these forms. She rests in her own ātma (swātma viśrānti, instead of swātmarāma) and derives bliss from her own ātma. She does not depend on any other object for her bliss.

तदा मानमातृप्रमेयातिरिक्तं / tadā mānamātrūprameyātiriktaṃ

तदा - tadā - at that time ; मान - māna - the knowledge; मातृ - mātrū- the knower (not mother in this context); प्रमेय - prameya- the object to be known; अतिरिक्तं - atiriktaṃ - free from.

The great bliss of Devi is free from the tripudi (triad) that are - knowledge, knower, and object of knowledge.

Notes:

According to Vedanta, every experience is three-fold. There is a knower (a student), an object to be known (such as a subject), and there is knowledge to be attained (the knowledge of that subject). This three-fold experience should be negated according to Vedanta. The Jīva would become neither the knower, the knowledge, nor the object to be known (if there is an object to be known, then it is different from Jīva).

According to Advaita Vedanta, there is nothing other than Paramātma. Paramātma is ever knowledgeable, ever conscious, and ever blissful. Once Jīva becomes Paramātma, there is no such knowledge to be sought.

Devi as Paramātma is described as free from the tripiti - māna (process of knowledge), mātru (the person who comes to know), and prameya (object to be known). She is unique, all alone, independent (swatantra), rests in her own bliss (swātma vishranti), and is in great bliss (parānanda). This is the state Jīva should also be reaching.

परानन्दमीडे भवानि त्वदीयम् / parānandamīḍe bhavāni tvadīyam

परानन्दम् - paranandam -eternal bliss; ईडे - īḍe - I worship, I adore; भवानि - Bhavāni - consort of Bhava or Shiva, also known as Shivani; त्वदीयम् - tvadīyam - yours.

I adore and worship the supreme bliss of Bhavani, which is described in the previous lines.

Summary:

I adore and worship Bhavani whose bliss is independent, who rests in the bliss of her own ātma after entrusting the responsibilities to the forms of Brahma and others, who is free from tripiti (the knower, the subject, and the knowledge).

4. विनोदाय चैतन्यमेकं विभज्य द्विधा देवि जीवः शिवश्चेति नाम्ना ।

शिवस्यापि जीवत्वमापादयन्ती पुनर्जीवमेनं शिवं वा करोषि ॥

4. vinodāya caitanyamekaṃ vibhajya dvidhā devi jīvaḥ śivaśceti nāmnā |

śivasyāpi jīvatvamāpādayantī punarjīvamenam śivam vā karoṣi | |

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes Devi's playful sport.

विनोदाय चैतन्यमेकं विभज्य द्विधा देवि जीवःशिवश्चेति नाम्ना / vinodāya caitanyamekaṃ vibhajya dvidhā devi jīvaḥ śivaśceti nāmnā

विनोदाय - vinodāya - for the sake of sport; चैतन्यं - caitanyam - consciousness; एकं - ekam - one; विभज्य - vibhajya - dividing; द्विधा - dvidhā- into two; देवि - Devi - Oh Devi; जीवः- jīvaḥ - Jīva, the individual soul in ignorance; शिवः - śivaḥ - Shiva; च- ca - and; इति - iti - thus; नाम्ना - nāmnā - only by name.

Oh Devi, just for the sake of your sport, you divide the one consciousness, into two - Shiva and Jīva, who are different just in name.

Notes:

Adi Shankara describes the play of Devi in this Shloka. Devi, the single consciousness, divides herself into Shiva and Jīva, who are different just in name. This is just the kalpana (imagination) and leela (playful sport) of Devi.

शिवस्यापि जीवत्वमापादयन्ती पुनर्जीवमेनं शिवं वा करोषि / śivasyāpi jīvatvamāpādayantī punarjīvamenaṁśivaṁ vā karoṣi

शिवस्य - śivaḥ - to Shiva; अपि - api - even; जीवत्वम्- jīvatvam - quality of being a Jīva; आपादयन्ती - giving or effecting; पुनः - punaḥ - after that; जीवमेनं - jīvam enam - this Jīva; शिवं - śivaṁ - into Shiva; वाकरोषि - vā karoṣi – and you are doing.

Oh Devi, your sport effects the concept of being a Jīva even on Shiva, and once again merges the Jīva with Shiva.

Notes:

Having created these two entities of Shiva and Jīva, Adi Shankara says that Devi's sport continues with effecting the quality of being a Jīva even on Shiva. Shiva is consciousness complete, and from that one consciousness Shiva and Jīva were created by Devi. The act of Devi, making Shiva into a Jīva, must not be misinterpreted as a travesty of Vedantic principles. Here, Adi Shankara is playing with words like the way Devi plays with Chaitanyam (the one consciousness). Adi Shankara intends to bring out the fact emphatically that Jīva is no different from Shiva. Jīva unfortunately, out of ignorance associates with the five kośas and thinks different from Shiva.

Adi Shankara explains further the sporting act of Devi, after effecting the concept of jīvatvam on Shiva. Here, Devi by her grace, rids this Jīva of Jīvatvam and merges the Jīva into Shiva. This completes the consciousness cycle. Devi creates the imaginary division between Jīva and Shiva, and again through her grace grants the consciousness to Jīva for unification with Shiva.

Summary:

Oh Devi, who for the sake of sport seemingly divides herself, the one consciousness, into two as Shiva and Jīva which are different only in name, who effects the concept of being a Jīva on Shiva, and then once again merges this Jīva back into Shiva.

5. समाकुञ्च्य मूलं हृदि न्यस्य वायुं मनो भ्रूबिलं प्रापयित्वा निवृत्ताः ।
ततः सच्चिदानन्दरूपे पदे ते भवन्त्यम्ब जीवाः शिवत्वेन केचित् ॥
5. samākuñcyā mūlaṁ hr̥di nyasya vāyuṁ mano bhrūbilaṁ prāpayitvā nivṛttāḥ |
tataḥ saccidānandarūpe pade te bhavantyamba jīvāḥ śivatvena kecit ||

Meaning and Explanation:

So far, Adi Shankara brought various significant aspects of Vedanta. He described Devi as pancha kosantara-stita (seated inside the five kośas), pancha-brahmasana-stita (seated on the five Brahmas) and also as dhyana-dhyātru-dheya rūpa (similar to māna, mātru, and prameya). Adi Shankara also mentioned about the leela (playful sport: the subtle difference between Shiva and Jīva) of Devi and how she ends the same with her grace.

This Shloka brings Kundalini Yoga, one of the many processes by which the imagined difference between Jīva and Shiva with Devi's grace ceases to exist. Further, Adi Shankara describes the process of Kundalini Yoga. The technicalities of the Kundalini Yoga practice are beyond the scope of this Stora and is to be practiced only by qualified people under the guidance of a competent Guru.

समाकुञ्च मूलं हृदि न्यस्य वायुं / samākuñcya mūlaṃ hṛdi nyasya vāyum

समाकुञ्च - samākuñcya – properly constricting/bending/pressurizing (derived from kuncana - to bend - as in Nataraja's bent left foot which is described as kuncita pādama); मूलं - mūlaṃ - mūladhāra; हृदि - hṛdi - in the heart; न्यस्य - nyasya - placing the (air) in (the heart); वायुं - vāyum - air.

Having properly constricted the Mūladhāra and having placed or concentrated the air in the heart.

Notes:

Mūladhāra is where, the Kundalini Shakti is coiled as a serpent, and is where the Sadhaka, during the initial states of practicing Kundalini Yoga, focuses by properly constricting the Mūladhāra. This practice is called Mulabandha.

मनो भ्रूबिलं प्रापयित्वा निवृत्ताः / mano bhrūbilaṃ prāpayitvā nivṛttāḥ

मनो - mano - mind ; भ्रूबिलं - bhrūbilaṃ - in the space between the eyebrows; प्रापयित्वा - prāpayitvā - focusing (the mind); निवृत्ताः - nivṛttāḥ - having done (the three steps mentioned in the process); can also be interpreted having renounced the world since while performing Kundalini Yoga .

Focusing the mind on the space between the eyebrows, and then proceeding to meditate is described here.

Notes: भ्रू - bhru - eyebrows; बिल - bilā - cave like space (like the Bilākasha in Kamakshi's sannidhi where She appeared first)

ततः सच्चिदानन्दरूपे पदे ते / tataḥ saccidānandarūpe pade te

ततः - tataḥ - after that ; सच्चिदानन्दरूपे - saccidānanda - the form of existence-consciousness-bliss; पदे - pade - state; ते- te - your.

Having performed the three steps of mūlabhanda, concentrating the air in the heart, and focusing the mind on the space between the eyebrows, one should meditate on the state of Devi as Sachchidānanda.

Notes:

Devi is Sat (only One who exists eternally), Chit (only source of consciousness), and Ānanda (eternal bliss). The consciousness and ānanda of a Jīva is limited as a tiny particle, when compared to that of Devi (whose consciousness and bliss are eternal and unparalleled).

The objective of meditation is to achieve the state of Sacchidānanda (by focusing the concentration between the eyebrows, and mind). This can be compared to seeing Kamakshi in the Garbhagruha.

भवन्त्यम्ब जीवाः शिवत्वेन केचित् / bhavantyaṃba jīvāḥ śivatvena kecit

भवन्ति - bhavanti - become; अम्ब - amba - Oh Mother; जीवाः- jīvāḥ - Jīva; शिवत्वेन - śivatvena - state of Shiva ; केचित् - kecit - some.

Oh Mother, only a few Jīvas (practicing the process and abandoning their Jīvatvam) attain the state of Shiva (become one with Shiva).

Notes:

Adi Shankara states that only a few Jīvas would be able to attain the state of Shiva through the process of Kundalini Yoga, by visualizing Devi. Not every Jīva, practicing Kundalini Yoga has the purity, concentration, and qualifications to have the sakshātkara (realization) of Devi. A few qualified Jīvas could abandon their Jīvatvam and ascend into the state of Shivatvam. One must remember that these are only states and has no relation to physical state of the body, the change in state is only for the transcended mind. Jīva associates the mind and body with itself. When Jīva loses that association with mind and body, it becomes one with Shiva.

Summary:

Oh Mother, having properly constricted the Mūladhāra, having placed the air in the heart, focusing the mind on the space between the eyebrows, and meditating on the state of Sachchidānanda, one attains the state of Shiva. Only a few Jīvas could attain this state of consciousness.

6. शरीरेऽतिकष्टे रिपौ पुत्रवर्गे सदाभीतिमूले कलत्रे धने वा ।
न कश्चिद्विरज्यत्यहो देवि चित्रं कथं त्वत्कटाक्षं विना तत्त्वबोधः ॥
6. śarīre’tikaṣṭe ripau putravarge sadābhītimūle kalatre dhane vā |
na kaścīdvirajyatyaho devi citraṃ kathaṃ tvatkaṭākṣaṃ vinā tattvabodhaḥ ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka, Adi Shankara pleads for Devi’s grace on Jīvas, unable to come out of samsāric bonds and failing to attain Shiva.

शरीरेऽतिकष्टे रिपौ पुत्रवर्गे सदाभीतिमूले कलत्रे धने वा / śarīre’tikaṣṭe ripau putravarge sadābhītimūle kalatre dhane vā

शरीरे - śarīre - body; अतिकष्टे - ati kaṣṭe –lot of misery; रिपौ - ripau - enemies, both external and internal ; पुत्रवर्गे - putra varge - sons/children; सदा - sadā - constant; भीति - bhīti - fear; मूले - mūle - source; कलत्रे - kalatre - wife/spouse; धने - dhané - wealth; वा - vā - and.

The body, enemies both external and internal (shadripus the six internal enemies such as kāma (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), mōha (delusion), mada (arrogance), and matsarya (jealousy)), children, spouse and wealth are the cause and source of great fear and misery.

न कश्चिद्विरज्यत्यहो देवि चित्रं / na kaścīdvirajyatyaho devi citraṃ

नकश्चित् - na kaścīt - no one; विरज्यति - virajyati – detaches or becomes indifferent (रज्यति - rajyati - attaches); अहो - aho - expression of wonder; देवि - Devi ; चित्रं - citraṃ - wonderful.

Oh Devi, it is a wonder that no one wants to detach himself from these five mundane bondages (as listed above), though they are cause and source of constant fear.

Notes:

Here, Adi Shankara exclaims in wonder, why Jīva despite constant cause of misery and fear, arising from the worldly attachments, is not able to get away from those bonds, as it is common that Jīvas move away from fearful things (such as serpent etc.,).

कथं त्वत्कटाक्षं विना तत्त्वबोधः / kathaṃ tvatkaṭākṣaṃ vinā tattvabodhaḥ

कथं - kathaṃ - how; त्वत् - twat - your; कटाक्षं - kaṭākṣaṃ- sidelong glance; विना - vinā - without; तत्त्वबोधः - tattva bodhaḥ - realization of the truth.

Devi, without your auspicious sidelong glance how can the realization of the truth dawn upon us?

Notes:

One cannot withstand the direct vision of the Devi. It is a practice to always pray to Devi for her sidelong glance, which is graceful, beneficial, and auspicious. Without detachment there can be no realization of truth. One can develop detachment only by Devi's kataksham. Hence, the three related concepts of detachment, Devi's kataksham, and Tattva Bodha are explained in this Shloka.

Summary:

Oh Devi, it is a wonder that no one detaches himself from the body, internal and external enemies, children, spouse, and wealth which are constant sources of fear and suffering! How can the realization of the truth dawn upon us without the grace of your sidelong glance?

7. शरीरे धनेऽपत्यवर्गे कलत्रे विरक्तस्य सद्देशिकादिष्टबुद्धेः।

यदाकस्मिकं ज्योतिरानन्दरूपं समाधौ भवेत्तत्त्वमस्यम्ब सत्यम्॥

7. śarīre dhane'patyavarge kalatre viraktasya saddeśikādiṣṭabuddheḥ |

yadākasmikaṃ jyotirānandarūpaṃ samādhau bhavettattvamasyamba satyam ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka Adi Shankara describes what happens when one is able to detach from the mundane bonds and is under the guidance of a Guru with Devi's grace.

शरीरे धनेऽपत्यवर्गे कलत्रे विरक्तस्य /śarīre dhane'patyavarge kalatre viraktasya

शरीरे - śarīre - body; धने - dhane - wealth; अपत्यवर्गे - apatya vargé - progeny; कलत्रे - kalatre - wife/spouse; विरक्तस्य - viraktasya - who has developed virakti or detachment to the body (similar to विरज्यति - virajyati in Shloka 6).

The one who has developed detachment to his own body, wealth, progeny, and spouse.

Notes:

Vedanta's fundamental principle is that all attachments arise from attachment to the body, as it is the root cause of all other attachments.

Jīvas' attachments can be classified as Ahamkāra (I) and Mamakāra (Mine). Ahamkāra is associated with the body that includes the mind. Mamakāra arises from the possessions including wealth, progeny, and spouse. So, Adi Shankara states, the fundamental detachment has to begin from the body.

Say - 'I am learned' is an attachment to the body since learning is to the mind and the mind is in the body. The mind and body have connection with the Jīva, and no relation with the entity of Shiva.

सदेशिकादिष्टबुद्धेः/ saddeśikādiṣṭabuddheḥ

सत्- sat- good; देशिक- deshika – Guru, one who shows the disha or direction; आदिष्ट - ādishta - directed; बुद्धेः - buddheḥ - intellect.

Intellect directed by a Sadguru.

Notes:

Even after one develops detachment, he might waver and might not know the path. For the Jīva, there is no escape from the Vāsanās (impressions from previous births) and the Prarabdha Karma (karma that is set to be experienced during this lifetime). A qualified Guru guides by showing a path that is suited based on the Vāsanās to reach the Parabrahman.

The use of word "Sat" emphasizes the quality. The word Deshika means showing the direction towards right destination. Since we tend to go on the wrong path, the Saddeshika (SadGuru) directs our intellect towards Devi and away from the world.

यदाकस्मिकं ज्योतिरानन्दरूपं समाधौ भवेत्तत्त्वमस्यम्ब सत्यम् / yadākasmikaṃ jyotirānandarūpaṃ samādhau bhavettattvamasyamba satyam

यदा - yadā - when; आकस्मिकं - ākasmikaṃ - all of a sudden, unexpected; ज्योतिः - jyotiḥ - light; आनन्दरूपं - ānanda rūpaṃ - form of bliss; समाधौ - samādhau - state of samādhi; भवेत् - bhavet – happens/ appears; तत् - tat - that; त्वम् - tvam - you; असि - asi- are; अम्ब - amba - Oh Mother; सत्यम् - satyam - only truth.

Oh Mother, in the state of samādhi, all of a sudden, a light in the form of bliss appears. That light is you, and that is the only truth.

Notes:

The downfall of attachment and the importance of detachment are fundamental concepts of Vedānta and are described in many Shāstras and Purānas like Devi Bhāgavatham, Adhyātma Rāmāyana, and Manuśmṛiti.

Devi Bhagavatham says:

आशा हि परमं दुःखं नैराश्यं परमं सुखम् । *Āsha hi paramaṃ dukhaṃ Nairashaym paramaṃ sukhaṃ ।*

Meaning: Attachment or Expectation is the greatest misery. Detachment is the greatest happiness.

Bhaja Govindam says:

अङ्गं गलितं पलितं मुण्डं दशनविहीनं जातं तुण्डम् ।
वृद्धो याति गृहीत्वा दण्डं तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशापिण्डम् ॥
*angam galitam palitam mundam, dashanavihīnam jātam tundam ।
vridhō yāti gruhītvā dandam, tadapi na munchatyāshāpindam ॥*

Meaning: An old man whose limbs are emaciated, with a bald head, and no teeth, who is unable to walk and holds a walking stick is yet unable to leave aside his love for worldly desires. Adi Shankara compares one's many desires to a pindam (rice-ball), with many attached rice particles.

Having developed detachment to the world, with the intellect directed by the Guru, one attains the state of Samādhi. Samādhi is the highest state of yoga, where the body, including the mind is absent (consciousness of body is destroyed). In such a state, the consciousness gets completely absorbed into Devi's consciousness. In Ashtanga Yoga, Samādhi is the last anga (limb) of yoga. It is the final state following Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana.

When one is in that state of Samādhi with Guru's guidance, a light in the form of bliss appears. At that time, one experiences the bliss associated with the Devi as Sacchidānanda rūpa. None of these is possible without Devi's grace. Oh Mother, you are that light and the truth.

Summary:

Having developed detachment to the body, wealth, progeny, and spouse, with the intellect directed by the Guru, when in the state of Samādhi a light in the form of great bliss appears, Oh Mother, you are that light and the truth.

**8. मृषान्योऽमृषान्यः परो मिश्रमेनं परः प्राकृतं चापरो बुद्धिमात्रम् ।
प्रपञ्चं मिमीते मुनीनां गणोऽयं तदेतत्त्वमेवेति न त्वां जहीमः ॥**

**8. mṛṣānyo amṛṣānyaḥ paro miśramenaṃ paraḥ prākṛtaṃ cāparo buddhimātram
prapañcaṃ mimīte munīnāṃ gaṇo'yaṃ tadetattvameveti na tvāṃ jahīmaḥ ॥**

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka Adi Shankara describes the speculations of various philosophies on the topic of Jīvatma-Paramātma Sambhanda - the relation between Jīvatma and Paramātma.

मृषान्योऽमृषान्यः परो मिश्रमेनं / mṛṣānyo mṛṣānyaḥ paro miśramenaṃ

मृषा - mṛṣā - false; अन्यः- anyaḥ - some; अमृषा - amṛṣā - not false, true; अन्यः - anyaḥ - some; परो - paro - some others; मिश्रम् - miśram - mixture; एनं - enaṃ - this.

Some say this world is false. Some say this world is not false. Some people say this world is a mixture of fallacy and reality.

परः प्राकृतं चापरो बुद्धिमात्रम् / paraḥ prākṛtaṃ cāparo buddhimātram

परः- paraḥ - some others; प्राकृतं - prākṛtaṃ - evolution of nature (prakṛti - nature); च - ca - and; अपरो - aparo - some others; बुद्धिमात्रम् - buddhimātram - intellectual exercise.

Some say this world is an evolution of nature (similar to that of Darwin's Theory). Some others say this world is an imagination of the intellect and is not real.

प्रपञ्चं मिमीते मुनीनां गणोऽयं / prapañcaṃ mimīte munīnāṃ gaṇo'yaṃ

प्रपञ्चं - prapañcaṃ - world; मिमीते - mimīte - measuring/assessing/infering; मुनीनां - munīnāṃ - sages; गणः - gaṇaḥ - group; अयं - ayaṃ - this.

Groups of sages assess this world (in different ways as stated above).

Adi Shankara explains further, why none of these assessments is correct in the next line.

तदेतत्त्वमेवेति न त्वां जहीमः / tadetattvameveti na tvāṃ jahīmaḥ

तत् - tat – that described earlier; एतत् - etat - this (assessment); त्वम् - tvam - you; एव - eva - alone; इति - iti - are; न- na - not त्वां - tvāṃ - you; जहीमः - jahīmaḥ - abandon, leave aside.

Let the sages make the assessment as described earlier, but as we know you alone are the truth, we will not abandon you (Devi).

Notes:

Adi Shankara says the sages do not realize that all their assessments and inferences are possible only because of intellect adorned by Devi. Devi alone manifests herself as the assessments of the sages. One should never abandon Devi and worship as the only truth.

Summary:

Groups of sages make inferences on this world. Some say the world as false, and some say the other. Some say the world is a mixture of falsity and reality. Some others say the world is an evolution of nature. Some others say it is an intellectual exercise. All these assessments pertain to the Devi. Oh Devi, you alone are the only truth, and we will not abandon you.

9. निवृत्तिः प्रतिष्ठा च विद्या च शान्ति-स्तथा शान्त्यतीतेति पञ्चीकृताभिः ।
कलाभिः परे पञ्चविंशत्तिकाभि-स्त्वमेकैव सेव्या शिवाभिन्नरूपा ॥
9. nivṛttiḥ pratiṣṭhā ca vidyā ca śānti-stathā śāntyatītetī pañcīkṛtābhiḥ |
kalābhiḥ pare pañcaviṁśātmikābhi-stvamekaiva sevya śivābhinnarūpā ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes one of the philosophies associated with Devi Upasana, based on the Sharada Tilaka Tantra.

Devi Upasana can be performed with many rituals, procedures. There are many Gurus and different tantra texts, that formulate different paths to reach her. One such text, the Sharada Tilaka Tantra describes how a Guru gives dīksha and initiates the śiśya (student) into Devi Upasana.

Dīksha is a process in which the Guru teaches a mantra to the student, which the student chants throughout his lifetime as a japā (chanting). The Guru also cultivates the mind of the student gradually as part of the dīksha (initiation). A qualified Guru, a Saddeshika, would be able to develop the detachment in the student and show the right path. The Guru ensures that the student does not return to his old ways and to previous attachments. One of the processes in the Sharada Tilaka Tantra describes how to train the student to detach and attach to Devi.

At this point one should understand how Tantra Shastra defines the creation. The Theory of Nāda- Bindu- Kala refers to the three stages of creation. At the very initial stage of creation, there is only Devi, and nothing else. When Devi decides to do creation, she starts a little vibration, called Nāda. This awakens the dormant Shiva, to start the process of creation. When Shiva starts the creation process, Nada develops into Bindu which is a physical point of concentration. So, sound (Nāda) has now become a physical spot (Bindu). This physical spot is developed into Kalā. Kalā is the expansion of the Bindu into the whole paraphernalia that we witness as the creation.

Devi has taken certain steps to create the world. One has to reverse this process, to get out of this world and return to Devi. This reversal process is what the Guru takes the student through.

निवृत्तिः प्रतिष्ठा च विद्या च शान्ति-स्तथा शान्त्यतीतेति / nivṛtṭiḥ pratiṣṭhā ca vidyā ca śānti-stathā śāntyatītetī

निवृत्तिः - nivṛtṭiḥ - Prithvi Tattva (Earth); प्रतिष्ठा - pratiṣṭhā- ĀpaTattva (Water); च - ca - and; विद्या - vidyā - Agni or Tejas Tattva (Fire); च- ca - and; शान्तिः - śāntiḥ - Vayu Tattva (Air); तथा - tatha - then; शान्त्यतीता - śāntyatīta - Akasha Tattva (Space).

Nivṛtṭi, Pratiṣṭhā, Vidyā, Śānti, Śāntyatīta are the technical terms used in the Sharada Tilaka Tantra Shastra for the five Tattvas of Prithvi-Earth, Āpa-Water, Tejas-Fire, Vayu-Air, and Ākasha-Space respectively.

Notes:

All creation consists of these basic five Tattvas/panchabhūtas/elements. To get out of the world, the aspirant has to get out of these five Tattvas, starting with the Prapancha (world)and the body.

The previous Shlokas 6 and 7 highlighted the body as our first attachment and the importance of detaching from it. When Devi created the world through Shiva, she went through the sequence of Ākasha, Vāyu, Agni, Āpa, and Prithvi. While Ākasha is the subtlest form, Prithvi is the most gross. In order to reach back to Devi, one has to reverse the process by starting to get out of the gross Prithvi form and subsequently the subtle Ākasha form too (otherwise one is dragged back into creation). This process is similar to the kośas as described in Shloka 2, where merger with Devi starts with the Annamaya Kośa and reaching finally beyond the Ānandamaya Kośa. The final kośa, Ānandamaya Kośa, is similar to the subtle śāntyatīta (Akasha Tattva).

There are five Tattvas that obscure Devi and attach us to the world. Nivṛtṭi (the most solid form), Pratiṣṭhā (establishes one in the world), Vidyā (makes one aware of the world), Śānti (permeates the world), Śāntyatīta (the bliss in the creation). One needs to get rid of these.

पञ्चीकृताभिः कलाभिःपरे पञ्चविंशत्त्मिकाभिः / pañcīkṛtābhiḥ kalābhiḥpare pañcaviṃśātmikābhiḥ

पञ्चीकृताभिः - pañcīkṛtābhiḥ – five-fold process/the process of Panchikaranam; कलाभिः - kalābhiḥ - Kalās orTattvas (here Kalā does not refer to the sixty-four arts); परे - pare - beyond (the Kalās); पञ्चविंश - pañcaviṃśā - twenty-five; आत्मिकाभिः - ātmikābhiḥ - in the form of. Devi is beyond the five Kalās or Tattvas, and expressed as twenty-five Kalās, through a process called Panchikaranam.

Notes:

Adi Shankara addresses Devi as beyond the Kalās or Tattvas of this creation. Devi started with Nāda, made the Bindu, and expanded into Kalā. But she is even beyond all this. One should attain Devi beyond all these Kalās.

Panchikaranam is a technical process during the creation of the world. The process is described in Vedanta by which the original five Tattvas (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space) are transformed into a workable form of twenty-five Tattvas to create the body and the world. Prakrana Granthas of Adi Shankara like Vivekachoodamani describe this process of Panchikaranam.

Panchikaranam is a process of division. The five elements are divided into two halves. One half is divided further into four equal parts. Each of these four equal parts are exchanged with each of the other four elements as described below.

Space	1/2 or 50% Space	1/8 or 12.5% Air	1/8 or 12.5% Fire	1/8 or 12.5% Water	1/8 or 12.5% Earth
Air	1/2 or 50% Air	1/8 or 12.5% Space	1/8 or 12.5% Fire	1/8 or 12.5% Water	1/8 or 12.5% Earth
Fire	1/2 or 50% Fire	1/8 or 12.5% Space	1/8 or 12.5% Air	1/8 or 12.5% Water	1/8 or 12.5% Earth
Water	1/2 or 50% Water	1/8 or 12.5% Space	1/8 or 12.5% Air	1/8 or 12.5% Fire	1/8 or 12.5% Earth
Earth	1/2 or 50% Earth	1/8 or 12.5% Space	1/8 or 12.5% Air	1/8 or 12.5% Fire	1/8 or 12.5% Water

The above table shows that each element will have predominantly (50%) its own element and 12.5% parts of each of the other four elements. Taking the example of the Earth element, we see that when we dig the earth, we see water, fire, air, and space. Similarly, air contains fire even though invisible. So, each of the original five elements is in a grosser form now a mixture of all the five elements. This process is instituted by Devi for the purpose of creation.

The Guru first takes the student beyond Nivriti, the Earth element, by taking the physical body which is mostly earth (in the physical body the other elements such as water/blood, Fire/Jataragni, Air and Space are also found, but most predominantly solid form of earth). The Guru then subsequently takes the student beyond the Āpa, Tejas, Vayu, and finally the Akasha

Tattva. The Guru then destroys the mind from its tendency to go into external objects and makes the mind focus internally on Devi.

त्वमेकैव सेव्याशिवाभिन्नरूपा / tvamekaiva sevyaśivābhinnarūpā

त्वम्एकएव - tvam eka eva - you only are; सेव्या - sevya - to be worshipped; शिवअभिन्नरूपा - śivā abhinna rūpā – form, not distinct from Shiva.

You are the only one to be worshipped, and your form is no different from Shiva.

Notes:

Adi Shankara says Devi alone is the truth, and the only one to be worshipped. All the twenty-five kālas that are cause of the creation have to be abandoned and left behind, as they are not the real Jīva. I am you, Devi, and I worship you. You are of the form no different from Shiva (Devi divided herself into Shiva (Purusha) and Shakti (Prakriti)). Worship of that unified form of Devi (as Lalita Parmeshwari or Raja Rajeshwari or Kamakshi) is indicated here.

Summary:

Devi, you are no different from Shiva. You are beyond the twenty-five Kalās that are the reason behind the formation of Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space Tattvas through Panchikaranam. You alone are to be worshipped.

**10. अगाधेऽत्र संसारपङ्के निमग्नं कलत्रादिभारेण खिन्नं नितान्तम् ।
महामोहपाशौघबद्धं चिरान्मां समुद्धर्तुमम्ब त्वमेकैव शक्ता ॥**

**10. agādhe'tra saṁsārapaṅke nimagnaṁ kalatrādibhāreṇa khinnaṁ nitāntam
mahāmohapāśaughabaddhaṁ cirānmāṁ samuddhartumamba tvamekaiva śaktā ||**

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a prayer to Devi. All the processes described in the previous Shlokas are complicated. Without Devi's grace none of the processes will work. Surrender is at the core of this Shloka.

अगाधेऽत्र संसारपङ्के निमग्नं / agādhe'tra saṁsārapaṅke nimagnaṁ

अगाधे - agādhe - very deep; अत्र - atra - here; संसारपङ्के - saṁsāra paṅke - slush of samsara; निमग्नं - nimagnaṁ - completely immersed.

I am deeply and completely immersed in the slush of samsāra.

Notes:

When immersed in slush (and quicksand) one needs help of the other to get out. The more one tries to get out of the slush all by himself, the more he gets stuck into that.

कलत्रादिभारेण खिन्नं नितान्तम् / kalatrādibhāreṇa khinnaṃ nitāntam

कलत्र - kalatra - wife/spouse; आदि- ādi – etcetera; भारेण - bhareṇa - weight; खिन्नं - khinnaṃ - weary and exhausted; नितान्तम् - nitāntam - very much.

I am very weary and exhausted from carrying the burden of wife/spouse/family etc.,

महामोहपाशौघबद्धंचिरान्मां / mahāmohapāśaughabaddhaṃcirānmām

महामोह - mahā moha - great delusion; पाश - pāśa - rope, attachment; औघ - aughā - plenty; बद्धं - baddhaṃ - bound; चिरात् - cirāt - long time; माम् - mām - me.

I have been bound by plenty of ropes of great delusion for a longer time.

Notes:

One's greatest delusion is perceiving this world to be real. The possessions, house, spouse, children, wealth are all delusions and assumed as reality. These delusions have been continuing for a long time over several births.

समुद्धर्तुमम्ब त्वमेकैव शक्ता / samuddhartumamba tvamekaiva śaktā

सम्-उद्धर्तुम् - sam udhartum - properly raise (udhāraṇa - raise); अम्ब - Amba - Oh Mother; त्वमेकैव - tvam eka eva - you alone are; शक्ता - śaktā - capable.

Oh Mother, you alone are capable of properly raising me (from this slush of samsāra, weight of family, and the delusory bonds of attachment).

Notes:

Adi Shankara is emphasizing the need of surrendering to Devi as she alone can raise the Jīva from the slush of samsāra.

Summary:

Oh Mother, you alone can properly raise me from this slush of samsāra in which I am deeply immersed. I am weary of carrying the burden of family etc., in which I have been bound by the ropes of delusion for a long time.

11. समारभ्य मूलं गतो ब्रह्मचक्रं भवद्दिव्यचक्रेश्वरीधामभाजः ।
महासिद्धिसङ्घातकल्पद्रुमाभा नवाप्याम्ब नादानुपास्ते च योगी ॥
11. samārabhya mūlaṃ gato brahmacakraṃ bhavaddivya cakreśvarīdhāmabhājah |
mahāsiddhisāṅghātakalpadrumābhā navāpyāmba nādānupāste ca yogī ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes another aspect of Devi upāsana and Kundalini Yōga

समारभ्यमूलंगतोब्रह्मचक्रं /samārabhyamūlaṅgatobrahmacakraṃ

समारभ्य - samārabhya- starting with; मूलं - mūlaṃ - Mūladhāra Chakra; गतो - gato-
reaching; ब्रह्मचक्रं - brahmacakraṃ - Brahma Chakra or Sahasrāra Chakra at the top of the head.

Starting with the Mūladhāra Chakra and reaching the Brahma Chakra.

Notes:

The Sahasrāra Chakra is also known as the Brahma Chakra, where Shakti unites with Shiva and gives a complete and unified experience of Brahman.

भवद्दिव्यचक्रेश्वरीधामभाजः / bhavaddivya cakreśvarīdhāmabhājah

भवत् - bhavat - yours; दिव्य - divya - divine; चक्रेश्वरी - cakreśvarī - Iswari of all chakras; धाम -
dhāma - abode; भाजः - bhājah - one who has reached.

One who has reached the Brahma Chakra, the divine abode of Chakreshwari.

Notes:

Here, Adi Shankara refers to Devi as Chakreshwari, meaning she is the Iswari/head of all the thousands of Chakras and not just the well-known seven chakras (Mūladhara, Swādhishthana, Manipura, Anāhata, Vishuddha, Agna, and Sahasrāra). The Brahma Chakra is described as the divine abode of Chakreshwari. She guides one from Mūladhara Chakra, through SushmanaNādi to the final destination of Brahma Chakra and unites with Brahman.

महासिद्धिसङ्घातकल्पद्रुमाभा/ mahāsiddhisāṅghātakalpadrumābhā

महासिद्धि- mahā siddhi - great attainments; सङ्घात - saṅghāta - group; कल्पद्रुमा- kalpadruma -
the Kalpaka tree in Swarga Loka that grants desires by a mere wish; आभा- ābha - radiance;

The radiance of the Kalpaka tree that can grant many mahā siddhis.

Notes:

Mahā siddhi (Great attainments) includes several siddhis other than the well-known ashta/eight siddhis (Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti, Prākamyā, Ishitva, and Vashitva).

नवाप्याम्बनादानुपास्ते च योगी / navāpyāmbanādānupāste ca yogī

नव- nava - ever new; अपि- api - though; अम्ब- Amba - Oh Mother; नादान्- nādān - sounds.; उपास्ते- upāste - worships; च- ca - and; योगी- yogī - the Yogi.

Oh Mother, the Yogi worships the new nādas (which are similar to the shine of the Kalpaka tree and capable of bestowing mahā siddhis).

Notes:

The word नवापि (ever new) applies to both nādān and mahā siddhi (in the previous line). Meaning, yogi always experiences new nadas (sounds) and attains new siddhis.

Nādān(sounds) can also be interpreted as the nine sounds of the Kundalini Philosophy-Nāda, Bindu, Kalā, Jyeshthama, Roudhri, Vāma, Vishanki, Dhoodri, Sarvananda, Nādhādhaya. In Srividya upāsana, a Manasikajapā(mental chant)is performed at each chakra. Each chakra corresponds to anāda associated with the Devata of that chakra. For example, Vināyaka is associated with the Mūladhāra Chakra. The ultimate sound of hreemkāra is heard at the Brahma Chakra. These sounds are divine, unlike the familiar worldly sounds, and are perceived by Yogis with Devi's grace while in state of samādhi. The Yogis gain new maha siddhis while hearing these divine sounds that have radiance equivalent to that of Kalpaka tree. However, the Yōgi's donot desire for these mahā siddhis and care only for the nada that gives the experience of Brahma Chakra.

12. गणेशैर्ग्रहैरम्ब नक्षत्रपङ्क्त्या तथा योगिनीराशिपीठैरभिन्नम् ।
महाकालमात्मानमामृश्य लोकं विधत्से कृतिं वा स्थितिं वा महेशि ॥
12. gaṇeśairgrahairamba nakṣatrapaṅktyā tathā yoginīrāshipīṭhairabhinnam
mahākālamātmānamamṛśya lokam vidhatse kṛtiṃ vā sthitiṃ vā mahēśi ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes the process of the creation of the world at the hands of Devi as Maheśi.

गणेशैर्ग्रहैरम्ब नक्षत्रपङ्क्त्या / gaṇeśairgrahairamba nakṣatrapaṅktyā

गणेशैः - gaṇeśaihi - the many (generally regarded as thirty-two) forms of Ganesha; ग्रहैः - grahaihi - nine planets; अम्ब - Amba - Oh Mother; नक्षत्रपङ्क्त्या- nakshatrapaṅktyā - rows of stars (28 stars including Abhijit star).

Oh Mother, the forms of Ganesha, the planets, the rows of stars

Notes:

Adi Shankara lists the important features of the Devi's creations (the galaxies, universes, and many other entities), some of which are difficult to imagine for an ordinary human being.

In Kāśī, Shiva and Devi established fifty-one forms of Ganesha to encircle and protect the city of Kāśī.

तथा योगिनीराशिपीठैरभिन्नम् / tathā yoginīrāśipīṭhairabhinnam

तथा- tatha - and; योगिनी- Yōgini - sixty-four crore Yōginis; राशि- rāśi - the twelve rāśis; पीठैः - pīṭhaihi - the fifty-one Shakti Peethas; अभिन्नम्- abhinnam - not different from.

And the Yōginis, Rāshis, Shakti Peethas are not different from you (Devi).

Notes:

In Sri Chakra upāsana, a mention of sixty-four Yōginis, each having one crore army is mentioned. The name “महाचतुः षष्टिकोटी योगिनीगण सेविता / Maha Chatushashti Koti Yogini Gana Sevitha” in the LalitaSahasranāmam also refers to the sixty-four crore Yōginis.

Adi Shankara, claims, Devi is not different from the forms of Ganesha, the planets, the stars, the Yōginis, the rāśis and the Shakti Peethas. She is the source of shakti(energy) to all of them, without which they become non-entities. She is the creator, the universe itself, and the source of energy to all such entities. The Upanishads state that Brahman creates the universe and enters the universe to provide shakti. That shakti is Devi.

महाकालमात्मानमामृश्य/ mahākālamātmānamāmṛśya

महाकालम्- mahā kālam - the great time; आत्मानम्- ātmānam - self; आमृश्य- āmṛśya- considering. Considering herself as the Mahā Kāla (the great time)

Notes:

Time determines everything in the process of creation and dissolution. The calculation of time is enormous to an ordinary human being. According to the Shastras, Brahma's life span is a

hundred years, with each day and night equivalent to a thousand chatur-yugas. Each chatur-yuga consists of a cycle of four yugas namely Krita, Treta, Dwāpara and Kali, lasting for 4.32 million human years. At the end of each day of Brahma, all the lower worlds including Swarga Lōka get dissolved. At the end of Brahma's lifespan of a hundred years, there is final dissolution. After the final dissolution, the kālashakti functions as an alarm clock and reminds Devi to restart the creation. Devi, in the form of Maha Kāla (infinite time) decides the time of creation and the dissolution.

लोकं विधत्से कृतिं वा स्थितिं वा महेशि / lokam vidhatse kṛtiṃ vā sthitiṃ vā maheśi

लोकं- lokam - worlds;विधत्से-vidhatse- ordains;कृतिं- kṛtiṃ - creation;वा- vā - and; स्थितिं- sustenance;वा- vā - and;महेशि- Maheśi - Devi as Maheshwari.

Devi/Maheśi ordains the creation and sustenance of the worlds (which are not different from her).

Notes:

Devi creates the worlds which are a mere manifestation of hers. As stated by Adi Shankara in Viveka Choodamani, ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या/Brahma satyam jaganmitya – the world doesn't exist apart from Brahman, which is Devi herself.

13. लसत्तारहारामतिस्वच्छचेलां वहन्तीं करे पुस्तकं चाक्षमालाम् ।
शरच्चन्द्रकोटिप्रभाभासुरां त्वां सकृद्भावयन्भारतीवल्लभः स्यात् ॥
13. lasattārahārāmatisvacchacelām vahantīm kare pustakam cākṣamālām |
śaraccandrakoṭiprabhābhāsūrām tvām sakṛdbhāvayanbhāratīvallabhaḥ syāt ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka, Adi Shankara contemplates on Devi as Saraswati and provides a Dhyana Shloka.

लसत्तारहारामतिस्वच्छचेलां/ lasattārahārāmatisvacchacelām

लसत्- lasat- shining or sparkling; तार- tara - pearl;हाराम्- hārām - necklace; अति- ati - very; स्वच्छ- swaccha - pure white;चेलां- celām - garment.

Devi wearing a sparkling pearl necklace and an extremely pure white garment

वहन्तीं करे पुस्तकं चाक्षमालाम् / vahantīm kare pustakaṃ cākṣamālām

वहन्तीं- vahantīm - holding; करे- kare - in the hands; पुस्तकं- pustakaṃ - book; च- ca - and; अक्षमालाम्- ākṣamālām - rudrakshamāla.

And holding book (representing the source of knowledge) and a rudrakshamāla (representing the japā that develops concentration) in her hands.

शरच्चन्द्रकोटिप्रभाभासुरां त्वां / śaraccandrakoṭiprabhābhāsuraṃ tvām

शरद् - śarad - autumn; चन्द्र- chandra - moon; कोटि- kōti - crore; प्रभा- prabhā - shine; भासुरां- bhāsuraṃ - shining with; त्वां- tvām - you (Devi/Adi Parashakti).

Shining with the radiance of a crore of autumnal moons.

Notes:

Adi Shankara has chosen the autumnal moon (when moon is in its full radiance without any cloud cover) as a metaphor to represent a clear shine.

सकृद्भावयन्भारतीवल्लभः स्यात् / sakṛdbhāvayanbhāratīvallabhaḥ syāt

सकृत्- sakṛt - just once (असकृत्- asakṛt - many times); भावयन्- bhāvayan - meditate; भारती- bhārathi - Saraswati; वल्लभः- vallabhaḥ - beloved; स्यात्- syāt - one will become.

One who meditates on this form of Devi at least once will become a beloved of Saraswati.

14. समुद्यत्सहस्रार्कबिम्बाभवक्त्रां स्वभासैव सिन्दूरिताजाण्डकोटिम् ।

धनुर्बाणपाशाङ्कुशान्धारयन्तीं स्मरन्तः स्मरं वापि सम्मोहयेयुः ॥

14. samudyatsahasrārkabimbābhavaktrāṃ svabhāsaiva sindūrītājāṇḍakoṭim

dhanurbāṇapāśāṅkuśāndhārayantīm smarantaḥ smaraṃ vāpi sammohayeyuḥ ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka, Adi Shankara contemplates on Devi as Durga.

समुद्यत्सहस्रार्कबिम्बाभवक्त्रां/ samudyatsahasrārkabimbābhavaktrāṃ

समुद्यत्- samudyat - rising; सहस्र- sahasra - thousand; अर्क- arka - sun; बिम्ब- bimba - round form; आभ- ābha - shine; वक्त्रां- vaktrāṃ - face.

Devi whose face shines like a thousand rising round suns.

Notes:

This Shloka describes Devi as Durga who is in the prachandavīrya (full of activity) form, eliminating evil elements and showering her blessings on good elements and so compared to many rising red suns. This form is in contrast to the form of Saraswati who is full of calmness and hence described in the previous shloka, as having the shine of many cool moons.

स्वभासैव सिन्दूरिताजाण्डकोटिम् / svabhāsaiva sindūritājāṇḍakoṭim

स्वभासा- swabhāsa - byHerradiance; एव- eva - mere ;सिन्दूरित- sindūrita - reddens; अज- aja-self-born or swayambhu (Brahma); अण्ड- aṇḍa - cosmic egg; अजाण्ड- ajāṇḍa - Brahmānda, universes created by Brahma who is also known as Aja; कोटिम्- koṭim - crores.

By the mere radiance (of her face) crores of Brahmāndas (universes) are reddened.

धनुर्बाणपाशाङ्कुशान्धारयन्तीं / dhanurbāṇapāsāṅkuśāndhārayantīṃ

धनुः - dhanuḥ - bow; बाण- bāṇa - arrow; पाश- pāsā - rope; अङ्कुशान्- aṅkuśān - goad; धारयन्तीं- dhārayantīṃ - holding.

Who holds in her hands the bow, arrow, rope, and goad.

Notes:

The rope is a representation of our worldly attachments to be controlled; the goad is to bring our senses and negative emotions such as anger under control, just as a Mahout uses his goad to control an elephant, when turned wild.

स्मरन्तः स्मरं वापि सम्मोहयेयुः / smarantaḥ smaraṃ vāpi sammohayeyuḥ

स्मरन्तः- smarantaḥ - those who meditate; स्मरं- smaraṃ - Manmathā; वापि- vāpi - even; सम्मोहयेयुः- sammohayeyuḥ- stupefy.

Those who mediate on this form of Devi can stupefy even Manmathā.

Notes:

One, who mediates on this form of Devi gains not only external beauty that stupefies the most handsome Manmathā but also gains inner beauty. The same is also given in the phalastuti of

Amba Pancharatnam as श्रीसुन्दरीभामिनी / śrīsundarīm (inner beauty) bhāminīm (external beauty).

15. मणिस्यूतताटङ्कशोणास्यबिम्बां हरित्पट्टवस्त्रां त्वगुल्लासिभूषाम् ।

हृदा भावयंस्तप्तहेमप्रभां त्वां श्रियो नाशयत्यम्ब चाञ्जल्यभावम् ॥

15. maṇisyūtataṭaṅkaśoṇāsyabimbāṃ haritpaṭṭavastrāṃ tvagullāsibhūṣām |

hṛdā bhāvayaṃstaptahemaprabhāṃ tvāṃ śriyo nāśayatyamba cāñcalyabhāvam ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka, Adi Shankara contemplates on Devi as Mahalakshmi.

मणिस्यूतताटङ्कशोणास्यबिम्बां / maṇisyūtataṭaṅkaśoṇāsyabimbāṃ

मणिस्यूत- manisyūta - studded with gems; ताटङ्क- tāṭaṅka - earstuds; शोण- śoṇā - red; आस्य - āsya - face; बिम्बां- bimbāṃ - round.

Devi's round face is reddened by the radiance of her gem studded earstuds.

हरित्पट्टवस्त्रां त्वगुल्लासिभूषाम् / haritpaṭṭavastrāṃ tvagullāsibhūṣām

हरित्- harit - green; पट्ट- paṭṭa - inner or upper dress, blouse; वस्त्रां- vastrāṃ - outer or lower dress, sari; त्वक्- tvak - skin; उल्लासि- ullāsi - sporting; भूषाम्- bhūṣām - ornaments.

Devi is dressed in green, sporting ornaments on her form.

Notes:

Vidwāns emphasize that Devi does not need ornaments to beautify her. The ornaments derive their beauty from the beauty of Devi.

हृदा भावयंस्तप्तहेमप्रभां त्वां / hṛdā bhāvayaṃstaptahemaprabhāṃ tvāṃ

हृदा- hṛdā- in the heart; भावयन्- bhavayan - meditating; तप्त- tapta - molten; हेम- hema - gold; प्रभां- prabhāṃ - shine; त्वां- tvām - You (Devi/Adi Parashakti).

Meditating in the heart on this form of Devi, who shines like molten gold.

श्रियोनाशयत्यम्बचाञ्जल्यभावम् / śriyonāśayatyamba cāñcalyabhāvam

श्रियः - śriyaḥ - of Lakshmi; नाशयति- nāśayati - destroys; अम्ब- amba - Oh Mother; चाञ्चल्यभावम्- cāñcalyabhāvam - quality of being fickle, not staying in one place for a long time.

Oh Mother, you destroy the fickle nature of Lakshmi (and bless us with the permanent presence of Lakshmi).

Notes:

Another interpretation can be made as praying for Devi Herself, instead of praying for wealth in the form of Lakshmi.

16. महामन्त्रराजान्तबीजं पराख्यं स्वतो न्यस्तबिन्दु स्वयं न्यस्तहार्दम् ।
भवद्वक्त्रवक्षोजगुह्याभिधानं स्वरूपं सकृद्भावयेत्स त्वमेव ॥
16. mahāmantrarājāntabījaṃ parākhyam svato nyastabindu svayam nyastahārdam |
bhavadvaktravakṣojaguhyābhidhānaṃ svarūpaṃ sakṛdbhāvayetsa tvameva ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes an esoteric process of Kāmakalā upāsana of Devi. Kamakalā upāsana involves chanting of Shlokas 16 and 17 during Srividya upāsana. Adi Shankara also refers to this upāsana in Soundarya Lahari Shloka19.

Describing the technicalities of this process is beyond the scope of this Stotram and is to be practiced only by qualified people under the guidance of a competent Guru.

महामन्त्रराजान्तबीजं पराख्यं / mahāmantrarājāntabījaṃ parākhyam

महामन्त्र- mahāmantra - great mantra; राज- rājā - king; महामन्त्रराज- mahāmantra raja - the king of mahāmantras, the fifteen lettered Panchadashakari mantra; अन्त- anta - end; बीजं - bījaṃ - seed letter; पराख्यं- parākhyam - called 'Paraa'.

The ending bījākshara ("eem") of the ending bījam ("hreem") of the king of the mahamantras (the Panchadashakari mantra) is called *the Kāmakalābījam and is known as "Paraa"*.

Notes:

The highest mantra of Devi, the fifteen lettered Panchadashakari mantra is considered to be the king of all mahāmantras. It has three groups named VagbhavaKuta, Madhya Kuta, and Shakti Kuta, each containing five letters, and each ending with the beejam "hreem". The bījam at the end of the panchadashakari mantra is "hreem", which is made up of "hra" and "eem".

As per Shastras there are seven crore mahamantras (सप्तकोटिमहामन्त्राः). Skanda Purāna states, these seven crore mahamantras are said to be painted on a wall in Kailasa. Once Shiva and Parvati were gazing at the gallery of these paintings, where the Omkara painting is at the centre. One of the Ganesha avatara stories states that the Omkara took form of a male and a female elephant which united and incarnated as Ganesha.

स्वतो न्यस्तबिन्दु स्वयं न्यस्तहार्दम् / svato nyastabindu svayaṃ nyastahārdam

स्वतो- svato - within itself;न्यस्त- nyasta - inside;बिन्दु- bindu - the mark of the bindu;स्वयं - svayaṃ - itself;न्यस्त- nyasta - inside;हार्दम्- hārdam - heart.

The bījākshara “eem” hasa bindu and the heart of Devi within itself.

Notes:

When the bījākshara “eem” is written in Devanagari script, one can notice the bindu on the top of the letter physically. Besides the scripting of the letter, the bījākshara “eem” (which is said to be the heart of Kāmakala mantra) has a bindu in itself, along with the heart of the Devi. ‘Harda’ has other interpretations also.

भवद्वक्त्रवक्षोजगुह्याभिधानं / bhavadvaktravakṣojaguhyābhidhānaṃ

भवत्- bhavad - your;वक्त्र- vaktra - face;वक्षोज- vakṣoja – two breasts;गुह्य- guhyā - yoni;अभिधानं- ābhidhānaṃ - with reference to.

The bījākshara “eem” has reference to Devi’s face, two breasts and yoni.

स्वरूपं सकृद्भावयेत्स त्वमेव / svarūpaṃ sakṛdbhāvayetsa tvameva

स्वरूपं- svarūpaṃ - form;सकृत्- sakṛd - just once;भावयेत्- bhāvayet - mediate;स- sa - he; त्वम्- tvam - you;एव- eva - alone;

The one who meditates just once on the Kāmakalābījam (the bījākshara “eem”) becomes associated with you (Devi)or attains merger with you (Devi).

17. तथान्ये विकल्पेषु निर्विण्णचित्ता- स्तदेकं समाधाय बिन्दुत्रयं ते ।

परानन्दसन्धानसिन्धौ निमग्नाः पुनर्गर्भरन्ध्रं न पश्यन्ति धीराः ॥

17. tathānye vikalpeṣu nirviṇṇacittā-stadekaṃ samādhāya bindutrayaṃ te |

parānandasandhānasindhau nimagnāḥ punargarbharandhraṃ na paśyanti dhīrāḥ ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a continuation of the previous Shloka stating the phalastuti of Kāmakalā upāsana.

तथान्ये विकल्पेषु निर्विण्णचित्ताः / tathānye vikalpeṣu nirviṅṇacittā

तथा- tathā - and; अन्ये- anye - other; विकल्पेषु- vikalpeṣu- alternatives (other types of upāsana); निर्विण्णचित्ताः - nirviṅṇacittā - to be indifferent, to turn your attention away from.

One should be indifferent to upāsanas related to any other devatas or alternative upāsanas of Devi.

तदेकं समाधाय बिन्दुत्रयं ते / tadekaṃ samādhāya bindutrayaṃ te

तत्- tat - the process as described in Shloka 16; एकं- ekaṃ - only; समाधाय- samādhāya- concentrating; बिन्दुत्रयं- bindutrayaṃ - bindu at the three parts of Devi's form; ते- te - your.

One should be focusing the mind completely on the *bindu at the three parts of Devi's form* (same akshara at three parts)

परानन्दसन्धानसिन्धौ निमग्नाः / parānandasandhānasindhau nimagnāḥ

पर- para - supreme; आनन्द - ānanda - bliss; सन्धान- sandhāna - put together, collectively; सिन्धौ- sindhau – in ocean; निमग्नाः- nimagnāḥ- immersed.

One gets immersed in the ocean of collective supreme bliss.

Notes:

Here Adi Shankara describes Devi as “ocean of great bliss”. An additional word of “sandhāna” is used to further emphasize the extent of the bliss.

The ordinary human could only imagine or experience a part or certain aspect of bliss, and not the entirety of bliss. Only Sandhāna (further worship or practice) lets the Saadhaka experience all aspects and several ānandas.

पुनर्गर्भरन्ध्रं न पश्यन्ति धीराः / punargarbharandhraṃ na paśyanti dhīrāḥ

पुनः - punaḥ - again; गर्भः - garbhaḥ - womb; रन्ध्रं- randhraṃ - opening; न- na - not; पश्यन्ति - paśyanti - see; धीराः- dhīrāḥ - the courageous person, concentrated intellect.

The courageous person with intellect concentrated on this process to attain Devi, does not experience the opening of the womb (is not reborn, does not return to the samsāra).

Notes:

The courageous with intellect concentrated on the Devi upāsana (Kāmakalā upāsana) will attain Devi and do not experience samsara again. However, care should be taken in such unique methods of upāsana, as half-hearted or careless attempts would result in unwanted or bad results. In Devi upāsana, the instructions of the Guru are to be followed with care.

**18. त्वदुन्मेषलीलानुबन्धाधिकारा-न्विरिञ्चादिकांस्त्वद्गुणाम्भोधिबिन्दून् ।
भजन्तस्तितीर्षन्ति संसारसिन्धुं शिवे तावकीना सुसम्भावनेयम् ॥**

**18. tvadunmeṣalīlānubandhādhikārā-nviriñcyādikāṃstvadguṇāmbhodhibindūn |
bhajantastitīrṣanti saṃsārasindhuṃ śive tāvakīnā susambhāvaneyam ||**

Meaning and Explanation:

Adi Shankara describes the mahimā of Devi in this shloka.

त्वदुन्मेषलीलानुबन्धाधिकारान् / tvadunmeṣalīlānubandhādhikārān

त्वत्- tvat- your; उन्मेष- unmeṣa- opening the eyes; लीला- līlā - sport, play; अनुबन्ध -anubandha - procure; अधिकारान्- adhikārān - rights, power.

By the sport of your (Devi) opening the eyes, they (Brahma and other Devatās) derive power.

Notes:

In Lalita Sahasranāmam, Devi is described as उन्मेष-निमिषोत्पन्न-विपन्न-भुवनावली/ unmeṣa-nimiṣotpanna-vipanna-bhuvanavali. By the mere opening and closing of her eyes Devi creates and dissolves the universes. Brahma and the other Devatās derive their power from Devi, by her mere sight.

विरिञ्चादिकांस्त्वद्गुणाम्भोधिबिन्दून्/ viriñcyādikāṃstvadguṇāmbhodhibindūn

विरिञ्चादिकान् - viriñcyādikān -Brahma and other Devatās; त्वत्- tvat - your; गुण- guṇa - qualities; अम्भोधि- ambhodhi - ocean; बिन्दून्- bindūn - drops.

Brahma and other Devatas pick a few drops from the ocean of your great qualities.

Notes:

The nirguna quality of Devi is that she is Sachchidānanda (Sat-Chit-Ānanda/Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). The saguna quality of Devi is that she is compassion incarnated.

भजन्तस्तितीर्षन्ति संसारसिन्धुं / bhajantastitīrṣanti saṃsārasindhuṃ

भजन्तः- bhajantaḥ - worship; तितीर्षन्ति- titīrṣanti - desire to cross ; संसार- saṃsāra - repeated cycle of birth and death; सिन्धुं- sindhuṃ - ocean.

Those who desire to cross the ocean of saṃsāra worship Brahma and other Devatas (who derive their power from you).

Notes:

The word तितीर्षन्ति is derived from the word तरणं (taraṇam), which means crossing. In Sri Rudram there is a mention नमस्ताराय नमःशंभवे/ namastārāya namaḥ shambhave, which refers to Shiva as the one who helps us cross the ocean of Samsara.

शिवे तावकीना सुसम्भावनयम् / śive tāvakīnā susambhāvaneyam

शिवे- śive - Oh consort of Shiva, Oh auspicious Devi; तावकीना- tāvakīnā - of you; सुसम्भावना- susambhāvanā- great honor; इयं- iyam-this;.

Oh, auspicious Devi, this is a great honour of you.

Notes:

When Brahma and other Devas are worshipped by Devotees, with a desire to cross saṃsāra, it is an honour to Devi herself, as these Devatas derive their power from Devi. In the Bhagavad Gīta, Bhagavan says:

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥
yo yo yām yām tanuṃ bhaktaḥ śhraddhayārchitum ichchhati
tasya tasyāchalām śhraddhām tām eva vidadhāmyaham

Whatever celestial form a devotee seeks to worship with faith, I steady the faith of such a devotee in that form. If the devotees' desire to cross this saṃsara is sincere, Devi blesses the devotees through those other Devatas.

19. कदा वा भवत्पादपोतेन तूर्णं भवाम्बोधिमुत्तीर्य पूर्णान्तरङ्गः ।
निमज्जन्तमेनं दुराशाविषाब्धौ समालोक्य लोकं कथं पर्युदास्से ॥

19. kadā vā bhavatpādapotena tūrṇaṃ bhavāmbhodhimuttīrya pūrṇāntaraṅgaḥ |
nimajjantamenam durāśāviṣābdhau samālokya lokam katham paryudāsse ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a plea to Devi for her grace to cross the ocean of samsāra.

कदा वा भवत्पादपोतेन तूर्णं / kadā vā bhavatpādapotena tūrṇaṃ

कदावा- kadā vā - when at all; भवत्- bhavat - your; पाद- pāda - holy feet; पोतेन- potena- boat; तूर्ण-
tūrṇaṃ - quickly.

When at all will the boat of your holy feet quickly take me across the ocean of samsāra?

भवाम्बोधिमुत्तीर्य पूर्णान्तरङ्गः / bhavāmbhodhimuttīrya pūrṇāntaraṅgaḥ

भव - bhava - samsāra, repeated cycle of birth and death; अम्बोधिम् - ambhodhim - ocean; उत्तीर्य
- uttīrya - having crossed properly; पूर्ण - pūrṇa - completely filled; अन्तरङ्गः - antaraṅga - core of
the mind.

Having crossed the ocean of samsāra, the mind should be completely filled with Devi.

Notes:

Adi Shankara says the mind needs to be completely occupied and focused sincerely on Devi, failing which, one may return to the world of samsara.

निमज्जन्तमेनं दुराशाविषाब्धौ / nimajjantamenam durāśāviṣābdhau

निमज्जन्तम् - nimajjantam - drowning completely; एनं - enam - this Jīva; दुराशा - durāśā - futile or
evil desire; विष - viṣā - poison; अब्धौ - abdhau - ocean.

This Jīva is drowning in the poisonous ocean of evil or futile desires.

Notes:

In this verse, Adi Shankara describes the condition, which is applicable to any Jīva. As one continues to have many desires with futile expectations from this samsara, desires that are different from attaining Devi are considered to be evil. In the Bhagavad Gīta verse 8.15, Bhagavan says samsāra is a source of all misery (दुःखालयं / dukhālayam) and is transient (अशाश्वतं/asasvatam). Whatever we consider as happiness in this samsāra is mere misery.

समालोक्य लोकं कथं पर्युदास्से / samālokya lokaṃ kathaṃ paryudāsse

समालोक्य - samālokya - seen very well; लोकं - lokaṃ - vision, sight; कथं - kathaṃ - how; पर्युदास्से- paryudāsse - ignore, be indifferent, exclude.

How can you ignore the sight (of this Jīva) even though you can see very well (that I am drowning)?

Notes:

The world is called lokam because we can see it with our eyes. Anything that can be seen is called lokā.

Here Adi Shankara is pleading Devi (on the behalf of Jivas) to make him cross the ocean of samsara with her feet as the boat. How can you ignore them while they are drowning in the poisonous ocean of Samsara?

20. कदा वा हृषीकाणि साम्यं भजेयुः कदा वा न शत्रुर्न मित्रं भवानि ।

कदा वा दुराशाविषूचीविलोपः कदा वा मनो मे समूलं विनश्येत् ॥

20. kadā vā hṛṣīkāṇi sāmyaṃ bhajeyuḥ kadā vā na śatruna mitraṃ bhavāni |

kadā vā durāśāviṣūcīvilopaḥ kadā vā mano me samūlaṃ vinaśyeta ||

Meaning and Explanation:

In this Shloka Adi Shankara lists the four qualities that the mind needs to achieve to cross the ocean of samsāra using the boat of Devi's sacred feet. He pleads to Devi to show her grace on the mind of Jiva, which is the cause of everything.

The Amṛitabindu Upaniṣhad states:

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।

बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्तं निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥

mana eva manuṣyāṇāṃ kāraṇaṃ bandha-mokṣayoḥ |

bandhāya viṣayāsaktaṃ muktaṃ nirviṣayaṃ smṛtam ||

The mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberation for human beings. The mind gets attached to the sense objects and is the cause of bondage. A mind devoid of desires is considered liberated.

कदा वा हृषीकाणि साम्यं भजेयुः / kadā vā hṛṣīkāṇi sāmyaṃ bhajeyuḥ

कदावा - kadāvā - when at all; हृषीकाणि- hṛṣīkāṇi - the five sense organs; साम्यं - sāmyam - equipoise, free from agitation; भजेयुः - bhajeyuḥ - attain.

When at all will the sense organs (that are driven by the mind) attain a state free from agitation?

Notes:

The five sense organs (shabda/sound/ears, sparsha/touch/skin, rūpa/sight/eyes, rasa/taste/tongue, and gandha/smell/nose) derive their power from the mind. An event that happens before one, does not get registered unless the mind gets involved. The mind emotes to events, good and bad. However, one needs to attain a state of equipoise or sama stithī. Though the feeling of the emotions is not wrong, one should cultivate equipoise with reference to the feeling of happiness or grief.

The word हृषीकाणि- hṛṣīkāṇi in this verse refers to Sense Organs and the one who has control on those sense organs is called Hrishikeśa.

कदा वा न शत्रुर्न मित्रं भवानि / kadā vā na śatruṇa mitraṃ bhavāni

कदावा - kadā vā - when at all; न -na - no; शत्रुः - śatruḥ - foe; न - na - no; मित्रं - mitraṃ - friend; भवानि - bhavāni - Oh Bhavani.

Oh Bhavani, when at all will I attain a state of having no foe or friend?

Notes:

In this phrase, Adi Shankara refers to the next stage of taming the mind, where one becomes equally compassionate to all, undifferentiating between a friend and a foe. Having developed an attitude of treating everyone equally is called sama darshanam. This is the quality of a Jnanī. The Bhagavad Gīta and Upanishads state that a Jnanī is identified by virtue of sama darshanam, which is associated with the mind.

The Shastras state परोपकारार्थं इदं शरीरम्/parōpakāraṥarthaṃ idaṃ śarīraṃ. This body is to help others. So, one needs to develop the mindset to be compassionate and help others with no prejudice.

The Trisati of Sri Rudram contains three hundred names many of which emphasize the sama darshanam of Shiva. Shiva is described as the head of thieves, as the sand, the hill, the insect, and the lion. This is representing Shiva in all the forms and living beings.

Bhagavan in the Bhagavad Gīta says

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि /
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनिः ॥५.१८॥
vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini |
śhuni chaiva śhva-pāke cha paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśhinaḥ ||5.18||

The one who has an equal vision (sama-darśhi) towards a Brahmana with great learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog, a chandala who prepares and eats the meat of a dog, is a pandita. In Samskrit, pandita is the one who has paṇḍa (spiritual knowledge or advancement). The one who has an equal attitude to all the above five categories has attained sama darshanam and can be called a pandita.

कदा वा दुराशाविषूचीविलोपः / kadā vā durāśāviṣūcīvilopah

कदावा - kadā vā - when at all; दुराशा- durāśā - futile or evil desire; विषूची - viṣūcī - disease of cholera; विलोपः- vilopah - destruction.

When at all will the disease of endless evil desires which is similar to the epidemic of cholera be destroyed?

Notes:

Desire is the cause for rebirth. Whatever one desires at the last moment of life would be the cause of the next birth. One might try to develop an equal attitude or sama darshanam but may not control the desires. Despite control of the mind, having materialistic desires is considered evil. The only desire that Shastras recommend is Mumukshutvam (the desire for Moksha) or attaining Paramātma.

Adi Shankara compares these evil desires to the disease of cholera, which was a difficult disease to cure.

कदा वा मनो मे समूलं विनश्येत् / kadā vā mano me samūlaṁ vinaśyēt

कदावा - kadā vā - when at all; मनो- mano - mind; मे- me - my; समूलं- samūlaṁ - along with its roots; विनश्येत्- vinaśyēt - destroyed.

When at all will my mind along with its roots be destroyed?

Notes:

Adi Shankara started with the control of sense organs, taming the mind to be equal to both friend and foe, and exterminating all desires. He now prays for the highest state of the mind which is its destruction.

Destroying the mind does not mean, not having control over thoughts and actions or losing the mind and become dull-witted. It means that the mind is entirely at the feet of Devi even if part of the mind is active doing samsāric work. This can be visualized as the base of the mind being at the feet of Devi while the upper part of the mind is like a floating object in the water performing the samsāric activities. Samsāric activities do not affect the Jeevanmukta. A Jeevanmukta is so-called because he is liberated even while residing in a body.

What does “devoting the mind entirely to Paramātma” mean? The manas (mind) loses itself and is absorbed in ātma, like samādhi. In such a state, one loses the sense of body and mind. It is difficult for a common person to understand this state because of no experience of it. Jnanis like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharshi spent years in samādhi and attained the state of mano nasha (destruction of the mind). When they came out of samādhi, the root of the mind was still associated with Paramātma.

When the root of the mind is associated with Devi, one is not attracted to the external world through the sense organs, has sama darshanam, and does not develop materialistic desires. All worldly activities are performed, without any attachment.

**21. नमोवाकमाशास्महे देवि युष्म-त्पदाम्भोजयुग्माय तिग्माय गौरि ।
विरिञ्चादिभास्वत्किरीटप्रतोली-प्रदीपायमानप्रभाभास्वराय ॥**

**21 . namovākamāśāsmāhe devi yuṣma-tpadāmbhojayugmāya tigmāya gauri |
viriñcyādibhāsvatkiṛīṭapratolī-pradīpāyamānaprabhābhāsvarāya ||**

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a surrender to the feet of Devi.

**नमोवाकमाशास्महे देवि युष्मत् पदाम्भोजयुग्माय तिग्माय गौरि / namovākamāśāsmāhe devi
yuṣmat padāmbhojayugmāya tigmāya gauri**

नमोवाकम् - namovākam - words of obeisance; आशास्महे - āśāsmāhe - want to offer; देवि- devi - Oh Devi; युष्मत्- yuṣmat - your; पदाम्भोज- padāmbhoja - lotus feet; युग्माय - yugmāya - pair; तिग्माय - tigmāya - radiant; गौरि- gauri - Oh Gauri.

Oh Gauri, I want to offer my words of obeisance to your radiant pair of lotus feet.

Notes:

This word तिग्माय/tigmāya usually means hot. Since the form of Devi is radiant like the sun and yet cool like the moon, the word is used to emphasize the radiance.

**विरिञ्चादिभास्वत्किरीटप्रतोली प्रदीपायमानप्रभाभास्वराय/ viriñcyādibhāsvatkiṛīṭapratolī
pradīpāyamānaprabhābhāsvarāya**

विरिञ्चिः- Virinchiḥ –Brahma;आदि–adhi- and others; भास्वत् - bhāsvat - shining very well; किरीट- kirīṭa - crown; प्रतोली- pratolī - row; प्रदीपायमान - pradīpāyamāna - looking like a great lamp; प्रभा- prabhā - shine; भास्वराय- bhāsvarāya - being brightened.

Brightened by the shine of the great lamp caused by row of shining crowns of Brahma and other Devas (who fall at your feet to worship).

Notes:

This image is also described in Soundaryalahari as मुकुन्द ब्रह्मेन्द्र स्फुटमकुट नीराजित पदाम् / mukunda brahmendra sphuṭamakuṭa nīrājita padām – The bright lights from the diadems of Vishnu, Brahma and Indra brightens Devi’s feet.

22. कचे चन्द्ररेखं कुचे तारहारं करे स्वादुचापं शरे षट्पदौघम् ।
स्मरामि स्मरारेरभिप्रायमेकं मदाघूर्णनेत्रं मदीयं निधानम् ॥

22. kace candrarekhaṃ kuce tārahāraṃ kare svāducāpaṃ śare ṣaṭpadaugham |
smarāmi smarārerabhiprāyamekaṃ madāghūrṇanetraṃ madīyaṃ nidhānam ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes the form of Devi for the mind to concentrate upon.

कचे चन्द्ररेखं कुचे तारहारं / kace candrarekhaṃ kuce tārahāraṃ

कचे - kace - tresses; चन्द्ररेखं - candrarekhaṃ - digit of the moon; कुचे - kuce - on the bosom; तार - tāra - excellent (silver or pearl); हारं- hāraṃ - necklace.

The form of Devi with the digit of the moon in Her tresses and an excellent necklace on Her bosom.

करे स्वादुचापं शरे षट्पदौघम् / kare svāducāpaṃ śare ṣaṭpadaugham

करे - kare - in the hands; स्वादु - svādu - sweet, tasty; चापं - cāpaṃ - (sugarcane) bow; शरे - śare - arrows; षट्पद- ṣaṭ pada - six legged (bee); औघम् - ogham - group.

The form of Devi holding in her hands the sweet sugarcane bow and flower arrows over which a group of bee’s hovers.

Notes:

Lalita Sahasranāmam describes Devi as

मनोरूपेक्षु-कोदण्डा पञ्चतन्मात्र-सायका/manorūpekshu-kodanda pancha-tanmātra-sāyaka.

मनो- mano - mind; रूप- rūpa - form; इक्षु- ikshu - sugarcane; कोदण्डा- bow; पञ्च- pancha - five; तन्मात्र- the qualities of pancha bhūtas (five elements) that are picked up by the sense organs. Shabda/sound, sparsha/touch, rūpa/form, rasa/taste, gandha/smell are the qualities of Space, Air, Fire, Water, Earth, respectively. These qualities are in turn picked up by the five sense organs ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose respectively; सायका- sāyaka - (flower) arrows. Manorūpekshu kodanda signifies that Devi holds Jivas minds as the sugarcane bow. And the five tanmātras as the arrows. If one devotes their mind to Devi, she will hold it, make it very sweet, and keep it safe. Similarly, when five tanmātras are handed over to Devi, they will become fragrant flowers (Kamala, Kairava, Kalhara, Indīvara, Sahakara) in her hands, and they will no longer be a source of trouble.

स्मरामि स्मरारेरभिप्रायमेकं / smarāmi smarārerabhiprāyamekaṃ

स्मरामि - smarāmi - I mediate; स्मरारेः- smarāreḥ - of Shiva; अभिप्रायम् - abhiprāyam - object of affection; एकं - ekaṃ - single/ only.

I meditate on Devi who is the single object of affection of Shiva, the enemy of Manmathā.

Notes:

In this verse, Adi Shankara refers to Shiva as Smarāri - enemy of Smara/Manmatha whom He destroyed with His third eye

मदाघूर्णनेत्रं मदीयं निधानम् / madāghūrṇanetraṃ madīyaṃ nidhānam

मद - mada - intoxication; आघूर्ण- āghūrṇa - whirling, tremulous; नेत्रं - netraṃ - eyes; मदीयं - madīyaṃ - my; निधानम् - nidhānam - resting place.

The intoxicated whirling eyes of Devi is my resting place.

Notes:

The intoxication in the eyes of Devi (Sacchidānanda) is her ānanda. Shastras state that Jnanis lose their sense of body and external world to Ātmaānanda, and so referred to as Ātmarāmas. Shri Sheshadri Swamigal of Thiruvannamalai is one such example.

Another reason for the intoxication in the eyes of Devi is her love and compassion towards the Jivas. Devi being a universal mother, looks at Jiva(s) with her open eyes just like a mother looks at her baby. When her eyes are open, the worlds are created and so she keeps those eyes open, as closing her eyes will bring upon destruction and dissolution.

23. शरेष्वेव नासा धनुष्वेव जिह्वा जपापाटले लोचने ते स्वरूपे ।
त्वगेषा भवच्चन्द्रखण्डे श्रवो मे गुणे ते मनोवृत्तिरम्ब त्वयि स्यात् ॥
23. śareṣveva nāsā dhanuṣveva jihvā japāpāṭale locane te svarūpe ।
tvageṣā bhavaccandrakhaṇḍe śravo me guṇe te manovṛttiramba tvayi syāt ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka describes how to control the sense organs by directing them towards Devi.

Controlling the sense organs does not mean closing them. Sense organs have a purpose and a function. One cannot function without the sense organs. So, the Saints direct these sense organs towards Devi. Adi Shankara expresses the same bhava (meaning) in Shloka 26 of Subrahmanya Bhujangam (दृशिस्कन्दमूर्तिः/dṛśi skandamūrtiḥ).

शरेष्वेव नासा धनुष्वेव जिह्वा / śareṣveva nāsā dhanuṣveva jihvā

शरेषु - śareṣu - in the (fragrant flower) arrows; एव - eva - only; नासा - nāsā - nose; धनुषु - in the (sweet sugarcane) bow; एव - eva - only; जिह्वा - jihvā - tongue.

My nose should go towards your arrows of fragrant flowers. My tongue should go towards your sweet sugarcane bow.

जपापाटले लोचने ते स्वरूपे / japāpāṭale locane te svarūpe

जपा - japā - hibiscus flower; पाटले - pāṭale - pale red or pink; लोचने - locane - eyes; ते - te - your; स्वरूपे - svarūpe - form.

My eyes should go towards your form that has the pale red colour of the hibiscus flower.

Notes:

The first Shloka of the Navagraha Stotram also uses 'japa', the hibiscus flower to describe the colour of the rising sun.

जपाकुसुमसंकाशं काश्यपेयं महाद्युतिम् ।
तमोऽरिं सर्वपापघ्नं प्रणतोऽस्मि दिवाकरम् ॥ १॥
japākusuma saṅkāśaṃ kāśyapēyaṃ mahādyutim ।
tamōriṃ sarva pāpaghnaṃ praṇatōsmi divākaram ॥1॥

त्वगेषा भवच्चन्द्रखण्डे श्रवो मे गुणे ते/ tvageṣā bhavaccandrakhaṇḍe śravo me guṇe te

त्वक् - tvak - skin; एषा - eṣā - this; भवत्- bhavat - your; चन्द्रखण्डे-candra khaṇḍe - camphor piece;श्रवो - śravo - ears; मे - my; गुणे- guṇe - qualities; ते - te - your.

The touch of my skin should go towards the piece of camphor. My ears should go towards hearing your qualities.

Notes:

The camphor is used in the fragrance that Devi applies to Her forehead and body;

मनोवृत्तिरम्ब त्वयि स्यात् / manovṛttiramba tvayi syāt

मनोवृत्तिः - manovṛttihi - the mode of the mind; अम्ब - amba - Oh Mother; त्वयि - tvayi - with you; स्यात् - syāt - let it be.

Oh Mother, let my modes of the mind be with you.

Notes:

The mind or manas is flow of thoughts and is difficult to be tamed. The sense organs are directed by the powerful mind. We experience this difficulty while doing japā or pūja. Generally, the manas is not focused (ekāgra chittha) and fluctuates (chanchala bhāva), constantly moving from one thought to another. Though It is important to tame the sense organs, it is even more important to tame the mind. So, Adi Shankara prays that the modes of the mind go towards Devi alone.

24. जगत्कर्मधीरान्वचोधूतकीरान् कुचन्यस्तहारान्कृपासिन्धुपूरान् ।

भवाम्भोधिपारान्महापापदूरान् भजे वेदसाराञ्छिवप्रेमदारान् ॥

24 jagatkarmadhīrānvachodhūtākīrān kucanyastahārāṅkṛpāsindhupūrān |

bhavāmbhodhipārānmahāpāpadūrān bhaje vedasārāñśivapremadārān ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a praise of Devi using a unique feature of Samskrit grammar.

Devi is described as शिवप्रेमदारान्/ śivapremadārān, the loving consort of Shiva. दारान्/dārān is from the Samskrit word for wife, दाराः /darāḥ. The peculiarity of the word darāḥ is that though it means wife, it is in the masculine gender, and it is to be used in the plural form according to the grammar rules. So, all the subsequent descriptions of Devi's qualities are also in the plural form धीरान्/ dhīrān, कीरान्/ kīrān, हारान्/ hārān, पूरान्/ pūrān, पारान्/pārān, दूरान्/ dūrān, सारान्/ sārān.

जगत्कर्मधीरान्वचोधूतकीरान् / jagatkarmadhīrānvacodhūtakīrān

जगत्कर्म - jagat karma - affairs of the universe (creation, sustenance, destruction); धीरान् - dhīrān - expert, master; वचो - vaco - speech; धूत - dhūta - defeat; कीरान् - kīrān - parrot.

I worship Devi who is the expert in the affairs of the universe, who defeats the parrot with her sweetness of speech.

Notes:

A similar image is also portrayed in Soundarya Lahari as:

विपञ्चया गायन्ती विविधमपदानं पशुपते-
स्त्वयारब्धे वक्तुं चलितशिरसा साधुवचने ।
तदीयैर्माधुर्यैरपलपिततन्त्रीकलरवां
निजां वीणां वाणी निचुलयति चोलेन निभृतम् ॥
*vīpañcyā gāyantī vividhamapadānaṃ paśupate-
stvayārabdhe vaktuṃ calitaśīrasā sādhuvacane |
tadīyairmādhuryairapalapitatāntrīkalaravāṃ
nijāṃ vīṇāṃ vāṇī niculayati colena nibhṛtam ||*

Goddess Saraswati plays her veena in the sabhā/hall of Devi. When Devi appreciates her music in her words, Goddess Saraswati stops playing her veena because the music of the veena is no match for the sweetness of the voice of Devi.

कुचन्यस्तहारान्कृपासिन्धुपूरान् / kucanyastahārāṅkrpāsindhupūrān

कुच - kuca - bosom; न्यस्त - nyasta - on; हारान् - hārān - necklace; कृपा - kṛpā - compassion; सिन्धु - sindhu - ocean; पूरान् - pūrān - ever full.

I worship Devi who has necklaces on her bosom and is an ever-full ocean of compassion.

भवाम्भोधिपारान्महापापदूरान्/ bhavāmbhodhipārān mahāpāpadūrān

भव - bhava - samsāra, repeated cycle of birth and death; अम्भोधि - ambhodhi - ocean; पारान् - pārān - other shore; महापाप - mahā pāpa - great sins; दूरान् - dūrān - very far.

I worship Devi who is on the other shore of the ocean of samsara and is very far from great sins.

Notes:

Devi creates this samsāra for the benefit of the Jīvas, so they can work on their karmas and attain her. Devi is also gunatīta (beyond the three gunas of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) which make up this samsāra.

Though Devi creates the universes and the Jīvas, the sins acquired by Jīvas from this samsāra are due to their state of delusion and cannot be ascribed to her. So, Devi has been described as being far away/ free from the sins. Devi indeed blesses the auspicious acts of punya, and is beyond both pāpa/sins and punyā/merits.

To attain moksha, or the ultimate liberation, the Jīva need to go beyond pāpa and punya, as any balance of pāpa or punya leads to rebirth. The amount of pāpa and punya acquired, also determines the place of birth (Swarga Loka, Earth, or the Lower Worlds). If the Jīva has punya he is born either on Earth or Swarga Loka. If the Jīva has pāpa he is born either on Earth or Naraka. So, having punya is also binding, very much like pāpa. Saints have described punya as a golden chain and pāpa an iron chain, binding the Jīva to the world.

The description of Devi as maha-pāpa-dūran implicitly also includes maha-punya-dūran. One has to get over the balance of pāpa and punya. This is possible only through Gnana.

Bhagavan in Bhagavad Gita says

*यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥४.१९॥
yasya sarve samārambhāḥ kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ ।
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇaṁ tam āhuḥ paṇḍitaṁ budhāḥ ॥4.19॥*

All karma, including pāpa and punya, gets burned in the fire of Gnana (ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं/jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇaṁ).

To attain Gnana, one has to follow the path as described in the Vedas. One would come back to the right path, by the mere compassionate looks of Devi.

भजे वेदसाराञ्छिवप्रेमदारान् / bhaje vedasārāñśivapremadārān

भजे - bhaje - worship; वेदसारान् - veda sārān - essence of the Vedās; शिव - śiva - Shiva; प्रेमदारान् - premadārān - loving consort of.

I worship Devi who is the essence of the Vedās and is the loving consort of Shiva.

Notes:

Veda, derived from the root 'vid' which is 'to know' means 'all that is to be known'. Everything that is to be known is in the Vedās. In the present day, though only a few shākhās/branches of Vedās are accessible, the quantity of knowledge in them is extraordinary. No one can fully comprehend the extent of knowledge in them despite the various bhashyās/commentaries. One can only imagine the extent of knowledge that was accessible in the olden days when many more shākhās were available. The purpose of the Vedas is to guide the Jīva in working out his karma. It provides the Jīva with the dharma/duties that he should perform based on his varna (function in society) and ashrama (stage of life). When the Jīva performs prescribed duties without any expectations and surrenders all the fruits/results to Paramātma, he automatically attains moksha/liberation. This is the secret of Karma Yoga. Karma Yoga automatically leads to Bhakti Yoga and Jnāna Yoga. Even if one is not qualified for Jnāna Yoga, Paramātma will grant him Jnāna out of compassion if he follows the path.

Therefore, the aim of the Vedas is to attain Devi. Devi is the essence of the Vedas. Devi represents moksha. Devi is वेद-प्रतिपाद्य-वस्तु/veda-pratipadya-vastu. She is the One who is to be attained through the path of Vedas.

25. सुधासिन्धुसारे चिदानन्दनीरे समुत्फुल्लनीपे सुरत्नान्तरीपे ।
मणिव्यूहसाले स्थिते हैमशाले मनोजारिवामे निषण्णं मनो मे ॥
25. sudhāsindhusāre cidānandanīre samutphullanīpe suratnāntarīpe |
maṇivyūhasāle sthite haimasāle manojārivāme niṣaṇṇaṃ mano me ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is a description of Devi and her abode of Sripuram.

सुधासिन्धुसारे चिदानन्दनीरे / sudhāsindhusāre cidānandanīre

सुधा - sudhā - nectar; सिन्धु- sindhu - ocean; सारे - sāre - essence; चिदानन्द - cidānanda - consciousness-bliss; नीरे - nīre - waters (of the streams in Sripuram where Devi resides).

My mind is immersed in Devi who is the essence of the ocean of nectar, whose consciousness-bliss is reflected in the waters of Sripuram.

Notes:

Devi is seated as Raja Rajeshwari on the mancha/peeta in the Chintamani Grha inside the Kadamba Vāti in the Ocean of Nectar and she is the essence of that ocean.

Devi is Sachchidānanda (Sat-Chit-Ānanda/Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) and Her sannidhyam is reflected in all of Sripuram. The Brahmavaivarta Puranā and Devi Bhagavatham describe the

Sripuram with its twenty-five prākāras (circuits). Each prākāra also has streams of water. The mahimā of Devi makes everything in Sripuram extraordinary including the water streams.

समुत्फुल्लनीपे सुरत्नान्तरीपे / samutphullanīpe suratnāntarīpe

सम् - sam - very well; उत्फुल्ल - utphulla - fully blossomed; नीपे - nīpe - Kadamba flower; सुरत्न - suratnā - gem-studded; अन्तरीपे - antarīpe - island.

My mind is immersed in Devi who resides in the gem-studded island (Chintamani Grha) with the forest of fully blossomed Kadamba flowers (Kadamba Vāti).

Notes:

The glory of the Chintamani Grha is that the sight of even a single chintamani is capable of granting all that one wishes for.

मणिव्यूहसाले स्थिते हैमशाले / maṇivyūhasāle sthite haimasāle

मणि - maṇi - gems; व्यूह - vyūha - orderly arrangement or formation; साले - sāle - pillars made from the Sal tree; स्थिते - sthite - seated; हैम - haima - golden; शाले - śāle - hall.

My mind is immersed in Devi who is seated in the golden hall that has an orderly arrangement of pillars made from the Sal Tree and are studded with gems.

मनोजारिवामे निषण्णं मनो मे / manojārivāme niṣaṅṅaṃ mano me

मनोज - manoja - mind born, Manmathā. Manmathā is the mind-born son of Vishnu and gets his attractiveness and handsomeness from Vishnu; अरि - ari - enemy; (मनोजारि - manojāri - Shiva, the enemy of Manmathā. Manmathā was burned to ashes by Shiva's third eye); वामे - vāme - left side; निषण्णं - niṣaṅṅaṃ - immersed; मनो - mano - mind; मे - me – my;

My mind is immersed in Devi who is on the left side of Shiva, the enemy of Manmathā.

Notes:

With this Shloka one can visualize the beautiful Sripuram, the abode of Devi with its features of the ocean of nectar, the prākāras, the streams, the Kadamba forest, the gem-studded island, the golden hall with the gem-studded pillars and Devi Herself within all of this being seated on the left side of Shiva.

26. दृगन्ते विलोला सुगन्धीषुमाला प्रपञ्चेन्द्रजाला विपत्सिन्धुकूला ।

मुनिस्वान्तशाला नमल्लोकपाला हृदि प्रेमलोलाऽमृतस्वादुलीला ॥

26. dṛgante vilolā sugandhīṣumālā prapañcendrajālā vipatsindhukūlā |

munisvāntasālā namallokapālā hṛdi premalolāmṛtasvādulīlā ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka continues to describe Devi further.

दृगन्ते विलोला सुगन्धीषुमाला / dṛgante vilolā sugandhīṣumālā

दृगन्ते- dṛgante - corner of the eye; विलोला - vilolā – whirling/ rolling; सुगन्ध - sugandha - fragrant; इषु- iṣu - arrow; माला - mālā – garland (ring).

Devi has a whirling sidelong glance and has a garland(ring) of fragrant flower arrows.

Notes:

The sidelong glance is the kataksha of Devi, hailed by many Saints as the most compassionate glance. One would not be able to bear her direct vision and is unwarranted. She rolls her eyes to shower her compassion on all Jīvas.

Just as flowers form a garland, the flower arrows of Devi are described as forming a garland.

प्रपञ्चेन्द्रजाला विपत्सिन्धुकूला / prapañcendrajālā vipatsindhukūlā

प्रपञ्च - prapañca - the universe that is made of five elements earth, water, fire, air, space; इन्द्रजाला - indrajālā - magic show; विपत् - vipat - danger; सिन्धु - sindhu - ocean; कूला - kūlā - shore;

Devi creates a magic show on the stage of the universe, and is off the shore of samsāra, the ocean of danger.

Notes:

Like a magician creates a magic show on the stage, Devi as the Sūtradhāri/Puppeteer creates a magic show on the stage of the universe with all the Jīvas as her puppets. Devi creates the indrajāla of the universe for the benefit of Jīvas.

According to Vedanta, samsara is considered to be the greatest danger. Jīvas continue to be part of this samsara unless Gnana is attained.

मुनिस्वान्तशाला नमल्लोकपाला / munisvāntaśālā namallokapālā

मुनि - muni - Muni, one who contemplates; स्वान्त - svānta - inside (the heart); शाला - śālā - abode; नमत् - namat - worship; लोकपाला- lokapālā - guardians of universe

Devi, whose abode is in the heart of munis, and is worshipped by the guardians of the universe.

Notes:

Lokapala can be understood as the three guardians - Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva or the Aṣṭa-Dikpālakas/Guardians of Eight Directions -Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Varuṇa, Vayu, Kubera, Īśāna.

The munis are always meditating on the feet of Devi. Devi is happy to leave Sripuram and reside in their hearts.

A similar idea was presented by Lord Vishnu, in his conversation with Nārada, where Bhagavan mentions, he is happy to leave his abode and be with his bhaktas

नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे योगिनां हृदये न च |
मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ||
Naham vasami vaikunthe yoginam hridaye na cha |
mad-bhakta yatra gayanti tatra tishthami narada ||

“I dwell not in Vaikunta nor in the hearts of yogis. I dwell where my bhaktas sing my name.”

हृदि प्रेमलोलाऽमृतस्वादुलीला / hṛdi premalolāmṛtasvādulīlā

हृदि- hṛdi - heart; प्रेम - prema - love; लोला - lolā - ever enjoys; अमृत - amṛta - nectar; स्वादु - svādu - sweet; लीला - līlā - sport.

Devi’s heart is full of love that she ever enjoys, and her sports are sweet as nectar.

Notes:

Devi enjoys the love in her heart and showers her love and compassion on Jīvas. Adi Shankara, by mentioning āmṛtasvādulīlā, describes the nectar-like qualities and līlas of Devi enacted during her avatārās.

27. जगज्जालमेतत्त्वयैवाम्ब सृष्टं त्वमेवाद्य यासीन्द्रियैरर्थजालम् ।
त्वमेकैव कर्त्री त्वमेकैव भोक्त्री न मे पुण्यपापे न मे बन्धमोक्षौ ॥
27. jagajjālametattvayaivāmba sṛṣṭaṃ tvamevādya yāsīndriyairarthajālam |
tvamekaiva kartrī tvamekaiva bhoktrī na me puṇyapāpe na me bandhamokṣau ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka continues to praise Devi and is a surrender to Her.

जगज्जालमेतत्त्वयैवाम्बसृष्टं / jagajjālametattvayaiivāmba sṛṣṭam

जगत्- jagat - world; जालम् - jālam - web; एतत् - etat - this; त्वयैव - tvayaiva - by you only; अम्ब- amba- Oh Mother; सृष्टं - sṛṣṭam - created.

Oh Mother, you alone have created this web-like world.

Notes:

The world is a web that catches and traps Jīvas like a spider web. Advaita Vedānta frequently uses the example of the spider that spins the web out of itself to show how Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the creation. Devi creates the world out of her own power and does not need any other material. The implied meaning in this verse is that Devi alone has created the world, and She alone can help Jīvas to get out of this world.

त्वमेवाद्य यासीन्द्रियैरर्थजालम् / tvamevādya yāsīndriyairarthajālam

त्वमेव- tvam eva - you alone; अद्य- ādya - today (now, when I am in this body), यासी- yāsī - move around; इन्द्रियैः - indriyaihi - through sense organs; अर्थ- artha - sense objects; जालम्- jālam - web.

Oh Mother, you alone are moving through my sense organs in the web of sense objects.

Notes:

Sense organs and sense objects always go together and may be considered as a web due to their countless number. The pleasure Jīva derives from innumerable sense objects (through sight, hear, smell, taste, and touch) can trap Jīvas in that web.

The Vedantic lesson here is that when Jīvas act on sense objects, one may think of performing various actions to derive pleasure, but it is Devi, enabling those actions through the body as an instrument. Once Jīvas realize body as an instrument, they come out of this Samsara with no re-birth and attains moksha.

The Kāṭhōpaniṣad says:

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रगहमेव च ॥ ३.३ ॥
इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुः विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान्।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ ३.४ ॥

Ātmānam rathinam vidhi shariram rathameva tu |

Buddhim tu sarathim viddhi maraha pragahameva cha //3.3 //

Indriyāṇi hayāñāhurvishayāñsteshu gocharān |

Ātmendriyamanoyuktam bhoktetyāhurmaneeshinaha //3.4 //

Know that the Atma in the body as the traveller in the chariot, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, the mind as the rein, the horses as the sense organs on the road of sense objects.

The greatest responsibility of the charioteer is to reach the right destination. Intellect being the charioteer of Jīva, is to be used very carefully. The intellect and mind are described as two separate entities for ease of understanding. However, they are both the same entity of thoughts. While the mind gets distracted due to sense objects, the intellect should drive the mind to perform actions in accordance with the Dharma.

If ātma is attached to the sense organs and mind, it has to bear the fruits of merit/sin through those actions. However, if the fruits are dedicated to Devi with body being a mere instrument, one can escape Samsara as Devi becomes the enjoyer.

त्वमेकैव कर्त्री त्वमेकैव भोक्त्री / tvamekaiva kartrī tvamekaiva bhoktrī

त्वम्एकएव - tvam eka eva - you alone are; कर्त्री - kartrī - doer; त्वम्एकएव - tvam eka eva - you alone are; भोक्त्री - bhoktrī - enjoyer.

Oh Mother, you alone are the doer, you alone are the enjoyer.

Notes:

As per the Vedanta, one should develop an understanding that Devi is both the doer and the enjoyer. Saints have used the example of the pen to explain this concept. A pen is used as a mere tool in the hands of an author and cannot become an author by itself. So, the applause/rejection goes to the author and not to the pen. Similarly, one needs to consider the self as a tool in the hands of Devi. Then, Devi becomes the doer and the enjoyer of the actions. Otherwise, if one assigns the doership to ahankāra then the fruits of karma go to the self.

न मे पुण्यपापे न मे बन्धमोक्षौ / na me puṇyapāpe na me bandhamokṣau

न- na - not; मे - me - for me; पुण्य- puṇya - merit; पापे- pāpe - sin; न- na - not; मे- me - for me; बन्ध- bandha - bondage; मोक्षौ- mokṣau - liberation.

There is no merit or sin for me. There is no bondage or liberation for me.

Notes:

When actions are dedicated to Devi, no sin or merit is attached to Jīva. This does not mean wrong doings could be dedicated to Devi. Instead, once the concept of doership-enjoyership is

clear, automatically all actions would be in accordance with dharma and can never go wrong even by mistake. This is the trait of Jnanis. Sometimes the acts of a Jnani may not be so evident, as they consider themselves as a tool in the hands of Devi, and act as dictated by Devi. By acting per the will of Devi, they accumulate neither merit/punya nor sin/pāpa, so they do not have bondage or liberation.

Adi Shankara states, mind is the sole cause of bondage or liberation (as explained in shloka 20). Once the mind is allowed to die, there is no merit, sin, bondage, or liberation. Allowing the mind to die means, dedicating the mind, actions to Devi and considering everything belonging to Devi. This was practically shown by Adi Shankara at the age of eight when he approached Govinda Bhagavatpāda. He met Govinda Bhagavatpāda on the banks of Narmada, when he was in samādhi. Adi Shankara composed Paduka Stotram, by looking at the padukās of Govinda Bhagavatpāda, went around the cave three times, prostrated, and waited for him to come out of samādhi. Govinda Bhagavatpāda through his divine vision asked Adi Shankara, the boy of eight years 'कस्त्वं/Who are you?'. To answer this, Adi Shankara replied with the Dasa Sloki saying 'I am ātma'. The glory of Adi Shankara is captured as अष्ट वर्षे चतुर्वेदी | द्वादशे सर्व शास्त्रवित् /ashta varshe chaturvedi | dvadase sarva shastravit. At the age of eight, he was a master of all four Vedas. At age of twelve, he was a master of all Shastras. Adi Shankara reached the highest experience of Vedanta based on his knowledge of Vedas and Shastras. Though he is considered as an incarnation of Parameshwara, having taken a human form, he announced himself as ātma with no merit or sin, bondage or liberation.

28. इति प्रेमभारेण किञ्चिन्मयोक्तं न बुध्वैव तत्त्वं मदीयं त्वदीयम् ।
विनोदाय बालस्य मौर्ख्यं हि मात-स्तदेतत्प्रलापस्तुतिं मे गृहाण ॥

28 iti premabhāreṇa kiñcinmayoktaṃ na budhvaiva tattvaṃ madiyaṃ tvadiyam |
vinodāya bālasya maurkhyam hi māta-stadetatpralāpastutiṃ me gṛhāṇa ||

Meaning and Explanation:

This Shloka is an extraordinary expression of Adi Shankara's humility.

इति प्रेमभारेण किञ्चिन्मयोक्तं / iti premabhāreṇa kiñcinmayoktaṃ

इति - iti - all the above (twenty-seven shlokas); प्रेमभारेण- premabhāreṇa - weight of love, excessive love; किञ्चित्- kiñcit - just a little something, not of any consequence; मया - maya - by me; उक्तं - uktaṃ - was said, was chanted.

These Shlokas are just a little something which I have said out of excessive love for you.

Notes:

If Adi Shankara says what he has chanted is not anything much, it is only out of his excessive love for mother Devi. A child standing in front of the mother might want to express something

out of love even though it might be a prattle and makes no sense. The same way Adi Shankara says 'I am standing in front of you with so much love, that I have to say something'.

न बुध्वैव तत्त्वं मदीयं त्वदीयम् / na budhvaiva tattvaṃ madīyaṃ tvadīyam

न - na - not; बुध्व - budhva - knowing; एव - eva - at all, even though (as a word of emphasis); तत्त्वं - tattvaṃ - the truth, reality; मदीयं- madīyaṃ - of mine; त्वदीयम्- tvadīyam - of you.

Not knowing at all the reality of me-Jīva or the reality of you-Paramātma. (Yet I have said all of this out of great love.)

विनोदाय बालस्य मौर्ख्यं हि मातः तदेतत्प्रलापस्तुतिं मे गृहाण / vinodāya bālasya maurkhyam hi mātaḥ tadetatpralāpastutiṃ me grhāṇa

विनोदाय- vinodāya - amusement; बालस्य- bālasya - child; मौर्ख्यं- maurkhyam - foolishness; हि - hi - indeed; मातः - mātaḥ - Oh Mother; तत् एतत्- this; प्रलाप- pralāpa - prattle; स्तुतिं - stutiṃ - verses of praise; मे - by me; गृहाण- grhāṇa - accept.

Oh Mother, accept this stuti of mine as a foolish prattle of a child for your amusement.

Adi Shankara, the incarnation of Parameshwara on this earth, was there to solely teach Gnana through Advaita Vedanta. Despite being an incarnation of Parameshwara, his expression of such great humility is a lesson to everyone and is to be cultivated throughout life. One should admit his ignorance, inadequacies and foolishness and stand in front of Devi. All the knowledge and materialistic possessions amount to nothing before Devi.

॥ देवीभुजंगस्तोत्रसम्पूर्णम् ॥

॥ Devībhujāṅgastotram Sampūrṇam ॥