

19. श्रीअच्युताष्टकम् / Sri Acyutāṣṭakam

Introduction:

Acchyuta means one who does not slip from his supreme state, and this usually applies to Maha Vishnu. Slippage attributes to vikaara (change). We as human beings go through many vikaaras in our lifetime (both mind and body), from birth to death.

Maha Vishnu is ever in Sachidananda state and is never slipping (changing) from his Supreme state, and hence he is Acchyuta. Acyutāṣṭakam comprises of eight verses in praise of Acchyuta. For each of these names of Vishnu, Adi Shankara has given several meanings in Vishnu Sahasranāma Bhāshya. Some of the most important meanings have been described here.

This āṣṭakam has a very lilting tune and can easily be memorized.

1. अच्युतं केशवं रामनारायणं कृष्णदामोदरं वासुदेवं हरिम् ।
श्रीधरं माधवं गोपिकावल्लभं जानकीनायकं रामचन्द्रं भजे ॥
1. acyutaṃ keśavaṃ rāmanārāyaṇaṃ kṛṣṇadāmodaraṃ vāsudevaṃ harim ।
śrīdharaṃ mādharmaṃ gopikāvallabhaṃ jānakīnāyakaṃ rāmacandraṃ bhaje ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

अच्युतं केशवं रामनारायणं कृष्णदामोदरं वासुदेवं हरिम् / acyutaṃ keśavaṃ rāmanārāyaṇaṃ kṛṣṇadāmodaraṃ vāsudevaṃ harim

अच्युतं - acyutaṃ - Acyuta, never changing ; केशवं - keśavaṃ - Keśava ; राम - rāma - Rama, ever in the state of bliss ; नारायणं - nārāyaṇaṃ - nārāyaṇa; कृष्ण - Kṛṣṇa - Krishna; दामोदरं - dāmodaraṃ - Damodara; वासुदेवं - vāsudevaṃ - Son of Vasudeva; हरिम् - harim - Sri Hari;

Notes:

All the three forms of Mahā Vishnu - Sri Rāma, Sri Krishna, and Sriman Nārāyaṇa are being worshipped here.

Acchyutaṃ - the meaning has been explained in the introduction.

Keśavaṃ - has two meanings.

- One who has beautiful hair, and
- He is the slayer of the asura Keshi.

There is one more interesting meaning for Keśava - He has got the three Eshwaras under his sway (control) - *Ka* is Brahma, *Aa* is Vishnu, *Eesha* is Mahadeva, *Va* means under his vasha (control).

Rāma - Bhagavān took the avatara of Sri Rāma. रमति इति रामः, रमयति इति रामः - he is ever in a state of Atma Ramā, in the state of bliss in the enjoyment of ātma, he revels in ātma. Whoever sees him, they also revel in Atma on seeing him (ramayati).

There's a beautiful shloka from Padma Purāna that brings out the essence of Rāma nāma.

रमन्ते योगिनो यस्मिन् नित्यानन्दे चिदात्मनि |
इति रामपदेनैतत् परं ब्रह्माभिधीयते ||
ramante yogino yasmin nityānande cidātmani |
iti rāmapadenaitat paraṃ brahmābhīdhīyate ||

Rāma denotes parabrahma because yogis always revel in constant state of bliss (nitya ānanda), the consciousness that is present in their own ātma, which is the source of constant bliss. Because they revel (ramante), and he gives them this experience, he is Rāma.

Nārāyaṇaṃ -

- One who has got waters as his ashaya (resting on water).
- नराणां अयनः - He is the destination for Jivas (nāra). Because all Jivas are born in waters. No Jīva can exist without water.
आपो वै नरसूनवः - all Jīvas are born in water, and hence he is the ashaya of /destination of Jīvas.
- Nāra can also mean Pancha bhutas. He is omnipresent, and he enters into the process of creation.

Krishna - कर्षति इति कृष्णः - one who attracts by his beauty and divine attributes. There are other deeper meanings for the word Krishna. One such is listed below

कृषिभू वाचकःशब्दो णश्चनिर्वृति वाचकः |
विष्णुस्तद् भावयोगाच्च कृष्णो भवति शाश्वतः ||

भू - Bhu means existence. He denotes existence.
निर्वृति - nirvruti means bliss in this context.

He denotes existence and bliss, hence he is Krishna.

Dāmodaraṃ - One who was tied to a mortar by his mother Yashoda with a dāma (rope) around his udara (belly), which she could not initially. Later on, Krishna subjects himself to be tied. He subjects himself only to bhakti, not to any other constraints.

Vāsudevam - means son of Vasudeva. There is a deeper meaning as given in the Uttara-reetika of Sri Vishnu Sahasranāma.

वासनाद्वासुदेवस्य वासितं भुवनत्रयम् ।
सर्वभूतनिवासोऽसि वासुदेव नमोऽस्तु ते ॥
vāsanādvāsudēvasya vāsitaṃ bhuvanatrayam ।
sarvabhūtanivāsōsi vāsudēva namōstu tē ॥

All the three worlds are inhabited by him, hence he is Vasudeva. He lives as antaryami (indweller) in all Jīvas.

Hari - One who steals the Pāpas (sins) of Jīvas who takes refuge in him. Incidentally, Hara (Shiva) and Hari (Vishnu) both mean the same.

**श्रीधरं माधवं गोपिकावल्लभं जानकीनायकं रामचन्द्रं भजे / śrīdharaṃ mādhavaṃ
gopikāvallabhaṃ jānakīnāyakaṃ rāmacandraṃ bhaje**

श्री - Śrī - Mahalakshmi; धरं - dharaṃ - supporting, holding; मा - mā - Mahalakshmi; धवं - dhavaṃ - husband, consort; गोपिका - gopikā - Gopikas ; वल्लभं - vallabhaṃ - beloved of; जानकी - Jānaki - Sita (daughter of Janaka); नायकं - nāyakaṃ - consort of; रामचन्द्रं - rāmacandraṃ - Rāmachandra ; भजे - bhaje - I worship;

Notes:

Śrīdhara - one who is holding Mahalakshmi on his chest.

Mādhavaṃ - Consort of Mahalakshmi.

Gopikā vallabhaṃ - Beloved of Gopikas. All the Gopikas are not ordinary Gopis but are the incarnation of very powerful punyātmās (Devas/Supreme beings/Rishis). They were in an extraordinary state of mind and were in an extraordinary state of attraction to Sri Krishna.

Jānakīnāyakaṃ - He is the consort of Jānaki (Janaka's daughter -Sita)

Rāmacandraṃ - Rāma is always called Rāmachandra, though he is from Surya vamsha, because रमयति इति रामः - one who sees Rāma is taken to a different world of happiness. आह्लादयति इति चन्द्रः - āhladayati iti chandraḥ - Chandra is in-charge of the mind and brings pleasure/happiness to the mind. Hence, he is Rāmachandra.

Summary:

I worship that Bhagavān who is ever in his Supreme state, who is ever in a state of bliss, who is Keśava, Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, Krishna, Dāmodara, Vāsudeva, Hari, who is holding Mahalakshmi on his chest, consort of Mahalakshmi, beloved of Gopikas, consort of Jānaki, and who brings happiness to the mind.

2. अच्युतं केशवं सत्यभामाधवं माधवं श्रीधरं राधिकाराधितम् ।
इन्दिरामन्दिरं चेतसा सुन्दरं देवकीनन्दनं नन्दजं सन्दधे ॥
2. acyutaṃ keśavaṃ satyabhāmādhavaṃ mādhaveṃ śrīdharaṃ rādhikārādhitam ।
indirāmandiraṃ cetasā sundaraṃ devakīnandanaṃ nandajaṃ sandadhe ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

अच्युतं केशवं सत्यभामाधवं माधवं श्रीधरं राधिकाराधितम् / acyutaṃ keśavaṃ
satyabhāmādhavaṃ mādhaveṃ śrīdharaṃ rādhikārādhitam

अच्युतं - acyutaṃ - acchyuta, never slipping; केशवं - keśavaṃ - Keśava; सत्यभामा - satyabhāmā - Satyabhāmā; धवं - dhavaṃ - consort, husband of ; माधवं - mādhaveṃ - consort of Mahalakshmi; श्रीधरं - śrīdharaṃ - one who holds Mahalakshmi; राधिका - rādhikā - Rādhika (Rādha) ; आराधितम् - ārādhitam - worshipped by;

Notes:

Satyabhāmā dhavaṃ - Consort, husband of Satyabhāmā.

Rādhikā ārādhitam – One who is worshipped by Rādhika. Rādha tattva is a great subject by itself. There's been much research on Rādha tattva.

According to Devi Bhagavatam, Rādha is defined as

राधोति सकलान् कामान् तेन राधेति कीर्तिता
Rādhnoti Sakalān Kāmān Tena Rādheti Keertitā

She bestows all your desires, so she is called Radha. There are other Purānas which define Rādha and Rādhika.

Rādha - कृष्णेन आराध्यते इति राधा - One who is worshipped by Krishna, one who holds the Prāna of Krishna.

Rādhika - कृष्णं समाराधयति सदा इति राधिका - She always worships Krishna, hence she is called Rādhika.

This signifies that there are no two personalities, there is only one that is split into Krishna and Radhika. That is the Advaita concept and is explained very well in Devi Bhagavatam - The Parabrahmam, Adi Parashakti, divides herself into Krishna (right side) and Radha (left side). Among the several manifestations of Adi Parashakti, Krishna and Radha are one such concept. In fact, Krishna is associated with Devi in many Puranas.

पुंरूपा कृष्ण विग्रहा - Adi Parashakti has taken the manly form, that is Krishna.

इन्दिरामन्दिरं चेतसा सुन्दरं देवकीनन्दनं नन्दजं सन्दधे / indirāmandiram̐ cetasā sundaram̐ devakīnandanam̐ nandajam̐ sandadhe

इन्दिरा - indirā - Mahalakshmi; मन्दिरं - mandiram̐ - abode; चेतसा - cetasā - splendor; सुन्दरं - sundaram̐ - beautiful ; देवकी - devakī - Devaki ; नन्दनं - nandanam̐ - child of; नन्दजं - nandajam̐ - son of Nanda; सन्दधे - sandadhe - I hold him in my mind

Notes:

Indirā mandiram̐ - He is holding Mahalakshmi on his chest.

Cetasā sundaram̐ - His splendor is beautiful. Chetas normally means mind, and in this context, it means splendor. This can also be interpreted as - by mind also he is beautiful because he is Sachidananda. Chit is associated with Cetas. He is full of consciousness of the supreme. He never slips from that consciousness because he is Acchyuta.

Devakī nandanam̐ - Son of Devaki, Child who brings ananda (happiness) is called Nandana.

Nandajam̐ - Son of Nanda, who brings happiness to Nanda.

Summary:

I hold in my mind that Bhagavān, who is ever in his Supreme state, who is Keśava, consort of Satyabhāmā, consort of Mahalakshmi, who holds Mahalakshmi, worshipped by Rādhika, who is the abode of Mahalakshmi (Indirā), whose splendor is very beautiful, who is dear to Devakī and who brings happiness to Nanda.

3. विष्णवे जिष्णवे शङ्खिने चक्रिणे रुक्मिणीरागिणे जानकीजानये ।
वल्लवीवल्लभायार्चितायात्मने कंसविध्वंसिने वंशिने ते नमः ॥
3. viṣṇave jiṣṇave śaṅkhine cakriṇe rukmiṇīrāgiṇe jānakījānaye ।
vallavīvallabhāyārcitāyātmane kaṁsavidhvamsine vaṁśine te namaḥ ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

विष्णवे जिष्णवे शङ्खिने चक्रिणे रुक्मिणीरागिणे जानकीजानये / viṣṇave jiṣṇave śaṅkhine cakriṇe jānakījānaye

विष्णवे - viṣṇave - Vishnu; जिष्णवे - jiṣṇave - ever victorious; शङ्खिने - śaṅkhine - one who is holding Shanka; चक्रिणे - cakriṇe - one who is holding Sudarshana Chakra; रुक्मिणी - rukmiṇī - Rukmiṇi; रागिणे - rāgiṇe - one who is beloved of; जानकीजानये - jānakījānaye - one who is having Janaki as wife;

Notes:

Vishnu - Sarva vyapi, one who is present everywhere.

Jishnu - जयति इति जिष्णुः - One who is ever victorious.

Śaṅkhine - He is holding the Panchajanya Shanka (conch).

Cakriṇe - One who is holding Sudarshana Chakra.

Panchajanya Shanka and Sudarshana Chakra are mentioned many times in Mahabharata and Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

Jānakī jānaye - Jāni means wife. One who is having **Jānakī** (Sita, Janaka's daughter) as his wife.

वल्लवीवल्लभायार्चितायात्मने कंसविध्वंसिने वंशिने ते नमः / vallavīvallabhāyārcitāyātmāne kaṁsavidhvamsine vaṁśīne te namaḥ

वल्लवी - vallavī - Cow herdess, Gopikas; वल्लभाय - vallabhāya - beloved of; अर्चिताय - arcitāya - worshipping; आत्मने - ātmāne - their own ātma; कंस विध्वंसिने - kaṁsa vidhvamsine - destroyer of Kamsa ; वंशिने - vaṁśīne - one who is holding the divine flute ; ते नमः - te namaḥ - I prostrate to you ;

Notes:

Vallavī vallabhā - Beloved of Gopikas. Vallavī means cow herdess, girls in charge of cows.

arcitāya ātmāne - Gopika's do not see an external divine being but their own ātma in Krishna. They are worshipping their own ātma in Krishna.

Vaṁśīne - Vaṁsa means flute. Krishna makes beautiful sounds through his flute. Whenever Krishna played his flute, all animals stood stupefied wherever they were. All movements would be stopped, and everyone was transported to another world. Gopis were very much attracted to the Venu-Nāda (music of flute) that they would rush towards Krishna whenever he played

the flute. And, at midnight one day (Karthik Purnima), Krishna played his flute and conducted the Rasa Lila. These are described beautifully in Bhagavata Purana.

Summary:

I prostrate to Bhagavān who is omnipresent, ever victorious, who is holding the Panchajanya Shanka (conch), and Sudarshana Chakra, beloved of Rukmiṇi, having Janaki as his wife, beloved of Gopikas, worshipped by Gopikas as their own Atma, destroyer of Kamsa, and who is holding the divine flute.

4. कृष्ण गोविन्द हे राम नारायण श्रीपते वासुदेवाजित श्रीनिधे ।
अच्युतानन्त हे माधवाधोक्षज द्वारकानायक द्रौपदीरक्षक ॥
4. kṛṣṇa govinda he rāma nārāyaṇa śrīpate vāsudevājita śrīnidhe ।
acyutānanta he mādhavādhokṣaja dvārakānāyaka draupadīrakṣaka ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

कृष्ण गोविन्द हे राम नारायण श्रीपते वासुदेवाजित श्रीनिधे / kṛṣṇa govinda he rāma nārāyaṇa śrīpate vāsudevājita śrīnidhe

कृष्ण - kṛṣṇa - Krishna ; गोविन्द - govinda - Govinda; हे राम - he rāma - Rāma ; नारायण - nārāyaṇa - Nārāyaṇa; श्रीपते - śrīpate - consort of Mahalakshmi; वासुदेव - vāsudēva - Vāsudeva; अजित - ajita - One who cannot be conquered; श्री - Śrī - Mahalakshmi; निधे - nidhe - holder of treasure of;

Notes:

Govinda - Govinda is a very significant and potent name , and has several meanings.

- Protector of cows
- Gau means earth. He is the protector of earth. In Varāhavatāra, when the Bhoomi (earth) was drowned in the sea, Bhagavān killed Hiranyāksha and brought out the earth.
- Gau means vāk (speech, Vāni) - गां विदयते - Gām vindayate - One who bestows Speech, enables us to attain speech. We are all able to speak because of the grace of Govinda.
- मूकं करोति वाचालं - Mūkam Karōti Vācālam - Even a man who cannot speak will become a great orator by the grace of Govinda.
- गोविदाम् पतिः - Govidām patiḥ - Master of knowers of speech.

Śrīpate - Consort of Mahalakshmi

Ajita - One who cannot be conquered, who never knows a defeat. It is the parallel of Jishnu (ever victorious).

Śrīnidhe - He holds the treasure - Mahalakshmi. Mahalakshmi denotes wealth, and he holds Mahalakshmi.

अच्युतानन्त हे माधवाधोक्षज द्वारकानायक द्रौपदीरक्षक / acyutānanta he mādhavādhokṣaja dvārakānāyaka draupadīrakṣaka

अच्युत - acyuta - Acchyuta; अनन्त – ananta - boundless; हे माधव - he mādhava - Consort of Mahalakshmi; अधोक्षज - adhokṣaja - Adhokṣhaja; द्वारकानायक – dvārakānāyaka - master of Dwaraka; द्रौपदीरक्षक - draupadīrakṣaka - Protector of Draupadi

Notes:

Ananta - One has no beginning and an end, he is omnipresent either in a form or formless state, and as our indweller (ātma)

Adhokṣaja - is a very interesting name, and Adi Shankara has given several / extended meanings in Vishnu Sahasranāma Bhāshya. One such significant and interesting meaning has been described here.

अधः - adaḥ - normally means going downwards. In this context it means going inwards.
अक्ष - akṣa - Indriyas (sense organs)
ज - Birth (of Jnāna).

When the indriyas are turned inwards, they will give you (birth of) Jnāna. He is the one who can turn your indriyas inwards and bless you with Jnāna. It is mentioned in Kathōpanishad that all our sense organs always tend to go outwards. That is how Brahma has created the sense organs. Even in a sleep state, we dream because we have developed a tendency to go outwards.

Yōga is all about turning indriyas (and mind) inwards. This will result in bliss, which results in Jnāna. By enabling you to turn your indriyas inwards, he is blessing us with Jnāna. Even when we see a picture or image of Bhagavān, all these experiences are transient and are associated with this body. They will have to go away once you leave the body. You have to confine yourself to your heart where ātma resides, and that is where you will ultimately have to go.

Dvārakā nāyaka - Dvārakā was created overnight by Krishna to protect the people of Mathura from the attack of the asura Jarāsandha.

Draupadī rakṣaka - He is the Protector of Draupadi. During Draupadi Vastrapaharana, he protected her by giving her endless piece of clothing (Saree). Krishna had been protecting Draupadi all along. The Kurukshetra war was itself to help Draupadi; she had vowed that Kauravas be eliminated. During Vanavāsa, Krishna helped her by taking away sage Durvasa

(Akshaya Patra related incident). This signifies that he protects all who take refuge in him all the time.

Summary:

Krishna, Govinda, hey Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, consort of Mahalakshmi, Vāsudeva, who cannot be conquered (Ajita), holder of treasure of Sri Mahalakshmi, O Acchyuta, Ananta (who is boundless), hey Mādhava, Adhokṣaja, Master of Dwaraka, Protector of Draupadi!

5. राक्षसक्षोभितः सीतया शोभितो दण्डकारण्यभूपुण्यताकारणः ।
लक्ष्मणेनान्वितो वानरैः सेवितो-ऽगस्त्यसम्पूजितो राघवः पातु माम् ॥
5. rākṣasakṣobhitaḥ sītayā śobhito daṇḍakāraṇyabhūpuṇyatākāraṇaḥ ।
lakṣmaṇenānvito vānaraiḥ sevito-’gastyasampūjito rāghavaḥ pātu mām ॥

Adi Shankara brings in Rāma, Krishna and Nārāyaṇa in this Aṣṭakam. This particular shloka is all about Rāma.

Meaning and Explanation:

राक्षसक्षोभितः सीतया शोभितो दण्डकारण्यभूपुण्यताकारणः / rākṣasakṣobhitaḥ sītayā śobhito daṇḍakāraṇyabhūpuṇyatākāraṇaḥ

राक्षस - rākṣasa - Rākṣasa; क्षोभितः - kṣobhitaḥ - killer of; सीतया - sītayā - of Sīta; शोभितः - śobhitaḥ - adorned with the glory; दण्डक - daṇḍakā - Daṇḍakā; अरण्य - araṇya - forest; भू - bhū - Bhumi (area, land); पुण्यता - puṇyatā - quality of Puṇya; कारणः - kāraṇaḥ - (he) is the cause of that

Notes:

Rākṣasa kṣobhitaḥ - Kṣobhana means agitating (disturbing). To the forest where Rākṣasas were ruling and killing sages with no mercy, Rāma went and killed the Rākṣasas.

Sītayā śobhitaḥ - He is adorned with the glory, splendor of Sīta.

daṇḍakāraṇya bhū puṇyatā kāraṇaḥ - The land of Daṇḍakā forest (current day Nasik, Panchavati Kṣetras) has become very significant, meritorious (bestowing Puṇya), and Sri Rāma is the cause of that.

लक्ष्मणेनान्वितो वानरैः सेवितो-ऽगस्त्यसम्पूजितो राघवः पातु माम् / lakṣmaṇenānvito vānaraiḥ sevito-’gastyasampūjito rāghavaḥ pātu mām

लक्ष्मणेन अन्वितः - lakṣmaṇena anvitaḥ - accompanied by Lakshmana; वानरैः सेवितः - vānaraiḥ sevitaḥ - served by Vānaras (monkeys); अगस्त्य सम्पूजितः - agastya sampūjitaḥ - worshipped by Agastya; राघवः - rāghavaḥ - ; पातु माम् - pātu mām - let him protect me

Notes:

Lakṣmaṇena anvitaḥ - Rāma was ever accompanied by Lakshmana, right from birth. It has been described in Vālmiki Rāmāyana. Though Bharata was the immediate next brother, we always mention the order as Rāma, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrugna. Lakshmana was very closely associated with Rāma, and there was no compulsion for him to go to the forest. He was not the one bound by the condition of Dasharatha, but he still followed Rāma to the forest and bore all the miseries and difficulties. He could have as well stayed back, like Bharata and Shatrugna, but he did not! Lakshmana is the form of Ādi Shesha, and Ādi Shesha never leaves Bhagavān.

vānaraiḥ sevitaḥ - Served and worshipped by Vānaras (monkeys). The monkey sainya (Hanumān and his army) was always with Sri Rāma during the war with Rāvana.

Agastya sampūjitaḥ - Worshipped by sage Agastya. Rāma during his stay in the forest goes to the kuteer (cottage) of sage Agastya and worships him. Agastya in turn offered Puja to Sri Rāma since Agastya knew Sri Rāma is Parabrahma swaroopa. Rāma is always respectful of elders and sages. He never showed himself as Parabrahma. He was so humble that he goes and falls at the feet of sage Agastya. When he enters the kuteer of sage Agastya, he introduces sage Agastya to Lakshmana in glorious terms, quoting various incidents like drinking of the ocean by Achamana, subduing arrogance of Vindhya, bringing Kaveri to Tamilnadu, etc. This has been described in Valmiki Rāmāyana. Rāma is worshipped by that sage Agastya.

Rāghavaḥ - Rāma is called Rāghava because he came from the lineage of Raghu, a great king of Surya vamsha before Dasharatha. Aja was the king before Dasharatha, and Raghu was the king before Aja. Dilipa, Mandhata, and Raghu are some of the famous kings in the lineage of Surya vamsha.

Raghu was a great and virtuous king. He performed a yāga called Vishwajit, and he gave away everything. At that time a Bramhachāri called Koutsa came to king Raghu and asked for 1400 lakh of gold coins because he had promised as Guru Dakshina that amount of gold to his Guru Varatantu. Raghu was in a dilemma since he did not have anything to offer to the Bramhachāri and he cannot now say no to the Bramhachāri. Raghu mentions he will fight with Kubera so as to get the gold. Such was the powers the Kings of Surya vamsha possessed, they could even think of fighting with Devas. Dasharatha himself had been to Indra-Loka and had helped Devendra in his fights. Kubera heard this and he showered gold coins in King Raghu's courtyard, and Raghu asked Koutsa to pick up all the gold. The Bramhachāri counted and picked just enough gold coins needed for his Guru Dakshina and left the balance in the courtyard. Then there was a quarrel between king Raghu and Bramhachāri. Raghu argued that all the gold was only meant for Bramhachāri since the gold was asked because of him and that Raghu cannot

accept a single coin of gold. Bramhachāri argued that he cannot accept anything more than what's needed. A Bramhachāri is supposed to be free from all wants and needs. He needed the gold only to fulfill his needs for Guru Dakshina.. This shows the magnanimity of people of those times. Finally, king Raghu managed to convince the Bramhachāri to carry all the gold; he in turn distributed the excess gold among the people of Ayodhya.

Kālidāsa named his great epic "Raghu Vamsha" after such a great king Raghu.

Summary:

Let Rāghava, the killer of Rākṣasas, who is adorned with the glory of Sīta, who made the land of Daṇḍakā forest meritorious, accompanied by Lakshmana, served by the Vānaras (monkeys), worshipped by the sage Agastya, protect me!

6. धेनुकारिष्टकोऽनिष्टकृद्द्वेषिणां केशिहा कंसहृद्वंशिकावादकः ।
पूतनाकोपकः सूरजाखेलनो बालगोपालकः पातु मां सर्वदा ॥
6. dhenukāriṣṭako'niṣṭakṛddveṣiṇāṃ keśihā kaṃsahṛdvamśikāvādakaḥ ।
pūtanākopakaḥ sūrajākhelano bālagopālakaḥ pātu māṃ sarvadā ॥

Adi Shankara describes some of the bāla leelas of Sri Krishna in this and next Shloka.

Meaning and Explanation:

धेनुकारिष्टकोऽनिष्टकृद्द्वेषिणां केशिहा कंसहृद्वंशिकावादकः / dhenukāriṣṭako'niṣṭakṛddveṣiṇāṃ keśihā kaṃsahṛdvamśikāvādakaḥ

धेनुक - Dhenukā - Dhenukāsura; अरिष्टक - ariṣṭaka - ariṣṭakāsura ; अनिष्टकृत् - aniṣṭakṛt - he harms (kills); द्वेषिणां - dveṣiṇāṃ - those who hated Krishna; केशिहा - keśihā – killer of Keśi; कंसहृत् -kaṃsahṛt – killer of Kaṃsa; वंशिका - vamśikā - flute; वादकः - vādakaḥ - player of

Notes:

Krishna killed those asuras who hated Krishna and came down to kill him. These asuras were sent by Kaṃsa to kill Krishna.

Dhenuka - Dhenu means cow. Dhenuka is an asura who came disguised in the form of a cow.

Ariṣṭaka - An asura who came disguised in the form of an ox. Ariṣṭaka also means one who harms others. These people were killed by Krishna.

Keśi – Another asura who came in the form of a horse.

Kaṃsahṛt - Krishna comes to Kamsa (asura) and kills him.

The music of Krishna's flute allured everybody in Brindavan, especially Gopas and Gopis.

**पूतनाकोपकः सूरजाखेलनो बालगोपालकः पातु मां सर्वदा / pūtanākopakaḥ sūrajākhelano
bālagopālakaḥ pātu māṃ sarvadā**

पूतना– pūtanā - Pūtanā (asura woman); कोपकः - kopakaḥ - very angry with; सूरजा - sūrajā - Yamuna, daughter of Surya; खेलनः - khelanaḥ - one who sports in; बालगोपालकः - bālagopālakaḥ - Bāla (child) Gopāla; पातु मां - pātu māṃ - protect me; सर्वदा - sarvadā - always

Notes:

Pūtanā was an asura woman who disguised in the form of a beautiful woman, she took Balakrishna onto her lap and suckled him. She intended to kill Krishna through poisonous milk. Krishna became angry and eventually killed her. She came pretending to be a mother, and no mother would give poisonous milk to her child. That pretension as a mother and feeding poisonous milk naturally made Krishna very angry.

Yamuna is the daughter of Surya (Sun), and Yama is the son of Surya. Krishna who sports in the river Yamuna, that Bāla Gopāla who enacts many such bāla leelas, let him protect me.

Summary:

The one who killed those asuras (Denuka, Arishtaka, Keshi) who hated him, who were sent by Kamsa and the killer of Kamsa himself, one who plays flute very melodiously, one who became very angry with Pūtanā who came for feeding him poisonous milk, and who sports in the river of Yamuna, that Bāla Gopāla who enacts these kinds of bāla leela, let him protect me.

7. विद्युद्योतवत्प्रस्फुरद्वाससं प्रावृडम्भोदवत्प्रोल्लसद्विग्रहम् ।
वन्यया मालया शोभितोरःस्थलं लोहिताङ्घ्रिद्वयं वारिजाक्षं भजे ॥
7. vidyududyotavatprasphuradvāsasaṃ prāvṛḍambhodavatprollasadvigrahaṃ ।
vanyayā mālayā śobhitorāḥsthalaṃ lohitaṅghridvayaṃ vārijākṣaṃ bhaje ॥

Krishna's form is described in this Shloka

Meaning and Explanation:

**विद्युद्योतवत्प्रस्फुरद्वाससं प्रावृडम्भोदवत्प्रोल्लसद्विग्रहम् / vidyududyotavatprasphuradvāsasaṃ
prāvṛḍambhodavatprollasadvigrahaṃ**

विद्युत् - Vidyut - lightning, sparkling, twinkling ; उद्योतवत् - udyotavat - flashing; प्रस्फुरत् - prasphurat - shining very well ; वाससं - vāsasaṃ - dress, garment that he is wearing ; प्रावृष् - prāvṛṣ - rainy season (Varsha) ; अम्भोदवत् - ambhodavat - like cloud ; प्रोल्लसत् - prollasat - giving pleasure, very pleasing; विग्रहम् - vigrahaṃ - his form;

The dress that he is wearing is shining very well like a flash of lightning. His form is very pleasing, making everybody happy, and is like a dark cloud (he has a shiny dark complexion) in the rainy season.

वन्यया मालया शोभितोरःस्थलं लोहिताङ्घ्रिद्वयं वारिजाक्षं भजे / vanyayā mālayā śobhitorahṣthalaṃ lohitāṅghridvayaṃ vārijākṣaṃ bhaje

वन्यया - vanyayā - forest flowers; मालया - mālayā - garland; शोभितः - śobhitaḥ - shining; उरःस्थलं - uraḥsthalam - chest area; लोहित - lohita - red color; अङ्घ्रिद्वयं - aṅghridvayaṃ - the two (twin) feet; वारिज - vārijā - lotus; अक्षं - akṣaṃ - eyes; भजे - bhaje - I worship

I worship him whose chest area is shining with the garland made of forest flowers, whose twin feet are red-colored and is full of compassion towards his devotees, whose eyes are like a lotus.

Notes:

वनमाली - vanamalee is one of the names of Krishna and is mentioned in Sri Vishnu Sahasra Nāma वनमाली गदी शार्ङ्गी शङ्खी चक्री च नन्दकी. Krishna is the one with nature, he never showed himself as something different from the natural cowherd of Brindavan. All his leelas, though they were extraordinary and divine, were apparently that of a cowherd.

Divine feet are always described with red color and exhibit compassion towards devotees, and we always bow to the divine feet. Sri Nārāyana Bhattatri in Sri Pāda Saptati describes in great detail the greatness, glory, and beauty of Devi's feet in 70 shlokas. His Narayaneem is famous, and Sri Pāda Saptati is extraordinarily beautiful. Rāga means red color and affection, compassion. He uses the word Rāga very brilliantly in some of the shlokas.

Vārijā akṣaṃ - vāri means water, vārijā means lotus born out of the water; Lotus eyes.

Summary:

I worship that Krishna whose dress is brilliant, radiant and is shining very well like a flash of lightning, whose form is very pleasing, and is like a dark cloud (he has shiny dark complexion) in the rainy season, who makes everybody happy with his very appearance, whose chest area is shining with the garland made of forest flowers, whose twin feet are red-colored and is full of compassion towards his devotees, and whose eyes are like lotus.

8. कुञ्चितैः कुन्तलैर्भ्रजमानाननं रत्नमौलिं लसत्कुण्डलं गण्डयोः ।
हारकेयूरकं कङ्कणप्रोज्ज्वलं किङ्किणीमञ्जुलं श्यामलं तं भजे ॥
8. kuñcitaiḥ kuntalairbhrājamānānaṃ ratnamauliṃ lasatkuṇḍalaṃ gaṇḍayoḥ ।
hārakeyūraḥ kaṅkaṇaproyjvalaṃ kiṅkiṇīmañjulaṃ śyāmaḥ taṃ bhaje ॥

Meaning and Explanation:

**कुञ्चितैः कुन्तलैर्भ्राजमानाननं रत्नमौलिं लसत्कुण्डलं गण्डयोः / kuñcitaiḥ
kuntalairbhrājamānānaṃ ratnamauliṃ lasatkuṇḍalaṃ gaṇḍayoḥ**

कुञ्चितैः - kuñcitaiḥ - curly ; कुन्तलैः - kuntalaiḥ - hair on the head ; भ्राजमान - bhrājamānā - shining brilliantly; आननं - ānaṃ - face ; रत्न - ratna - gem; मौलिं - mauliṃ - head ; लसत्कुण्डलं - lasatkuṇḍalaṃ - shining kundalas; गण्डयोः - gaṇḍayoḥ - cheeks

His curly hair is adding to the brilliance of his face, he is wearing a gem-studded crown which also adds to the shine of the face. The shining kundalas (earrings) are adding shine to his cheeks.

Notes:

Lord Nataraja's left foot which is slightly bent is referred to as Kunchita padam.

**हारकेयूरकं कङ्कणप्रोज्ज्वलं किङ्किणीमञ्जुलं श्यामलं तं भजे / hārakeyūraṃ kaṅkaṇaprojvalaṃ
kiṅkiṇīmañjulaṃ śyāmaṃ taṃ bhaje**

हार - hāra - necklace; केयूरकं - keyūraṃ - armband; कङ्कण - kaṅkaṇa - bracelet; प्रोज्ज्वलं - projvalaṃ - shining brilliantly; किङ्किणी - kiṅkiṇī - tiny bells; मञ्जुलं - mañjulaṃ - very pleasing, sweet; श्यामलं - śyāmaṃ - dark colored; तं भजे - taṃ bhaje - that Krishna I worship him;

I worship that very pleasing and dark colored Krishna whose necklace, armband and bracelet are shining very brilliantly, and the tiny bells are making pleasing sounds.

Notes:

Projvalaṃ means shining too brightly (jvalaṃ, ujjvalaṃ, projjvalaṃ - words denoting the shine in increasing order). The armband is also called as angada.

Summary:

I worship that Krishna whose face shines very brilliantly because of the curly hair, his face is further shining because of the gem-studded crown, his cheek area is shining because of the kundalas on his ears, his ornaments are shining extraordinarily brilliant, and the tiny bells are jingling and making a beautiful sound and he who is dark-colored.

9. अच्युतस्याष्टकं यः पठेदिष्टदं प्रेमतः प्रत्यहं पूरुषः सस्पृहम् ।
वृत्ततः सुन्दरं वेद्यविश्वम्भरं तस्य वश्यो हरिर्जायते सत्वरम् ॥

**9. acyutasyāṣṭakaṃ yaḥ paṭhediṣṭadaṃ premataḥ pratyahaṃ pūruṣaḥ saspr̥ham |
vṛttataḥ sundaraṃ vedyaviśvambharaṃ tasya vaśyo harirjāyate satvaram ||**

This shloka is the Phalaśruti of chanting Acyutāṣṭakaṃ

Meaning and Explanation:

**अच्युतस्याष्टकं यः पठेदिष्टदं प्रेमतः प्रत्यहं पूरुषः सस्पृहम् / acyutasyāṣṭakaṃ yaḥ paṭhediṣṭadaṃ
premataḥ pratyahaṃ pūruṣaḥ saspr̥ham**

अच्युतस्य - acyutasya - in praise of Acchyuta; अष्टकं - aṣṭakaṃ - eight shlokas; यः - yaḥ - The one; पठेत् - paṭhet - who reads; इष्टदं - iṣṭadaṃ - the one which gives whatever you desire; प्रेमतः - premataḥ - with real love for Krishna; प्रत्यहं - pratyahaṃ - every day; पूरुषः - pūruṣaḥ - supreme being; सस्पृहम् - saspr̥ham - irresistible desire to attain

Those who have an irresistible desire to attain the supreme being, and read this desire - fulfilling eight shlokas every day in praise of Acchyuta, with the real love for Krishna

**वृत्ततः सुन्दरं वेद्यविश्वम्भरं तस्य वश्यो हरिर्जायते सत्वरम् / vṛttataḥ sundaraṃ
vedyaviśvambharaṃ tasya vaśyo harirjāyate satvaram**

वृत्ततः - vṛttataḥ - chandas, meter; सुन्दरं - sundaraṃ - having beautiful; वेद्य - vedya - making known; विश्वम्भरं - viśvambharaṃ - one who fulfills the needs of the universe; तस्य - tasya - to him; वश्यो - vaśyo - under his control; हरिः - hariḥ - Mahā Vishnu; जायते - jāyate - becomes ; सत्वरम् - satvaram - immediately

This Acyutāṣṭakaṃ having a beautiful meter makes Viśvambhara's glory known to you. To one who reads Acyutāṣṭakaṃ every day and with a desire to attain him, Mahā Vishnu immediately comes under his (her) control.

Notes:

विश्वं भरति इति विश्वम्भरः - One who supports the earth, who fulfills the needs of the universe. Viśvambhara is a beautiful name of Mahā Vishnu, and Chaitanya maha prabhu's earlier name was Viśvambhara.

The मुमुक्षुत्वं- mumukshutvaṃ - the insatiable desire for moksha is the final requirement in the Jnāna mārga. This is the same as 'Spruha', and if you have that desire, Hari will be very pleased with you, and he will be under your vasha (control).

॥ ॐ ॥

There is one very famous shloka from Srimad Bhāgavatam to explain that Bhagavan comes under the control of a Bhakta if you are a true Bhakta. In Ambarisha Charitram, sage Durvāsa runs to Vaikunta, when he was chased by Sudarshana Chakra. Sage Durvāsa pleads for Mahā Vishnu's mercy for escaping from Sudarshana Chakra, and, Mahā Vishnu says this verse

अहं भक्तपराधीन ह्यस्वतन्त्र इव द्विज ।
साधुभिर्ग्रस्तहृदयो भक्तैर्भक्तजनप्रियः ॥
aham bhakta-paradhinaḥ hyasvatantra iva dvija ।
sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ ॥

O Brāhmana, I am the servant of my devotees, I do not have any freedom of my own, my heart is always in the control of Sādhus, my heart is in the hands of Bhaktas, and always have a special affection for Bhaktas.

The same point is emphasized by Adi Shankara in this concluding shloka of Phalaśruti.

Summary:

Those, who have an irresistible desire to attain the supreme being and read eight shlokas every day in praise of Acchyuta, with the real love for Krishna, will get to know the glory of Viśvambhara, and Hari will be very pleased with them and will be under their vasha (control).

॥ श्रीअच्युताष्टकं सम्पूर्णम् ॥
॥ Sri Acyutāṣṭakaṃ Sampūrṇam ॥