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LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP

BY

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

(Ananda Kutir)

RIKHIKESH (Himalayas)



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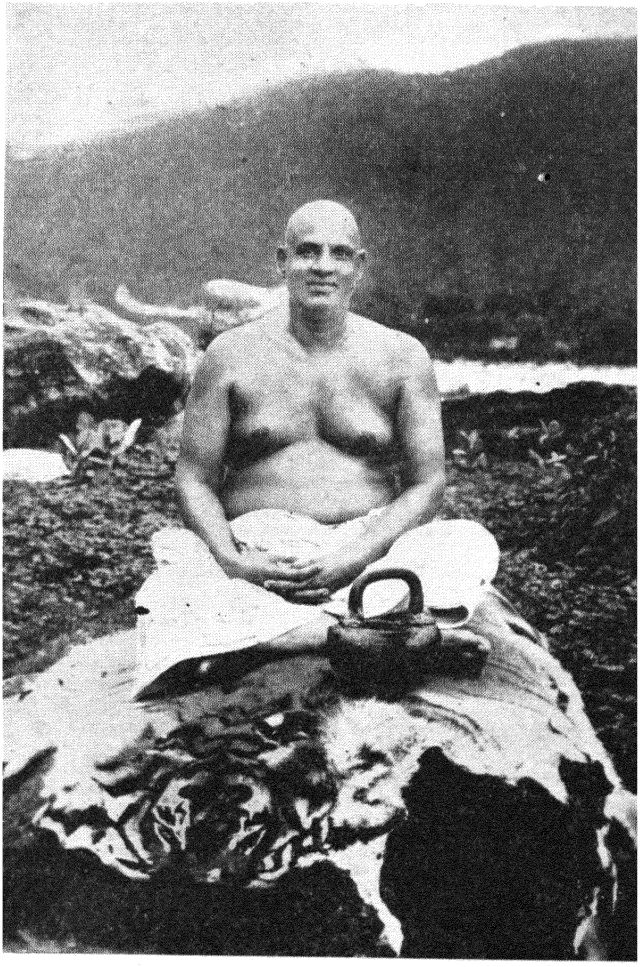
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DEDICATED TO LORD SIVA

THE CONSORT OF UMA

GAURI OR PARVATHI

THE BESTOWER OF ETERNAL BLISS, KNOWLEDGE AND IMMORTALITY.



SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This is a most valuable and instructive book for the aspirants, particularly for the devotees of Lord Siva. It contains fourteen chapters. It is full of practical Sadhana and instructions for attaining Siva-Tattwa or God-realisation. The chapters will speak for themselves. The secrets of Siva Tandava, Sakti Yoga and Siva Tattwa, etc., are very nicely presented. The translation of the Saiva Upanishads is a beautiful addition.

Up to this time, there is no such presentation on this subject. The philosophical portion is highly illuminating and helpful to the readers. The book contains the essence of all Saiva Puranas, such as Periya Purana, Linga Purana, Siva Parakrama, Tiruvilayadal Purana.

Its value is enhanced by the addition of some important Siva-stotras with English translation.

This book will prove to be an invaluable addition to the spiritual literature It is a good guide to the aspirants. It will adorn every library.

The book is written in a most lucid and clear style. It must be studied by all religious-minded persons. The book is of solid worth from a spiritual point of view.

The lives of Saiva Acharyas, the Bhaktas and the sixty-three Nayanmars are inspiring and soul-stirring. A study of their lives will make your life sublime and holy.

Ananda Kutir,
Rikhikesh.

THE SIVANANDA PUBLICATION LEAGUE.

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OM TAT SAT

SIVA MANTRAS

१. ॐ नमः शिवाय

"OM NAMASIVAYA"

२. ॐ त त्पुरुषाय विद्महे महादेवाय धीमहि,
तन्नोरुद्रः प्रचोदयात् ॥

"Om Tatpurushaya Vidmahe Mahadevaya dheemahi, Tanno Rudra Prachodayat."

३. ॐ त्र्यंबकं य जामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनं उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनात् मृत्योर्मोक्षीयमामृतात् ॥

"Om Trayambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam Urvarukamiva bandhanaat mrityormokshyeeya maamritat."

SIVA MANTRAS

1. Om is Sat-Chid-Ananda Para-Brahman. "Prostration to Lord Siva." This is the five-lettered formula or the Panchakshara-Mantra of Lord Siva. This is a very powerful Mantra which will bestow on the chanter the Highest Bliss of Existence!

2. "We comprehend (realise) that Celebrated Supreme Being (Purusha), and meditate upon that Great God, Mahadeva; may that Rudra impel us to do so." This the Rudra Gayatri Mantra.

3. "I bow down to that three-eyed Lord Siva, who is full of sweet fragrance, who nourishes the human beings. May He free me from the bondage of Samsara and death, just as a ripe Ber (cucumber) fruit is separated from the tree (creeper). May I be fixed in Immortality!" This is the Maha-Mrityunjaya Mantra.

SIVA PANCHAKSHARA STOTRAM

नागेन्द्रहाराय त्रिलोचनाय भस्माङ्गरागाय महेश्वराय।
नित्याय शुद्धाय दिगम्बराय तस्मै नकाराय नमः शिवाय॥

Salutations to the Ashen Clad, three eyed lord, embodied as the first letter Na, who is pure, nude and eternal and whose garland is the lord of serpents.

मन्दाकिनीसालल चन्दनचर्चिताय नन्दीश्वरप्रमथनाथमहेश्वराय।
मन्दापुष्पबहुपुन्यसुरपूजिताय तस्मै मकारायनमः शिवाय॥

I bow to him, embodied as Makara, who is adorned with innumerable divine flowers as Mandara and the like, who is the Sovereign King of the Pramatha Ganas and whose body is annointed with the holy waters of the celestial Ganges.

शिवाय मौरीवदनाब्जवृन्दसूर्याय दुक्षाध्वर नाशकाय।
श्रीनीलकण्ठाय वृषध्वजाय तस्मै शिकाराय नमः शिवाय॥

To the blue-necked lord, embodied as the letter Si, the destroyer of Daksha's sacrifice and the Resplendent Sun of Gouri's lotus-face, whose banner bears the emblem of a bull, may our salutations be.

वसिष्ठकुम्भोद्भवगौन मार्य मुनीन्द्रदेवार्चित शेखराय।
चन्द्रार्क वैश्वानर लोचनाय तस्मै वकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

I prostrate before the God of gods, embodied as Vakara, whose eyes are the sun, moon and the fire and whom the gods and the great sages like Vasishtha, Agastya and Goutama, ever pray and worship.

यक्ष स्वरूपाय जटाधराय पिनाकहस्ताय सनातनाय।
दिव्याय देवाय दिगम्बराय तस्मै यकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

Prostrations to that Ancient Naked God, embodied as the letter Ya, the Yaksha incarnate, whose hairs are long and matted and who holds Pinakam in his hands.

पञ्चाक्षरमिदं पुण्यं यः पठेच्छिव सन्निधौ ॥
शिवलोकमवाप्नोनि शिवेन सह मोदते ॥

Whoever repeats this prayer, composed with the five holy letters before Lord Siva, attains That Supreme Abode of His and enjoys there with him in eternal bliss.

SIVA SHADAKSHARA STOTRAM

ॐकारं विन्दुसंयुक्तं नित्यं ध्यायनि योगिनः ॥
कामदं मोक्षदं चैव ॐकाराय नमो नमः ॥

May our salutations ever be Omkara upon which the Yogins fix their minds constantly in deep meditation and which satiates all desires and sanctions eternal salvation.

नमनि ऋषयो देवा नमन्त्यप्सरसां गणाः ॥
नरा नमन्ति देवेशं नकाराय नमो नमः ॥

The mortals and the sages, the gods and the bands of Apsaras bow to the Supreme Lord, embodied as Nakara, we salute again.

महादेवं महात्मानं महाध्यानं परायणम् ।
महापापहरं देवं मकाराय नमो नमः ॥

To that Great Effulgent Being, embodied as Makara who is the Transcendent Self, the destroyer of multifarious sins and the Supreme Object of worship and Meditation, we salute ever and ever again.

शिवं शान्तं जगन्नाथं लोकानुग्रहकारकम् ।
शिवमेकमदं नित्यं शिकाराय नमो नमः ॥

To the All-auspicious and all-powerful Lord

of the Universe embodied as the third letter Si, who bestows peace and prosperity upon the world and who is One and Eternal, may our salutations always be.

वाहनं वृषभो यस्य वासुकिः कण्ठभूषणम् ।
वामे शान्तिधरं देवं वकाराय नमो नमः ॥

Who wears Shakti on the left hand and who has a bull to ride on and the serpent king, Vasuki to garland, to him, embodied as Vakara, we salute again and again.

यत्र यत्र स्थितो देवः सर्वव्यापी महेश्वरः ।
यो मुकुः सर्वदेवानां यकाराय नमो नमः ॥

To that all-pervading Maheshwara, embodied as the letter Ya, God with a form and without, who is the preceptor of the shining ones, wherever He may be, may our salutations be.

षडक्षरमिदं स्तोत्रं यः पठेच्छिव सन्निधौ ।
शिवलोकम वाप्नोति शिवेन सह मोदते ॥

Whosever repeats this prayer, composed with the six letters, "Om Namah Sivaya" before Lord Siva, enjoys Supreme Bliss in His Eternal Abode.

LINGA ASHTAKAM

ब्रह्ममुरारिसुरार्चितलिङ्गं निर्मलभावित शोभितलिङ्गम् ।
जन्मजदुःख विनाशकलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ।

I always bow before that Sadashivalinga, which is adored by Brahma, Vishnu and the other Suras, which is praised by pure and holy speeches and which destroys the cycle of births add deaths.

देवमुनिप्रवरार्चितलिङ्गं कामदहं करुणाकरलिङ्गम् ।
रावणदर्प विनाशनलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ।

Before That, the destroyer of Cupid, which the Devas and the sages worship, which is infiniteyl compassionate and which subdued the pride of Ravana.

सर्वसुगन्धि सुलेपितलिङ्गं बुद्धिविवर्धनकारणलिङ्गम् ।
सिद्धसुरा सुरनन्दितलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ।

Before that, which is lavishly smeared with variegated perfumes and scents, which elevates the power of thought and enkindles the light of discrimination, and which the Siddhas, the Suras and Asuras prostrate before.

कनकमहामणि भूषितलिङ्गं फणिपतिवेष्टित शोभितलिङ्गम् ॥
दक्षसुयज्ञ विनाशनलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ॥

Before that, the destroyer of Daksha's sacrifice, which is decorated with various ornaments, studded with different gems and rubies and which glows with the serpent lord coiled around.

कुङ्कुमचन्दनलेपिनलिङ्गं पङ्कजहार सुशोभितलिङ्गम् ॥
सञ्चित पापविनाशनलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ॥

Before that, which is smeared with saffron and sandal-paste, which is fair with lotus-garlands, and which extirpates the multitude of all accumulated sins.

देवगणार्चित सेवितलिङ्ग भावैर्धकिन्निरेव च लिङ्ग ।
दिनकरको टिप्रभाकरलिङ्ग नत्प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ॥

Before that, whose splendour is like that of million suns and before which genuine thoughts full of faith and devotion.

अष्टदलो परिवेष्टनलिङ्गं सर्वसमुद्भव कारणलिङ्गम् ।
अष्टदरिद्र विनाशनलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामिसदाशिवलिङ्गम् ॥

Before that destructive of all poverty in its eight aspects, which is the cause of all creation and which stands on the eight dalas.

सुरगुरुसुरवरपूजितलिङ्गं सुरवनपुष्प सदार्चितलिङ्गम् ।
परात्परं परमात्मकलिङ्गं तत्प्रणमामिसदाशिवलिङ्गम ॥

Before That which is the Transcendent Being and the Supreme Self, worshipped by all Suras with their priest ahead, with innumerable flowers from the celestial gardens.

लिङ्गाष्टक मिदं पुण्यं यः पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ । शिवलोकमवाप्नोति शिवेन सहमोदते ॥

Whosever repeats these eight Slokas, praising Sivalinga in his presence attains that Supreme Abode of Siva and enjoys there with Him in everlasting Bliss and Beatitude.

ARDHA NAREE NATESHWARA STOTRAM

चांपेयगौरार्ध शरीरकायै ● कर्पूरगौरार्धरशरीकाय ।
धम्मिल्लकायै च जटाधराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥१॥

To her whose body shines as bright as polished gold, to him whose body shines as brilliant as white camphor, to her with a fitting head-dress and to him with matted locks, to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

कस्तूरिका कुंकुमचर्चितायै चितारजः पुञ्जविचर्चिताय ।
कृतस्मरायै विकृतस्मराय नमः शिवायै चजमः शिवाय ॥२॥

To her of body smeared with musk and saffron, to him of body smeared with ashes of the crematorium, to her who radiates love through her beauty, to him who destroyed the God of love (Kamadeva) to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

चलत्कणत्कंकणनूपुरायै मिलत्पणाभूसुरनूपुराय ।
हेमाङ्गदायै भुजगाङ्गदाय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥३॥

To her adorned with shining beautiful anklets to him adorned with snakeanklets, circled round his lotus-feet, to her shining white golden

bracelets, and to him with snake-bracelets, to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

विलोल नीलोत्पल लोचनायै विकासि पङ्केरुहलोचनाय ।
समेक्षणायै विषमेक्षणाय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥४॥

To her whose hair is decorated with garlands of sweet-smelling divine flowers, to him whose neck is adorned with a garland of skulls, to her decorated with excellent divine garments, to him clad with eight quarters, to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

मन्दारमाला कलितालकायै कपालकालाङ्कितकन्धाराय ।
दिव्याम्बरायै च दिगम्बराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥५॥

To her with eyes as broad as the petals of the blue lotus (Nilotpala), to him with eyes as broad as the petals of the fully blossomed lotus, to her with an even number of eyes (two), to him with an odd number of eyes (three), to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be,

अम्भोधर श्यामलकुन्तलायै तडित्प्रभाताम्र जटाधराय ।
गिरीश्वरायै निखिलेश्वराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥६॥

To her with hair as dark as the fresh rain clouds, to him with matted hair resembling the colour of lightning, to her who is the Supreme Goddess of the Mountains (Himalayas), to him

who is the Lord of the entire universe, to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

प्रपञ्चसृष्टिप्रमुख लास्यका समस्तसं यैहारक ताण्डवाय।
जगज्जनन्यै जगदेकपित्रे नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥७॥

To her whose dance marks the creation of the world, to him whose dance indicates the total destruction of everything in this world, to her who is the world mother and to him who is the father of this universe, to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be,

प्रदीप्तरत्नोज्वल कुण्डलायै स्फुरन्महापन्नगभूषणाय।
शिवान्वितायै च शिवान्विताय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय॥८॥

To her with bright shining ear-rings of gems, to him who wears the great serpent as ornament, to her who is ever united with Lord Siva, to him who is ever in union with Gouri (Siva), to Gouri and Lord Siva may our prostrations be.

SIVA KAVACHAM

Rishi Rishabha Spoke to the Prince :—

Om ! My Salutations unto Lord Nilakantha, the Beloved of Uma, the three-eyed and thousand-armed Sambhu, who destroys the enemies by his mighty valour !

I now, for your good, reveal the supreme secret of all penances, possessing which you will be ever successful, redeemed from all sins and pains.

After adoring the Omnipresent Lord, I declare the esoteric Truth of Siva Kavacha, for the weal and welfare of the human beings.

Having seated himself in composure in a sacred place, he should contemplate upon the Imperishable Siva with all his senses subdued and pranas controlled.

He is to meditate upon the subtle and Infinite, having installed Him in the lotus feet of the hearts, who is all-pervading and beyond the senses.

Having disentangled himself from the bond of actions, by constant meditation and merging

wholly in the Supreme Bliss, and with his heart ever intent on the Shadakshara, "Om Namah Sivaya", he is to protect himself thus wearing the armour of Siva. (Siva Kavacha).

May that Supreme Divinity, raise me from the dark fathomless well of Samsara, and may His glorious name destroy my sins in their totality.

May He render me free from all fears in all places, who exists in all forms, who is all-blissful, who is smaller than the smallest and is possessed of Mighty Power!

May the eight-fold form of Siva, who supports the universe as earth, protect me from all earthly ailments, and may He who gives life to humanity as water, remove all my fears from waters.

May the Kala Rudra, who having burnt the worlds at the end of Kalpa, engages himself in Tandava, rescue me from all troubles from wild conflagrations and wind.

May He, the four-headed Trinayana, who is resplendent like lightning and gold look after me in the east, and He who holds axe, Veda, hook, noose, Trident, and rosary in his hands, whose

colour is dark and glossy as the raining clouds, in the South.

I adore him who is pure and spotless as jasmine, moon, conch and crystal, who bears the Vedas and rosary in his hands, as the emblems of bestowing boons and fearlessness, for my safety in the West; and Him who shines like the filament of a blossoming lotus in the North.

May the five-faced Iswara, who is white and transparent as the crystal, who holds hook, noose, hatchet, skull, drum, and trident in his hands and also the Vedas and a rosary as the token of security, protect me above.

I pray to Lord Chandramauli to take care of my head, Bhalanetra to look after my forehead, and Him, the destroyer of lust, for the protection of my eyes.

I worship Vishwa natha,who is renowned in Vedas and who holds a skull in his hand to keep my nose, ears and skull, safe and sound.

The five-faced Lord, whose tongue is the very Vedas, may protect my face and tongue, my throat, the Blue-necked one and my hands, He who holds Pinak in his hands.

May the Lord, the destroyer of the sacrifice

of Daksha, whose arms are the very embodiment of Dharma, guard my chest and arms against all dangers and evils.

May my hip, waist, stomach, naval, be in Dhurjati's care, of the destroyer of Cupid, and who holds the Mountain as his bow.

I leave my thighs, knees, and feet to His grace who is all graceful.

In the first watch of the day, may Mahesha be my protector; In the second Vamadeva; Trilochana in the third and Vrishaketu in the fourth.

Shashishekhara may keep me from all the evils in the evening, Gangadhara during midnight, Gouripathi at dawn and Mrityunjaya at all times.

May Sankâra be my protector when I am in, Sthanu, when I am out, Pashupati in the intermediate region and Sadashiva in all places.

May He, who is known by the Vedas, be my Saviour when sitting, the Lord of the Pramathas while walking and the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe while at rest.

May Nilakantha, the formidable foe of the

three cities, dispel my fears and dangers while on the way, and amidst impassable mountainous peaks and valleys.

May the All-powerful Almighty save me from the cruel clutches of the wild animals, while journeying through thick forests.

I offer my hearty prayers to Lord Virabhadra who is as fierce as Yama at the end of Kalpa and whose terrible laughter causes the worlds to tremble, for destroying my fears in crossing the terrible ocean of formidable foes.

I worship the Lord, to destroy the fearful hosts of the enemy armies, arrayed against with the four divisions, Infantry, Cavalry, Chariots and Elephants with the sharp and ferocious edge of his sword.

May the blazing fire emitted by the trident of the Lord, reduce the desperadoes to ashes and His bow, Pinaka, frighten the wild beasts such as tigers, lions and bears.

May He protect me from all evils arising from the inauspicious dreams and omens, from all the mental and bodily agonies, and from all the calamities of different types.

I bow down that Lord Sadashiva. who is

that Supreme Truth, who is the very form of holy hymns and sacred rites, who is beyond all knowledge and truth, who is the incarnation of Brahma and Rudra, whose very eyes are the sun, moon and fire, who has a body smeared with white holy ashes, who wears a crown and artless jewellery, studded with various gems and diamonds, who is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the whole universe, who destroyed Daksha's sacrifice, who kills the tide of time, who resides alone in Muladhara, who transcends the categories of knowledge, upon whose head, the holy Ganges makes her permanent abode, who is immanent in all beings, who possesses the six qualities, who is the truth and essence of philosophy, who is the means to attain the three Vargas (Dharma, Artha and Kama), who is the lord of the worlds, who wears the eight serpent-kings round his neck and who is the very form of Pranava.

I adore him who is the embodiment of consciousness, whose form is of ether and the directions, who wears the necklace of stars and planets, who is pure and spotless, who is the preceptor of all the worlds, who is the Supreme witness of the whole universes, who is the

Supreme Sedret of all Vedas, who transcends all philosophy, who bestows boons upon all his devotees and who showers mercy upon the poor and ignorant.

I pray to the All-merciful Lord who is ever pure and all-blissful, who is free from all lust, greed and sorrow, who is bereft of all flaws and qualities, who is devoid of desire, disease, ego and attachment, who is all-pervading, endless and eternal, who is beyond the chains of causes and effects, in whom all pains and pleasures, pride, power and pomp, fears, and dangers, sins and sufferings sink and die.

I worship Him, who is the embodiment of Pure Consciousness, in whom doubts are dried and actions cease, who is beyond all change, time, and destruction, who is full, Pure, Mute and Eternal, who is Satchidananda, Existence Absolute, Knowledge-Absolute and Bliss-Absolute, who is the incommunicable place personified, who is all-effulgence and Effulgence Embodied, who is the beneficent One, the radiant vision of Infinite Beauty and Beatitude. O My Lord! Victory on Thee,—Thou art the incarnation of Rudra, Roudra and Bhadra. Thou art that Mahabhairava, Kalabhairava. Thy garlands are

the necklaces of skulls and Thou holdest the Divine Weapons, Khatvanga, Sword, skin (Charma), noose, hook, drum, trident, bow, arrow, club, Sakti (a weapon) and the like in thy hands. O Thousand-faced God! Thou art fearful to look at with thy terrible teeth and the pealing laughter pierces through the whole worlds. Serpents are thy ear-rings, thy garlands and bracelets. Thou wearest elephant-skin on Thy body. Thou art the conquerer of death, the destroyer of the three cities, O three-eyed God!

Thou art All-existent, Immanence of things, Essence of Peace, and the Supreme Bliss and silence, O Sambhu! Thou art verily the Brahman of Veda and Vedanta. Thou art all pervading, ancient and eternal. Save me! My Lord! Dispel my fears from unnatural death and dangers, destroy my enemies, with thy trident and chop them off with the edge of thy sword! Frighten the bands of Betala, Kushmanda and the like with the bow and arrows. Save me from falling into the pit of fearful hell and render me free and fearless. Cover me with thy armour and protect me always. I am poor, meek, humble and helpless. I dedicate

all at thy feet and leave myself at thy disposal. Thou art my only prop and Saviour. O Lord Sadashiva! Mrityunjaya! Tryambaka! Salutations to thee again and again!

Rishabha spoke:—In this manner, I have unfolded the Supreme Secret of Siva Kavacha which grants every boon and gratifies all desires and which relieves one from all pains and sufferings.

Always one, clad in this (Armour of Siva), is free from all fears, all dangers and downfall by His divine Grace.

One, released from chronic diseases and premature death, enjoys long life and Eternal Bliss!

This Armour (of Siva) strikes at the root of evil and elevates one to the lofty heights of Peace and Prosperity!

One, at his end, redeemed from all sins and obstacles, attains the blissful seat of Salvation by its mighty power.

Therefore my boy! wear this presented by

me with full faith, by which you will be very happy.

Suta said:—Having spoken thus sage Rishabha gave the prince a big conch and mighty sword with which he would be able to conquer his enemies in no time.

Then he sprinkled some holy ashes on his body and gave the magnetic touch which rendered him feel the strength of twelve thousand elephants.

Having obtained such strength, power and courage, the prince shone with the glory of Autumn Sun!

The Sage again told him:—This sword given by me is purified by sacred mantras, by whose mere sight the enemy will become lifeless. Death itself will be terrified and take to his heels.

Hearing the thundering sound of this conch, the enemies will fall down unconscious, with their weapons cast aside.

These are the two instruments which will destroy the opposing armies and encourage your own.

Clad in Siva's Armour, you will destroy your enemies with these two divine weapons. You will obtain your ancestral kingdom and become the sovereign ruler of this earth.

Consoling him thus, with all his blessings, the sage after receiving due respects and honours departed.

SARVALINGA STHAVA.

O Omkareshwara, Umamaheshwara,
Rameshwara, Triambakeshwara,
Mahabaleshwara, Mahakalishwara,
Mukteshwara,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Jambukeshwara, Kalahastishwara,
Tarakeshwara, Parmeshwara,
Narmadeshwara, Nageshwara, Nanjundesh-
wara,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Ardhanareeshwara, Kapaleeshwara,
Brihadeeshwara, Bhuvaneshwara,
Kumbheshwara,
Vriddhachaleshwara, Ekambareshwara,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kailasapate, Pashupate,
Gouripate, Parvatipate,
Umapate, Sivakamipate,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Vishwesha, Tyagesha, Sarvesha,
Sundaresha, Mahesha, Jagadisha,

Gushrunesha, Matribhutesha,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kailasanatha, Kasinatha,
Kedaranatha, Muktinatha,
Amaranatha, Pashupatinatha,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kasi Vishwanatha, Kanjinatha,
Somanatha, Baijnatha, Vaidyanatha,
Thunganatha, Trilokinatha,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kalabhairava, Tripurantaka,
Nilalohita, Harohara,
Siva, Shambho, Sankara, Sadashiva,
OM NAMA SIVAYA.

O Mahadeva, Mahakala,
Nilakantha, Nataraja, Chandrashekhara,
Chidambaresha, Papavimochaka,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Halasyasundara, Meenakshisundara,
Kalyanasundara, Kadambavanasundara,
Srisaila-vasa, Virabhadra,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Gouri Sankara, Gangadhara

Dakshinamurthi, Mrityunjaya,
Om Nama Bhagavate Rudraya,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Vaikkathappa, Thiruvoniappa,
Chittambala, Ponnambala,
Chitsabesha, Chidambaresha,
Om NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kamadahan, Brahmashiraschheda,
Kurma Matsya Varaha Samhara,
Virabhairava, Rishabharoodha,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Kalantaka Mallikarjuna,
Arunachala, Nandivahana,
Bhikshatana, Bhaktarakshaka,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Bhimashankara, Bhasmadhara,
Pannagabhooshana, Pinakadhari,
Trilochana, Trishoolapane,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Who can describe Thy glory O Hara!
Even Shruti says Neti Neti,
Thou art Supreme Brahman,
Thou art full of auspicious qualities,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

O Destroyer of Tripura,
My Silent adorations unto Thee,
Thou art Rudra, the destroyer,
Thou art bestower of Immortality,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Thy vehicle is the bull,
Tiger-skin is Thy garment,
Trident, Damaru, Axe,
Are Thy instruments,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA.

Snake is Thy ornament,
You are besmeared with ashes,
Ganges flows from Thy head,
Moon is Thy Choodamani,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA,

You incarnated as Dakshinamoorthy,
To initiate Sanak, Sanandan,
Sanatkumar and Sanatsujata,
Into the mysteries of Brahma Gyana,
Through silence and chinmudra,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Thy form speaks of renunciation,
Thou art embodiment of knowledge,
Thou art famous for Nritva.

Agada Bhum is Thy song,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

You assumed the form of light,
Brahma and Vishnu failed
To measure Thee,
Thou art Infinity and Eternity,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

You saved Markandeya, Manikkavasakar,
You blessed Kannappa, Thirunavlkkarasu,
Thirugnanasambandhar, Sundaresar,
Appar and Pattinathadiyar,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Thou art ocean of mercy,
Thou art giver of boons,
You blessed Arjuna and Bana,
You swallowed the poison,
And saved the world,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

You destroyed the Cupid,
Thou art the Father,
Of Ganesh and Subrahmanya,
You cut the head of proud Daksha,
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Tripurasundari, Rajarajeshwari,

Gouri, Chandi, Chamundi,
Durga, Annapoorna,
Are Thy Saktis
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Thy garland is strung of skulls,
Thy matted lock is the abode for Ganga,
Thou dwellest in the cremation ground,
Thy form is terrfble, thou art Mahakala,
Thou art Deathunto Death itself
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Thou art the greatest Devotee of Hari,
Thou wearest in Thy head the Ganges,
Which flows from Hari's feet,
You initiate the Rama Taraka Mantra
at Benares.
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Lord Rama worshipped Thee alone at,
Rameshwar,
You existed in sound as Sadashiva,
In the heart as Atmalinga,
In the Vedas as Pranava
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

O Hari! O Lord! O Siva!
Prostrations unto Thee again and again,

Let me remember Thee always,
Let me ever dwell in Thee
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

Make me desireless, Fearless and 'I' less,
Let me ever repeat Thy five letters,
Let me behold Thee everywhere,
Let me merge in Thee for ever
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

He who sings or repeats or hears this
Sarvalinga Sthava
Morning and evening with faith, devotion
and bhav
Will be freed from all sins and diseases,
Will attain son, wealth, prosperity,
Bhakti, Bhukti, Mukti.

ATTRIBUTES OF SIVA.

1. Adwaita, Akhanda, Akarta, Abhokta,
Asanga, Asakta, Nirguna, Nirlipta,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Non-dual, indivisible, non-doer, non-enjoyer,
Unattached, without qualities,
I am Siva (auspiciousness) I am Siva of the form of knowlege and bliss.

2. Avyakta, Ananta, Amrita, Ananda,
Achala, Amara, Akshara, Avyaya,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Unmanifested, endless, immortal, bliss,
Immovable, without impurities,
imperishable, inexhaustible,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of knowledge and bliss.

3. Asabdha, Asparsha, Arupa, Agandha,
Aprana, Amana, Atindriya, Adrishya,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Soundless, touchless, smell-less, form-less,
Without Prana, without mind, without senses, unseen,

I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

4. Satyam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram,
Kantam,
Sat-chit-ananda, Sampoorna, Sukha,
Santam,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Truth, auspiciousness, good, beautiful,
resplendent,
Existence, knowledge-bliss, all-full,
pure happiness, peaceful,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

5. Chetana, Chaitanya, Chidghana, Tanmaya,
Chidakasa, Chitmatra, Sanmatra, Tanmaya,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham, Sivoham.
Consciousness, mass of knowledge, full
of knowledge,
All-pervading like ether, conciousness
alone, existence alone, full of That,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the ferm of
knowledge and bliss.

6. Amala, Vimala, Nirmala, Achala,
Avang manogochara, Akshara, Nischala,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.

Pure, stainless, immoveable,
Beyond the reach of mind and speech,
imperishable, steady,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

7. Nitya, Nirupadhika, Niratisaya Ananda,
Nirakara, Hrimkara, Omkara, Kutastha,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Eternal, without attributes, supreme bliss,
Without form, Hrim and Om (Pranava),
rock-seated Self,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

8. Poorna, Para Brahma, Prajnana Ananda,
Sakshi, Drishta, Turiya, Vijnana Ananda,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
All-full, Paramatma, knowledge and bliss,
Witness, Seer, the fourth state, self-
knowledge, bliss,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.

9. Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Anandam,
Sat-chit-ananda, Swayam Jyoti Prakasa,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Truth, knowledge, endless, bliss,

Existence, knowledge, bliss, self-luminous,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

10. Kaivalya, Kevala, Kutastha, Brahma,
Shuddha, Siddha, Buddha, Sat-chit-ananda,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Immortality, alone, changeless, Self,
Pure, perfect, illumined, existence-
knowledge-bliss,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

11. Nirdosha, Nirmala, Vimala, Niranjana,
Nitya, Nirakara, Nirguna, Nirvikalpa,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Without defects, pure, spotless,
Eternal, formless, without qualities,
super-consciousness,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

12. Atma, Brahma Swaroopa, Chaitanya-
Purusha
Tejomaya, Ananda "Tat Twam Asi"
Lakshya,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
Self, supreme Self, consciousness,

Full of light, bliss, that which is indicated
by "TAT-TWAM-ASI
THOU ART THAT,"
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

13. 'Soham' 'Sivoham' 'Aham Brahma Asmi'
Mahavakya,
Shuddha, Sat-chit-ananda, Poorna Para
Brahma,
Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham.
'I am He', 'I am Siva' 'I am Brahman',
Pure, existence-knowledge-bliss, all-full Self,
I am Siva, I am Siva of the form of
knowledge and bliss.

THE SUBLIME VISION

I

The adorable Lord of All-bliss, all love, all mercy
The supreme light that shines in my heart
The Lord who fed Sambandhar and Appar
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The Great Ancient, the goal of Yogis
The Supreme Purusha that dwells in the Puri
The Adi Dev, whom the Vedas sing of
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The pillar of light which baffled Brahma and Vishnu
The ocean of mercy who saved Markandeya
The Lord of Madura whom the Pandya beat
Him I saw at the abode of Munis.

The supreme Teacher who taught the four
The Adi Dev who has assumed the five
Param, Vyuha, Vibhava, Archa and Antaryamin,
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The Lord who pervades the universe
The thread soul, the Sutratman,
The over-soul, the purport of Srutis
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The effulgence who is above the Three
Who exists even after the Pralaya
Who saved Kannappa and Sundarar
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis

He who drank the poison and saved the world,
He who danced at Chidambaram,
He who shines as the Jyotir Linga
Him I saw at the abode Rishis.

He who brought the jackal -horses to Pandya
He who gave pearl-palanquin to Sambandhar
He who is the essence of Panchakashara
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

He who dwells in Benares and Vedas,
In Rameswar, Arunachal and Kanchi
In the hearts of all beings
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

He who pleaded on behalf of Darumi
He who dwells in Kailas with Uma
He who restored the eye sight of Sundarar
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

II

The Lord who gave stick to blind Appar
The grace who begged alms for Sundarar
The Marga Bandhu who showed the way to Appayya Dixitar
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The mercy who took the message to Paravai,
The love who wrote the poem for Darumi
The fire that burnt Narkirar
Him I saw at the abode of Rishis.

The Lord who became a cooly at Madura
And carried earth for stopping the floods
For the sake of a little sweetmeat
Him I saw at the abode of bliss.

The Lord who created tank and garden for the devotee
Who became the slave of His devotees
Who sent the pearl palanquin to Sambandhar
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

The hunter who quarrelled with Arjuna
The untouchable who debated with Sankara
The groom who took the horses to Pandya
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

He who has Uma as his left side
Who is also Narayana of the milk ocean
Who is the child sleeping on the banian leaf
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

The Lord who is the Holiest, the oldest
Who is Jyoti within the Jyoti
Who is praised by the Devas and Rishis
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

He who is Ambalam in Chidambaram
Who is brilliance in Arunachalam
Who is the great thief hiding in forms
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

The Sadguru who reveals in the Chidakasa
Who breaks all the three bonds
Who leads the aspirants to the land of Moksha
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

The Lord who dwells in the Sahasrara
Who is the way, the goal and the centre,
Who is the truth in the Mahavakya
Him I saw at the abode of the Rishis.

OM

SONG OF LORD NATARAJA

Sivaya Namah Om Sivaya Namah,
Sivaya Namah Om Namah Sivaya.

O Lord Nataraja! of Chidambaram,
King Dancer of Thillai Ambalam,
Beloved consort of Sivakami Sundara,
Bhuvaneshwari, Raja Raja Ishwari,
Destroyer of Sin, Bestower of prosperity,
Remover of suffering, Giver of Immortality,

Sivaya Namah Om Sivaya Namah,
Sivaya Namah Om Namah Sivaya,

Holder of Trident, Drinker of Poison,
Master of Yogi, Ruler in the Sun,
Dweller in Kailas, Rider of Nandi,
Destroyer of Cupid, Lord of Siddhi,
The Three-eyed Lord, the five-faced God,
The blue-necked God, the God of Gods.

Sivaya Namah Om Sivaya Namah,
Sivaya Namah Om Namah Sivaya,

Thou art my Guru and sole-refuge,
Salutations unto thee O Lord of Mercy,
Bless me with Thy shower of Grace,
Let me behold Thy benign face,
Let me merge in thee for ever,
This is my real fervent prayer.
Sivaya Namah Om Sivaya Namah,
Sivaya Namah Om Namah Sivaya.

INTRODUCTION

Om. I bow with folded hands to Lord Siva, who is the Lord of the universe (Jagat Pati), world's teacher (Jagat Guru), who is the destroyer of Tripura (3 cities, egoism, lust and anger), who is the Lord of Uma (Uma Sankar), Guard (Gauri Sankar), Ganga (Ganga Sankar), who is full of light (Jyotirmaya), knowledge and bliss (Chidananda Maya), who is the Lord of Yogins (Yogeshwara), who is the storehouse of knowledge and who is known by various names as Mahadeva, Sankara, Hara, Samboo, Sadasiva, Rudra, Soolapani, Bhairava, Uma Maheshawara, Neelakanta, Trilochana (the three-eyed), Triambhak (the three faced), Viswanath, Chandrasekhara, Ardhanarishwara, Maheshwara, Neela-lohita, Parama Siva, Digambara, Dakshinamurthi, etc.

How merciful He is! How loving and kind He is! He even wears the skulls of His devotees as a garland in His neck. He is an embodiment of renunciation, mercy, love and wisdom. It is a mistake to say that He is the destroyer. Lord Siva in reality is the regenerator. Whenever one's physical body becomes unfit for further evolution in this birth either by disease, old age or other causes, He at once removes this rotten physical sheath and gives a new, healthy, vigorous body for further quick evolution. He wants to take all His children to His Lotus Feet quickly. He

desires to give them His glorious "Siva-Pada." It is easier to please Siva than Hari. A little Prem and devotion, a little chanting of His Panchakshara is quite sufficient to infuse delight in Siva. He gives boons to His devotees quite readily. How large is His heart! He gave Pasupatastra to Arjuna without any difficulty for his little penance. He gave a precious boon to Bhasmasura. In Kalahasti near Tirupati He gave Darshan for Kannppanyanar, the devoted hunter who plucked his two eyes to replace the weeping eyes in the Murti. In Chidambaram even the untouchable Pariah saint, Nandan had Darshan of Lord Siva. He ran with tremendous speed to make the boy Markhandeya immortal when he was in the clutches of the God of Death-Yama. Ravana of Lanka pleased Siva with his Sama chantings. He initiated the four virgin youths Sanak, Sanandhan, Sanathan and Sanatkumara into the mysteries of Gyana in the form of Guru Dakshinamoorthy. In Madura, in southern India, Sundareshwara (Lord Siva) assumed the form of a boy and carried earth on his head for a devoted lady for the sake of Puttu (a kind of sweetmeat) as wages when an anicut was erected in the Vaigai river. Look at the unbounded mercy for His devotees. When Brahma and Lord Vishnu went to find out the head and feet of Lord Siva, He assumed an infinite, expansive blaze of light (Jyotirmaya-Swaroop). They were baffled in their attempts. How magnanimous and self-effulgent He is. He lived in the house of Pattinattu Swami in southern India for several

years as his adopted son and disappeared after giving him the small note: "Even the broken needles will not follow you after your death." The reading of this note was the starting point for attainment of Gyana for Pattinattu Swami. Why not you all attempt this very second with sincerity to realise God (Lord Siva) ?

Hatha Yogins awaken the Kundalini Shakti that is lying dormant in the Muladhara Chakra by Asana, Pranayama, Kumbhak, Mudra and Bandha, take it above through different Chakras (centres of spiritual energy)—Swadhishthana, Manipura, Anahat, Vishudda and Ajna and join it with Lord Siva at the Sahasrara, the thousand-petalled lotus at the crown of the head. They drink the nectar of Immortality (Siva-Jnana-amritam). This is termed Amritasrava. When the Shakti is united with Siva full illumination comes for the Yogi.

Lord Siva represents the destructive aspect of Brahman. That portion of Brahman that is enveloped by Tamo-Guna-pradhana-Maya is Lord Siva who is the all-pervading Ishwara and who also dwells in Mount Kailas. He is the Bhandar or store-house for wisdom. Siva minus Parvathi or Kali or Durga is pure Nirguna Brahman. With Maya (Parvathi) He becomes the Saguna Brahman for the purpose of pious devotion of His devotees. Devotees of Rama must worship Lord Siva also. Rama Himself worshipped Lord Siva at the famous Rameshwaram. Lord Siva is the

Lord of Ascetics and Lord of Yogins robed in space (Digambara).

His Trisul (trident) that is held in his right hand represents the three Gunas—Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas, That is the emblem of sovereignty. He rules the world through these three Gunas. The Damaru in his left hand represents the Sabdha Brahman. It represents OM from which all languages are formed. It is He who formed the Sanskrit language out of the Damaru sound.

The wearing of the crescent moon in His head indicates that He has controlled the mind perfectly. The flow of the Ganges represents the nector of immortality. Elephant represents symbocially the Vritti, pride. Wearing the skin of the elephant denotes that He has controlled pride. Tiger represents lust. His sitting on the tiger's skin indicates that he has conquered lust. His holding a deer on one hand indicates that He has removed the Chanchalata (tossing) of the mind. Deer jumps from one place to another swiftly. The mind also jumps from one object to another. His wearing of serpents on the neck denotes wisdom and eternity. Serpents live for a large number of years. He is Trilochana, the three-eyed One, in the centre of whose forehead is the third eye, the eye of wisdom. Nandi, the bull that sits in front of Sivalingam, represents Pranava (Omkara). The Lingam represents Adwaita. It points out "I am one without a second. Ekam eva Adwaetiyam," just

as a man raises his right hand above his head pointing out his right index-finger only.

Kailas hills in Thibet are a huge range with a central, beautiful, naturally carved and decorated shining peak, eternally clad with silvery snow 22,980 feet above sea-level. Some take the height to be 22,028 feet. This particular peak is in the form of a natural, huge Siva Linga (Virat form). This is worshipped as the form of Lord Siva from a distance. There is neither a temple nor a Poojari nor a daily Pooja there. I had the fortune to have Darshan of Kailas through the grace of Lord Siva on July 22, 1931. I even climbed with panting breath to the foot of Kailas peak where the Indus takes its origin. It is a very picturesque, soul-stirring scenery. You will have to ascend from Didipha Guha, the first halting stage in Parikrama of Kailas. The Indus gushes out as a small streamlet through blocks of ice from behind the back portion of Kailas peak. Though in the pictures of Lord Siva it is shown that the Ganges flows from His head, it is really the Indus that takes its origin from the head of Siva (Kailas) in the physical plane. Parikrama of Kailas covers 30 miles. It takes three days. On the way comes the famous and sacred Gauri Kund which is eternally covered with snow. You will have to break the snow when you take a bath.

The Name of Lord Siva chanted in any way correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknow-

ingly, carefully or carelessly is sure to give the desired result. The glory of the Name of Lord Siva cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can certainly be experienced or realised only through devotion, faith and constant repetition of the Name and singing His hymns with Bhava. Every Name is filled with countless potencies or Saktis. The power of the Name is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. The efficiency and inherent Sakti of the Name of Lord Siva are unfathomable.

The mind is purified by constant repetition of Siva Stotra and Names of Lord Siva. The Stotras are filled with good and pure thoughts. Repetition of the hymns to Siva strengthens the good Samskaras. "As a man thinks, that he becomes." This is the psychological law. The mind of a man who trains himself in thinking good, holy thoughts, develops a tendency to think of good thoughts. His character is moulded and transformed by continued good thought. When the mind thinks of the image of the Lord during His hymns, the mental substance actually assumes the form of the image of the Lord. The impression of the object is left in the mind. This is called Samskara. When the act is repeated very often, the Samskaras gain strength by repetition, and a tendeney or habit is formed in the mind. He who entertains thoughts of Divinity becomes transformed actually into the Divinity himself by constant thinking. His Bhava or disposition

is purified and divinised. When one sings the hymns of Lord Siva, he is in tune with the Lord. The individual mind melts in the cosmic mind. He who sings the hymns becomes one with Lord Siva.

Just as fire has the natural property of burning inflammable things, so also the Name of Lord Siva has the power of burning the sins, Samskaras and Vasanas and bestowing eternal bliss and everlasting peace on those who repeat the Name of the Lord.

Just as burning quality is natural and inherent in fire, so also the power of destroying sins with their very root and branch and bringing the aspirant into blissful union with the Lord through Bhava Samadhi is natural and inherent in the Name of God.

O friends! Take refuge in the name of Siva, Sing His hymns. Nami and Name are inseparable. Sing Lord Siva's hymns incessantly. Remember the Name of the Lord with every incoming and outgoing breath. In this Iron Age Nama Smaran or singing the hymns is the easiest, quickest, safest and surest way to reach God and attain Immortality and perennial joy. Glory to Lord Siva! Glory to his Name!!

Ravana propititated Lord Siva by his hymns. Pushpadanta pleased Lord Siva by his celebrated Stotra-Siva Mahimna Stotra-which is even now sung by all devotees of Siva throughout India,

and obtained all Aiswarya or Siddhis and Mukti. The glory of the Stotras of Siva is indescribable. You must all sing the hymns of Lord Siva and obtain His grace and salvation not in the unknown future, but right now in this very second. You can please Lord Siva easily. Fast on the Sivaratri day. If you cannot do this, take milk and fruits. Keep perfect vigil the whole night and sing His Stotras, and repeat OM Namah Sivaya. May the blessings of Lord Siva be upon you all!

OM Santi! Santi!! Santi!!!

CHAPTER I

1. THE DIVINE LIFE

Man has forgotten his inherent nature on account of ignorance and so he is tossed about hither and thither in the ocean of this Samsara by the two currents of Raga and Dwesha—like and dislike. He is not leading the Divine Life and therefore he has become a slave of his senses, passion and impulses. He vainly searches for his happiness in perishable objects that are conditioned in time, space and causation and therefore he has no peace of mind. The musk deer does not know that the fragrance of musk is emanating from its own navel. It wanders about here and there to find out the source of this smell. Even so the deluded ignorant man is not aware of the fountain of bliss within himself, in the immortal Atma or soul and he is running after the external perishable objects to get happiness.

You can have permanent peace, if you turn your mind from the objective universe and live in the divine within your heart. You can be free from cares, worries, anxieties, fear, delusion doubt, etc., only if you lead a Divine Life by getting purity of heart and concentration of mind. Divine Life is not possible without purity of heart. Concentration, meditation and communion are not attainable without Chitta

Suddhi. They are attainable through constant and protracted selfless service.

People are thirsting for spiritual ideas, and contact with evolved souls The materialistic West also is tired of money and power. They do not find any solace here. They are directing slowly their attention towards the quest of God and search of Mahatmas. They visit India in search of Satgurus and Yogins.

Blessed is he who is tired of this tormenting, degenerating materialistic life and who longs to lead a Divine Life; twice blessed is he who has dispassion and discrimination, who goes to Mahatmas to have Satsangh, and gets advice and tries to lead a Divine Life; thrice blessed is he who lives in God always, who feels the Divine Presence everywhere, in every face, in every motion, in every feeling, in every sentiment and in every atom or electron.

2. GOD DOES EXIST

You feel: "I exist". This itself clearly proves that God exists. Existence is God or Self or Atma or Brahman. When you feel that you exist, it is another way of putting that God exists. In Vedanta there is only One Invisible Being and that is Brahman, and that you are. You are yourself God and you have to feel it. If you cast off duality, you will understand the right significance of Aham Brahma Asmi. According to Vedanta, the individual soul is not part and parcel of the Supreme but the Supreme Itself. To live the life of a true Vedantin is to

rightly understand this aspect of the teaching and put it into practice. It is only dualism that says that the individual soul is part and parcel of the whole (Supreme Soul) or one subordinate to it.

The insentient engine of a railway train cannot move without the intelligent driver working at it. The analogy of the engine is very appropriate. Just as the engine cannot move without the help of the driver at his work, so also this body will not move without the existence of the intelligent driver or soul within it. Body does not grow without life. Life is the term applied in common parlance for God or Ishwara. A lifeless body putrifies very soon. There is decay and no growth in it. If the body is a self-growing entity, without the soul it must be able to work.

The existence of Brahman or the Self is indicated by the existence of the Upadhis or limiting adjuncts. These limiting adjuncts are not found in the body which is lifeless. These cannot work though the body is visible with all parts in perfect order. The Self-conscious and unifying centre which is man's real being is God or the Soul.

The Bhakta says: "As Thou art the Soul of all, Lord of all beings, what shall I speak unto Thee, as Thou knowest everything in my mind, being seated in the hearts of all beings." This is the outpouring from his heart. It is the song of a devotee and not of a Vedantin. A devotee sees duality for his desire is to see God not in

himself but outside himself, though he is concious of the fact that God is within him. Hence he says :—being seated in the heart of all beings. This approach to God is quite different from the Vedantin's method.

God cannot be demonstrated through a laboratorical test. His existence can be proved only by denying all other attributes, such as names and forms. God is abstract and hence He cannot be defined. He is not void. He is like ether, all-pervading. One cannot deny the existence of ether because it cannot be seen with the naked eyes. In the same way we cannot deny the existence of God, because He cannot be seen or heard through our physical organs.

A certain lady had a fall from the third storey. Underneath there was a bed of sharp angular stones. She would have received serious injuries but she was miraculously saved—She herself expressed : " I felt the warm embrace of some invisible hands : some mysterious power saved me." This may read like fiction. To some it may look like pure chance To those who believe in the existence of God, it is nothing else than Truth. It is not necessary that at every such happening there must be the hand of God giving the help. This is one such instance where God helped miraculously.

It is futile to argue that miracles do not happen or that He does not come to the assistance of the true devotee. Swami Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was asked why he should not turn

his mind towards the curing of his own disease. He gave the reply that his work was over and that he would not take the mind which was fixed on His Mother Kali back to his body. One should not argue that God does not exist and if He did exist he would have saved Swami Ramakrishna from the deadly disease of cancer or Swami Ramtirtha from drowning. Great men never identified themselves with their physical body. They never cured their own diseases but suffered patiently. They worked not miracles for their own sake.

The theory of Karma proves the law of the existence of God. People generally feel that their longevity might be increased by certain methods of living etc. This is mere wishful thinking. None can live more than what he has to live according to the fruits of his own past actions, or Karma. A strong man dies suddenly for no cause, and the doctor diagnoses the cause as sudden stoppage of heart. Why should the heart stop suddenly when it is completely alright, strong and vigorous? None can answer this. His Prarabdha or the fruit of Karma of the past has ceased to exist. Hence, his life comes to an end for the present.

"Lord Hari constantly resides where His devotees sing with devotion from the bottom of their hearts. They sing nothing but in Hari Nam, the Name of Lord Hari." This is truly an outpouring of feeling. The Bhakta feels that Lord Hari is always at that place where His Bhaktas sing His Name. An instance from the life of Saint Tukaram may be quoted here. Once

Tukaram was holding a Ratna and singing: Vithal, Vithal. All the assembled got tired of the singing of one single name and went away. But a poor man who had spread his Kambal on the ground and over which Tukaram was dancing in his ecstacy was the only one left behind. Tukaram who was during the whole Kirtan seeing the Lord dancing in front of him took the poor man sitting at his feet as the only true dovotee. Such instances are not rare. They do not deny the Omnipresent nature of the Lord. The idea is that the Lord always is at that place where He is remembered.

3. GLORY OF RIGHT GONDUCT

A man who has attained ethical perfection by the continued practice of Right Conduct or Yama and Niyama has got a magnetic personality. He can influence millions. Character gives a strong personality to man. People respect a man who has good character. Moral people command respect everywhere. He who is honest, sincere, truthful, kind and liberal-hearted always commands respect and influence at the hands of all people. Sattwic virtues make a man divine. He who speaks truth and practises Brahmacharya becomes a great dynamic personality. Even if he speaks a word there is power in it and people are magnetised. Character-building is of paramount importance if a man wants to develop personality. No development of a strong personality is possible without celibacy.

A man may die but his character survives. His thoughts remain. It is the character that

gives real force and power to man. Character is power. Without character the attainment of knowledge is impossible. That man who has no character is practically a dead man in this world. He is ignored and despised by the society. If you want success in life, if you want to influence others, if you want to progress well in the spiritual path, if you wish to have God-realisation, you must possess an unblemished or spotless character. The character of a man survives or outlives him. Shri Sankara, Buddha, Jesus and other Rishis of yore are remembered even now because they had wonderful character. Character is a mighty soul-force. It is like sweet flower that wafts its fragrance far and wide. A man of noble traits, good character possesses a tremendous personality. Personality is character only. A person may be a skilful artist, clever singer, an able poet or a great scientist, but *if he has no character has no real position in the society*,

You must be polite, civil and courteous. You must treat others with respect and consideration. "Good manners and soft words have brought many difficult things to pass". He who gives respect to others, gets respect Humility is a virtue that subdues the hearts of others. A man of humflity is a powerful magnet or a loadstone.

Note carefully how our ancient Rishis gave instructions to their students when they had finished their course of study. "Speak truth. Do not neglect the study of Vedas. Do not

swerve from truth and duty. Do not neglect welfare and prosperity. Do not neglect the learning and teachings of Vedas. Do not neglect the duties towards God and forefathers. May the mother be thy God. (मातृ देवो भव) May the father be thy God. (पितृ देवो भव) May the preceptor be thy God. (आचार्य देवो भव). Do such actions as are blameless and not harmful to others. Those Brahmans that are superior to us should be comforted by thee with seats, etc. Give with faith. Do not give without faith. Give with joy, with modesty, with fear, with kindness".

Righteousness is eternal. Do not leave the path of righteousness even if your life is in danger. Do not leave righteousness for the sake of some material gain. A virtuous life and a clean conscience give great deal of comfort to a man while living and at the time of his death also. A holy man with piety is far superior to a mighty potentate. God is much pleased with a pious man. Lord Krishna says, "Even if the most sinful worshippeth Me, with undivided heart, he too must be accounted righteous, for he hath rightly resolved". There is great hope even for a cutthroat, if he makes a strong determination and takes up the spiritual path.

Do your duties in a satisfactory manner in accordance with Sadachara. Apply yourselves diligently to all kinds of your daily duties. Consult the Shastras and Mahatmas whenever you are in doubt. Build up your character. This will give you success in life. Struggle hard daily to remove old evil habits.

Establish daily virtuous healthy habits. Character will help you to attain the goal of life. Character is your very being. Struggle hard to practice Sadachara. Stick to Sadachara with leech-like tenacity. Practise it and realise Sat-chit-ananda state right in this very second.

4. MODERN MIND AND MAN

Modern man wants scientific proofs and laboratory tests for the existence of God. Modern man wants everything in terms of science. He argues in the light of science. He has no faith in the sacred utterances of the ancient Rishis of India, in the Upanishads, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Gita, in the efficacy of Lord's name and Yogic practices, Kirtan, Prayer, etc. If any scientist brings forward any theory, he at once takes it as gospel-truth, because it is scientific. Such is the nature of the modern mind and modern man.

All secular sciences have got their own limitations. A scientist works in the physical plane with a finite mind and with instruments. He knows the physical laws. He has some knowledge of the elements, atoms and physical energy. His knowledge is fragmentary. He has no experience of the whole. He has no knowledge of transcendental or super-sensual things.

"Kasmin nu bhagavo vijnate sarvam idam vijnatam bhavati"—O Lord, what is that by knowing which everything else becomes known? It is Brahma Vidya. This is the enquiry of a student of Brahma-Vidya.

Brahma Vidya is the science of sciences. The knower of Brahma-Vidya or the Science of Brahman or the Absolute knows everything. His knowledge is full. He has the whole experience through intuition or revelation. Take your firm seat on the rock-bottom of the Upanishadic truths and accept the findings of science only if they tally with the Upanishadic truths. Otherwise reject them ruthlessly.

The mind of a scientist cannot work in higher spiritual planes. It is gross and impure. It has outgoing tendencies. It is filled with Vasanas, rajas and wordly samskaras. He cannot look within, introspect and meditate. He can analyse the atoms of different elements, he cannot do self-analysis. He can bombard atoms, watch the movement of the electrons and make discoveries in nature.

But the mind of a Rishi or a Yogi is subtle and pure. It is free from worldly Vasanas and rajas, selfishness, lust, hatred etc. It is equipped with the instructions of the Srutis and sages. It is filled with Sattva. It is free from out-going tendencies. It is fit for divine contemplation. It is properly disciplined in a variety of ways, through rigorous Tapas and self-restraint. The Yogi undergoes a discipline-a rare discipline—Sama, Dama, Yama, Niyama etc., which cannot be had in the universities.

The scientist observes the physical phenomena, makes experiments and goes from the effects to the cause. The Rishi or the Yogi directly goes to the Cause or the Source. He

dives deep into the source and brings the pearl of Knowledge of the Self. The man of science sees and observes things only as they appear to be etc his sense perception. The seer perceives them as they actually are in their very essential nature. He has direct intuition, perception of the Truth through Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Then he comes to the effect, the manifested universe. Therefore his utterances are infallible. They are gospel-truths. The Srutis of the Upanishad are direct revelations. They are Apta-vakyas or infallible utterances of the seers or sages. They are beyond questioning, or the least shadow of doubt.

When the Yogi attains knowledge of the Eternal, he acquires knowledge of all secular sciences, because all sciences are hanging on Brahma-jnana. If you have knowledge of clay or thread or gold, you will have knowledge of all modifications of clay, thread and gold etc.

Those who have fallen into the clutches of science, dislike Sandhya, prayer; neglect study of Gita, japa, kirtan, meditation. Even if there is study-class, discours on Upanishads, common prayer and meditation in the neighbouring hall, they continue their smoking, drinking, card-playing, carrom in the next room. They are busy with the raffle-tickets, ranger tickets, worthless talks and gossipping. What a sad, deplorable state!

A business man advertises about his specialities. There is a motive behind this. He wants money and name. But the ancient Rishis had

no motive in giving their precious instructions. The Rishis cared for the well-being of the suffering humanity. They were an embodiment of mercy and love. They lived to serve the people. They placed their experiences for the spiritual uplift and the final-emancipation of mankind. The whole world is under a great debt of gratitude to them. You cannot repay the debts even in millions of births.

You are ready to purchase shares in a company. You strive your level best to amass money. You are ready to cross the seas to get degrees or diplomas. You spend much of your time in hotels, clubs, restaurants, picture-palaces. Are you really happy now? Has science really contributed to your peace and happiness? You have already witnessed the horrors of the war, the horrors of the bombs, the result of scientific discoveries. You are very restless, your life has become very complex. You cannot live without a radio, without elecricity. Living has become very very expensive. Have you realised your folly now? You have lost the power of discrimination between the real and the unreal as you are immersed in the mire of worldliness.

O Ignorant man! Wake up now at least! Even if you have spent a few minutes in meditation, japa, kirtan, study of religious books, you would have become a saintly man by this time. Find out the way now at least to get rid of fear of death, pain, diseases, suffering. Stop the wheel of births and death. Give up unnecessary arguing. Have implicit faith in the Upan-

ishads and the instructions of the ancient Rishis. Move in the company of sages. Be regular in japa, kirtan, meditation, study of Gita. Be sincere.

Regain back the lost Kingdom of Eternal Bliss and Supreme Peace! Attain Immortality through purity, devotion, self-analysis, enquiry and meditation. Never delay a moment.

5. INNER PEACE

Real deeper peace is independent of external conditions. Real abiding peace is stupendous stillness of the Immortal soul within. If you can rest yourself in this ocean of Peace, all the usual noises of the world can hardly affect you. If you enter the silence or the wonderful calm of divine peace by stilling the bubbling mind and restraining the thoughts and withdrawing the outgoing senses, all disturbing noises will die away. Motor cars may roll on the streets, boys may shout at the pitch of their voices, railway trains may run in front of your house, several mills may be working in your neighbourhood and yet all these noises will not disturb you even a bit.

If you wish to enter into the Great Peace of God all the worldly desires must die, all the senses should be brought under your perfect control and the mind should be stilled.

Rich people possess immense wealth. They have all sorts of comforts, easy circumstances

and easy going life. They have decent motor cars, beautiful bungalows, etc. They take dainties and palatable dishes and go to hill stations during summer. And yet they have no peace of mind because they have no inner harmony. There is discord in their hearts on account of their greed, selfishness, egoism, lust, pride, hatred, anger, fear, worry, etc. Outward harmony and quietness cannot give you real peace of mind. The peace of God is an internal state. You can have it without the help of money and outward favourable circumstances. You may have sorrows, and yet you may enjoy the inward harmony and peace, if you rest in God by withdrawing the senses, by stilling the mind and eradicating the impurities of the mind. Lord Jesus was persecuted in a variety of ways. He was put to death in the cross and yet what did he say? He said "O Lord, forgive them. They know not what they are doing." How peaceful he was even when his life was at stake! He was enjoying the inner peace. No tribulation or calamity could touch him.

The man who cannot fix his mind in meditation cannot have knowledge of the Self. The unsteady man cannot practise any meditation. He cannot have any intense devotion to knowledge of the Self or any burning longing for liberation or Moksha. He who does not practise any meditation cannot possess peace of mind. How can there be happiness for the unpeaceful?

Desire or Trishna (thirsting for objects) is the enemy of peace. There cannot be any iota

or tinge of happiness for a man who is thirsting for sensual object. The mind will be ever restless and will be hankering after the objects. When this thirsting dies, man enjoys peace. Only he can meditate and rest himself in the Self.

When you behold the objects of the senses the mind enters the objects. When you do not perceive the objects, the objects enter the mind. You find it very difficult to free yourself from the clutches of sensual objects. But if you remain as a Sakshi or silent witness you will not be affected by them. Therefore cultivate the Sakshi bhav and remain as a witness of the vrittis or waves of the mind. You will enjoy the Peace of the Eternal.

The Self-controlled man, moving among objects with senses under restraint and free from attraction and repulsion attains to peace. The mind and the senses are naturally endowed with the two currents of attraction and repulsion. Therefore the mind and the senses like certain objects and dislike certain other objects. But the disciplined man moves among senses-objects with a mind and senses free from attraction and repulsion mastered by Self, attains to the peace of the Eternal. The disciplined man has a very strong will. Therefore the senses and the mind obey his will. The disciplined man takes only those objects which are quite necessary for the maintenance of the body without any love or hatred. He never takes those objects which are forbidden by the Shastras.

In that Peace all pains are destroyed; for the intellect of the tranquil-minded soon becomes steady. When the mental peace is attained, there is no hankering after sense objects. The Yogi has perfect mastery over his reason. The intellect abides in the Self. It is quite steady. The miseries of the body and the mind come to an end.

If you yourself are in possession of peace you will be able to radiate it to others. You must lead a life of peace. You must live in it. You must feel it. You must establish it in your own heart. Then only you will be a blessing to the world. Wherever you go those who come in contact with you be affected will by your spiritual vibrations. They will be inspired and elevated. In your sweet presence all discordant vibrations will disappear; all quarrels will come to an end. All jarring noises will be transmuted into sweet melodious music. In your presence irritable people and sickly people will get new strength, fresh hope, and wonderful joy.

Develop universal love. This will help you to live peacefully with all men and all creatures. Love and peace are inseparable. Wherever there is love there is peace and wherever there is peace there is love.

When you sit for meditation in the morning, send out your love and peace to all living beings. Say "Sarvesham Santir bhavatu" May Peace be unto all; "Sarvesham Swashi bhavatu" May auspiciousness be unto all; "Sarvesham Poornam bhavatu" May fulness be unto all; "Sarvesham

Mangalam bhavatu" May prosperity be unto all; "Lokah Samastha sukhino bhavantu" May happiness be unto the whole world.

Om Santi! Santi! Santi;

Om Peace! Peace! Peace.

6. THE ONLY WARLESS KINGDOM

The Swaroopa or essential nature of Maya is Raga Dwesha, like and dislikes. The Swaroopa of mind is Raga Dwesha. The Swaroopa of the world is Raga Dwesha. So there must be war in this world.

War is a product of ignorance, Rajas and Tamas. This world abounds in Rajasic and Tamasic men and women. So there must be war in this world.

War is a necessary evil. It cannot be stopped on this earth as it is a plane of three Gunas. You can only reduce or minimise it.

Nations learn many lessons in a war. A new order, a new era of enlightenment and culture follow the war. Proud nations are humbled. Excess of population is removed.

Even if there is no mechanical warfare between nations, there will be civil war. You cannot stop this.

The inner war is going on and will continue for ever. This is the greatest war.

Then there are the holy wars, crusades, fights, and bloodshed which are necessary sometimes for the spread of the faith. You can well remem-

ber now the holy wars between the Iranians and the Turanians in 601 B. C. The prophet of Iran thought that for the spread of his faith holy wars were necessary. Even in heaven there is the war between the Devas or the Suras and the Asuras.

There are also wars between Vaishnavites and Saivites, Samajists and Sanatanists, dualists and non-dualists, Bhaktas and Vedantins, Roman Catholics and Protestants, Hindus and Mohammedans, Englishmen and Germans, orthodox people and non-orthodox men, Pundits and Sannyasins.

There is war in the Kumbhamela between the Nagas and the Vairagis, Sannyasins and Vairagis. There is war between the Mandaleswars for the position of Mahamandaleswarship and the first raised seat, the first distribution of Prasad, first Arathi and first garlanding.

There is war between Sadhus while taking Bhiksha. There is war between the Sadhus and Kshethra authorities There is war in the the Ashrams where there is a mixture of different kinds of persons. There is war amidst Agnihotris, sastris, Pundits, Dixits in the Yagna pandals where sacrifices are conducted. There is war where car festivals are held, There is war amongst Pandas and Yatris in places of pilgrimage in Badrinath, Kedarnath etc. There is war between devotees for darshan in the Badri and Kedar temples.

There was war in the Rajasuya Yagna of Yudhistira. Lord Krishna killed Sisupala in

this war. There is war in Nature between wind and fire, wind and water. There is war even in the forest between the beasts. There is the war between dogs and dogs, monkeys and monkeys, birds and birds and amongst men and men.

There is fight between a Rajasic and Tamasic man. There is fight between a Rajasic man and a Rajasic man. But there is no fight between a Satvic man and a Rajasic or Tamasic man. The Satvic man avoids a war through his own discrimination. He conquers the Rajasic and Tamasic man through love.

Wherever there are Durvasa and Narada there are wars. But these wars are conducive to human welfare and the well-being of the world. Always some supreme good will be the outcome of such wars created by Durvasa and Narada. Durvasa was styled as Krodha Bhattarka, the wrathful sire. He had a choleric temper. He cursed Sakuntala and fell foul of Ambarisha. But he was no more wrathful than Narada as aninciter of quarrels. His anger, like Narada's incitements was but to purify the soul and bring it into the presence of God.

There is war daily in the house between husband and wife, brothers and sisters, father and son, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. There is war between friends and friends on account of selfish interests.

There is war in the Congress Pandal between the delegates and the President. There is the war in the legislative assembly and the legislative council. There is war between the capitalists

and the labour party. There is war amongst medical practitioners, Mahants of temples, solicitors. There is war in every business undertaking. There is war between different castes, creeds, communities and religionists. There is war in the office between the deputy and the assistant, the head clerk and the office superintendent. Wherever you go there is the same lower human, diabolical nature. Man carries his own Samskaras, Vasanas, thoughts, cravings even to the caves of the Himalayas. You will find Ragadwesh in the origin of the Ganges, in Badrikashram and Uttarkasi in the Himalayas. You will have to create your own Sattvic divine atmosphere by regular Japa, Kirtan, meditation, study of scriptures. These new divine Samskaras will protect you. They will serve you as a coat of arms to prevent the formidable attacks of dark, evil forces. Without knowing this secret aspirants and other ignorant people wander from place to place in search of solitude and congenial environments.

There were wars in every Yuga. In Kali Yuga Adharma increases. The number of Rajasic and Tamasic people is more in Kaliyuga. So there will be constant menace of the war. But when Kritayuga dawns Lord Kalki will put down Adharma with his own Maya. Sattva will reign supreme and there will be peace and prosperity everywhere.

There is war when Rajas and Tamas are on the increase. War will disappear when Sattva predominates in the nature of men. There is

no Sattva in wild beasts and animals, So they fight with one another from the time of birth to the time of death. There is very little difference between Rajasic men and beasts. But man has little commonsense and discrimination. He stops his war when he is utterly defeated and starts the warfare when he gains little strength.

But there cannot be any war among real sages or Jiwanmuktas, real Bhaktas and real Yogis, who are perfectly free from Ragadwesha. The seeds of Ragadwesha are burnt in them in toto through Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

There is no war among pure Sattvic souls. The only warless place is the nondual Brahman or the Absolute, where there is none to fight. Who is to fight with whom? Here there are no Ragadwesha, jealousy, selfishnes. Here alone you can enjoy everlasting peace of the immortal soul. Realise this wonderful Atma and be ever free and peaceful.

May you all enter the kingdom of peace the only warless abode: This abode lies within you. May you realise That and be free!!

7. PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL

Good and evil are matters of personal whim only. They are relative terms. What is good for one is evil for another. What is good at one time becomes evil at another time. What is good for one Varna or Ashrama, caste or order of life, is evil for another varna or ashrama.

Good and evil are only human ways of looking at things. From the Absolute view-point there is no such thing as evil; everything is as it ought to be. There is neither good nor evil from the transcendental point of view.

Evil also is negative good. Good often cometh out of evil. A heavy storm is an evil but it sweeps away germs and dust and makes the place healthy. Evil exists to glorify good. Good and evil are mental creation. Good and evil are the obverse and reverse sides of the same coin or thing. Evil can be transmuted into good. Then the whole world will be a paradise. For a sage there is no evil on this earth.

People expect that this world must contain good and good alone. How could this be ? There cannot be only absolute good on this earth. You will find absolute good in Brahman or the Eternal One. This is a world of opposites. This is a world of three gunas.

If there is absolute good on this earth, people will be quite satisfied with mundane life. They will never attempt for the final emancipation or Moksha, the state of Supreme Good !

According to Christianity, Satan is the Lord of evil. According to Zoroastrianism Angra Mainyush is the Lord of evil. Satan and Angra Mainyush work for the downfall of man. But they can be destroyed by spiritual power and meditation. Zoroaster attacked Angra Mainyush and obtained victory over him. Lord Buddha conquered Mara through his power of Yoga. All the saints have conquered the tempting evil forces. The Devas put obstacles on the spiritual path of Yogic students. You all know how the sage Uddalaka was tempted by Satan. He subdued all temptations through his power of meditation.

Some ignorant persons put the question. "If God is really all-powerful, why does He tolerate so much evil and sin on earth? If His nature admits of evil, then the existence of evil is due to some other agency. If such an agent exists, as can give birth to evil in spite of God, surely we have a definite limitation of God's power."

This is a mistake. Evil in this world cannot bring limitation to God. He is above good and evil. Good and evil cannot touch Him in the least. The products of jugglery cannot affect the juggler. The defects in the eye cannot affect the sun, the presiding deity of the eyes. Akasha or ether cannot be affected by the thing which it holds. The poison cannot affect the cobra. Even so good and evil, which are the products of Maya, cannot affect in the least the Lord of Maya. God is the Lord of Maya. He has Maya under His control.

Evil also is a manifested aspect of the Lord. Lord Krishna says "I am the gambling of the cheat." Lord Siva is the Lord of thieves— "Taskaranam Pataye".

May you all understand the nature of good and evil and reach Brahman or the Absolute, a Place which is above good and evil.

8. SEEK THE DIVINE LIGHT

Aspirants after material wealth, worldly success, prosperity and power plan and direct their lives in the manner best suited for the achievement of their ambitions. They strain to their utmost in getting success and crowning themselves with glory. Eagerly and earnestly they long to appear in the eyes of others as men of high position and vast possessions. Everybody be it man or woman desires popularity, fame, social distinction and in short all-round smashing success in every undertaking. Everyone sets about equipping himself with all the modern acomplishments, university degrees, most up-to-date information, moves restlessly in fashionable society and ever devises ways and means for gaining predominance over all men and things. He wishes to be foremost in all things, the Field Marshal of an army, Admiral of the Navy, the leader of the country, nay the supreme authority on everything.

As he rises higher and higher in his educational career, passing examination after exami-

nation, clouds of anxiety and pessimism begin to gather around him and to threaten him with nightmare speculations of an undefined future. Setbacks and disappointments appear one by one at every stage. The ambitious candidate is now satisfied with any enterprise or 'little business' sufficient to provide him a fair status in society. His shrewdness and keen acumen fail to impress before the hard facts of life. The mind comes down after many futile wanderings in dreamland and no sooner the college career is over, sets him scarning the 'situation vacant' column of dailies and weeklies.

Day in and day out he broods on how best to dress himself tip top, whom to seek an interview with, what to prepare for the viva-voce etc. He fails in the first few attempts and is forthwith plunged in dark despondency. His intelligence, smartness, refinement and adaptability all fly away at this first test. He is discouraged, becomes sour, curses his fate and scowls at his brethren. He goes about with woe-begone face like one being called to his doom.

Blessed Immortal Self; Cheer up; It is not these trifles, clinking coins and crisp currency cheques and cash certificates, that are going to help you to the last. All these are perishable trifles. You are the imperishable child of Brahman. You have only lost the right track. Shake off all despondency, all misery. Free yourself from all imaginary pain. Realize that you are meant for something grander, something more than slavish service in anticipation of a monthly

cheque. Realise that you are meant for noble selfless service, Understand that this selfless service benefits both the server and the served. This alone makes life fruitful. It is the source of all real joy. It is thrice blessed.

Worry not. You have not lost your talents. You have all power within you. Shake off all fear. Come out. Exert. Seek out centres where you can usefully serve without self-interest. This life is precious. Do not rust. Do not languish. So many are needing your willing hands and heart. So many anxiously await you. There is much that you can do. Be you an accountant or be you a typist. Be an editor or a writer. Be a cook, a nurse, a doctor, teacher or be anything you like. Serve and be served. Everywhere you will find welcome. The 'No vacancy' board is only for the greedy and the purely materialistic. Join Duty To-day. Earn the Good-will and grace of the Almighty Lord. Make haste! Rejoice and obtain bliss now!

9. NECTAR DROPS—AIM AT PERFECTION

I

1. Little acts make great actions.

2. Do not marry until you are able to support a wife.

3. Time and tide wait for nobody.

4. Ever live within your income.

5. Time is more precious than money.

6. Save when you are young to spend when you are old.

7. Never remain idle.

8. Keep your mind fully occupied.

9. Never run into debt.

10. When you go to bed think over what you have done during the whole day.

11. Good company and good speeches are the signs of virtue.

12. He who does not try to do his little bit to uplift his mother country is not the true son of one's mother.

13. The memory of pleasant things and duties well done lives for ever.

14. Face the worst bravely, fight for the best boldly.

15. Everything in the world has a bright side.

16. Always try to look at the bright side of things.

17. The world is like a mirror. If you smile it smiles. If you frown it frowns back.

18. An expensive wife makes a pensive husband.

19. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.

20. The modern girls try best to show their faces and hide their sins.

21. Physical-beauty is skin deep.

22. Man proposes and woman dispossesses him of all he has.

23. Aim at perfection in everything.

24. Cultivate consideration for the feelings of others.

25. A virtuous action is never lost.

26. He who sows courtesy reaps friendship.

FIGHT LIFE'S BATTLE BRAVELY

II

27. He who plants kindness gathers love.

28. Every temptation that is resisted, every sinful thought that is repressed, every harsh word that is withheld, every noble aspiration that is encouraged, helps you to develop your will-power or Soul-force and take you to the goal nearer and nearer.

29. Virtue, faith, patience in suffering, endurance during trials will make you a great yogi.

30. Youth is the opportunity to do great actions and to become a great man.

31. Don't speak without thinking; don't act without reflecting; don't seek to accomplish a great work without adopting the proper measures.

32. It is better to lose than play foul.

33. Time is a great healer.

34. Young men think old men fools and old men know younger men to be so.

35. Life is thorny and youth is vain. A wise man attains perfection.

36. A lazy man is the beggar's elder brother.

37. Idleness is hunger's mother and theft's full brother.

38. An idle brain is the devil's (Satan's) workshop.

39. Neither wealth nor rank will ensure happiness. Happiness is within.

40. A guilty mind always suspects others.

41. Attend carefully to details.

42. Never despair. Nil desperandum. Plod on.

43. Watch carefully over your passions.

44. Be prompt in doing all things.

45. Sacrifice money rather than principle.

46. Consider well, then decide positively.

47. Endure trials patiently.

48. Touch not liquors, opium, cannabisindica.

49. Respect the counsel of your parents.

50. Fight life's battles bravely.

51. Pay your debts promptly.

52. Give up bad company.

CHARACTER IS LIFE'S PILLAR

III

53. Be polite, courteous. Observe good manners.

54. Do not injure another's reputation.

55. Never try to appear what you are not.

56. Do not multiply friends.

57. Keep company with the virtuous.

58. Do not utter falsehood for any consideration.

59. Keep your mind away from evil thoughts.

60. The destiny of a nation lies in the hands of her women.

61. Glory of Indian women is the Glory of India herself.

62. The society in which women are not honoured will surely perish.

63. A girl without simplicity and purity is not worthy of appreciation.

64. Contentment is immense wealth.

65. Progress is the law of life.

66. There can be no endeavours where there is no hope.

67. The beginnings of all the things were small.

68. Luxury is the enemy of peace. It is artificial poverty.

69. Health is the first wealth.

70. Friendship stops when borrowing begins.

71. Patience is the key to Self-realisation.

72. Character is the true life's pillar.

73. A liar should have a good memory.

74. Working without a method and a plan is to sail without a compass.

75. A real friend increases your happiness and shares your sorrows.

76. One rotten apple spoils the whole basket.

77. Let the dead past bury its dead. Present is all in all.

78. Loss of temper is loss of sense.

79. A clear conscience is a soft pillar.

80. Good manners are the great letters of education.

81. Live simply, naturally and sensibly; you will have long, healthy, efficient life.

THE LORD IS WITHIN YOU
IV

82. The Lord is with you, within you. He is nearer than your hands and closer than your breathing.

83. The Lord is shining within the chambers of your heart. Of him and in him thou art.

84. To err is human, to forgive is divine.

85. Union is strength.

86. Make the best use of time.

87. Do not spend your time in idle talk.

88. A flatterer is the most dangerous enemy.

89. Adversity is the good soil for virtue.

90. Exertion brings success.

91. He who knows not and knows not he knows not, is a fool; shun him.

92. He who knows not and knows he knows not, is simple; teach him.

93. He who knows and knows not he knows, is asleep; wake him.

94. He who knows and knows he knows, is wise; follow him.

95. The best teacher is the world, the best book is nature, the best friend is God.

96. Place everything in its proper place. Keep everything to its proper use. Do everything in its proper time.

97. Make few promises.

98. Always speak the truth.

99. Speak little, read much, think more.

100. Never speak ill of any one.

101. Never borrow.

102. Keep good company or none.

103. Good character is above all things.

104. When you talk to a person look him in the face.

105. The way from passion to peace is by controlling the mind.

106. God is just. He dispenses the fruit according to one's Karma.

107. Aspiration is the longing for God-realisation.

108. Realise God. You will drink the deepest and sweetest nectar of immortality.

109 Supreme peace can be found in the chambers of your heart.

110. Destroy passion, greed and jealousy. you will enjoy deep abiding peace.

111. You make your life by your own thoughts and actions.

112. You will find yonr final refuge and eternal rest in your own innermost self.

113. Lead the divine life. You will have victory over matter and mind, and triumph over sin and evil.

114. He is a great Yogi and blessed soul in whose heart there are no thoughts of hatred.

115. Suffering is a great purifier. It develops will-power, endurance and memory and turns the mind towards God.

LIVE WISELY

V

116. If you make a strong resolve you can attain the Eternal or the Supreme Being.

117. If you have a right mental attitude, you will have right thoughts.

118. Right thoughts will lead to right action.

119. Every moment, every thought, every speech, every action shapes your destiny.

120. Live wisely now. Do virtuous actions now. Develop good character. You will attain perfection.

121, If you lead a pure life you will have a pure mind.

122. Purity is akin to Divinity.

123. Evil is born of ignorance.

124. Passion is rooted in ignorance.

125. Within you is a vast resource of power and knowledge.

126. Meditate daily on Truth or the Eternal.

127. The real heaven is in a pure heart.

128. Bliss is the hall-mark of spiritual culture.

129. Strive, plod on. Be vigilant. Be diligent. Persevere. You will attain the Eternal.

130. Sat-sang or association with the sages and regular meditation on the imperishable Soul will liberate you from the round of births and deaths.

131. You will have an awakened vision if you live in the company of yogis and seers of Truth.

132. Call to the noble, exalted, divine life will come by association with Mahatmas.

133. Selfishness is the root cause for human activities.

134. He who is fearless, desireless, 'I' less, mine-less, humble, faithful, truthful, will soon attain Knowledge of the imperishable.

135. Perfect Knowledge, perfect peace. eternal bliss are the fruits of Self-realisation.

136. He who is endowed with kindness and good behaviour is loved and respected by all.

137. He who loves Truth must love all. Truth and love are one.

138. Great trials and adversities will make you stronger and stronger.

139. Stand adamant. Be resolute. Have a firy determination and iron-will.

STRENGTHEN YOUR RESOLUTION

VI

Strengthen your resolution daily.

140. A Jivanmukta or liberated sage is a transforming force. He is a perfected flower of humanity. He will mould you.

141. If your heart is pure there will be no craving for sensual pleasure.

142. If you have to pass through a great temptation, you will attain more lasting and more glorious victory.

143. Kill all doubts ruthlessly through the sword of unswerving faith.

144. Evil is born of ignorance. It disappears before the light of knowledge of the imperishable.

145. Truth is one. Sages call it by various names.

146. The principles of truth are eternally the same.

147. When the need for your spiritual growth or evolution is the greatest you will be put to severe trials.

148. Do not exaggerate. Exaggeration is untruth.

149. Where Rama is, there is no Kama; where Kama is, there is no Rama.

150. Where desire is, there is no bliss, where bliss is, there is no desire.

151. Think rightly. Act righteously. Meditate regularly. You will attain eternal bliss.

152. Your face and speech advertise the contents of your mind.

153. You can realise the Eternal only through purity, devotion and meditation.

154. Do not argue much about the existence of God, but lead the Divine Life.

155. Have self-conquest, control the mind. You will attain perfection and peace.

156. Real sympathy directly enters the heart; lip-sympathy is an empty sound in the air.

157. Love includes all. Love purifies and expands the heart.

158. Purify your thoughts, through love, celibacy, kindness, non-injury. prayer and meditation.

159. Do not deviate from the path of Truth in the hour of temptation.

BECOME ONE WITH THE ETERNAL

VII

160. Reduce evil actions and increase good actions.

161. Eradicate evil qualities and cultivate virtuous qualities.

162. Self-control, serenity, continence, humility, will help you to attain the Supreme Good.

163. Become one with the Eternal. Enter into the heart of the infinite. This is Self realisation.

164. He who has a blameless character and good behaviour can realise Truth.

165. Truth is imperishable Soul. It can be realised only through purity, devotion and meditation.

166. Where the little 'I' ends, sorrow and pain vanish in toto.

167. Be strong and healthy. Be energetic and vigorous. Be steadfast and vigilant. Be self-reliant.

168. Annihilate egoism. Practise self-denial or self-abnegation. Then only you can become one with the Eternal or the infinite.

169. You cannot reach the goal without alading a righteous life and without possessing e pure heart.

170. The law of causation governs the whole world and maintains order.

171. You are the maker of your own destiny, joy and sorrow.

172. As you cling to perishable mundane objects, you cannot enter the illimitable domain of Eternal Bliss.

173. He who is afraid of sins, who has fear of God, who has a soft heart is very near to the door of Wisdom.

174. God is the Supreme King of the world. Dharma is His chief minister.

175. Entertain pure divine thoughts. Evil thoughts will pass away.

176. Prejudice, dislike, contempt, scorn, frowning, ill-will are all forms of hatred. Eradicate them to their very root.

177. Wherever there are contempt, scorn, lislike, there is absence of love.

178. A back-biter and a scandal-monger cannot find the way to the domain of Eternal bliss.

179. He who complaints of environments and circumstances is a man of week will.

180. He who is patient and serene under all trying circumstances is fit to become the Eternal.

181. Do total self-surrender to God. All difficulties and sorrows will end,

SEARCH IN THE HEART

VIII

182, Hatred, injustice, and cruelty are inseparable.

183. Purification of heart is a very difficult process. It takes a long time.

184. If purification is done, the goal is very near.

185. Look within, and search in the heart. You will find the fountain of eternal bliss.

186. If the mind is serene you will have very good health.

187. The goal of life is to become one with the Eternal.

188. To become one with the Infinite is to become immortal, indestructible.

189. Truth is Infinite, invincible, imperishable, all-pervading, indivisible, homogeneous.

190. A selfish man can never develop universal love.

191. Where pride, hatred, selfishness, jealousy, greed, are there can be no universal love.

192. This world is a vast school of experience. Learn the lessons with humility and patience. You will soon attain eternal bliss, perfection and freedom.

193. The selfless actions alone can live for ever.

194. Realise the Turiya or the fourth state of superconsciousness. You will become immortal.

195. Practice of celibacy is the beginning of holiness.

196. Truthfulness is the beginning of saintliness.

197. Patience is the friend of peace.

198. By self-discipline you can become a great yogi or sage.

199. Meditation tears the veil of ignorance, breaks the knots and fetters and leads to the attainment of wisdom.

200. Pain, sorrow, restlessness are all due to ignorance. They will all melt in the fire of wisdom.

201. Cultivation of virtuous qualities is the beginning of divinity.

202. Abandon selfish interests and selfish efforts. Practise self-sacrifice; you will soon be transmuted into divinity.

203. Aspire fervently. Meditate regularly in right earnest. You will attain the Peace of the Eternal.

204. Man creates his own world through his own thoughts,

405. Man is a very complex mysterious being.

BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN

IX

206. There is unrest in the surface of the objective mind. There is deep silence in the innermost recesses of the heart. Here abides the Eternal.

207. All evils have their root and origin in the mind.

208. Have holy aspiration. Grow in purity. Discipline the senses and the mind. Meditate seriously. You will soon become one with the Infinite.

209. Sublime, divine thoughts are great forces.

210. Become as little children. You will have soon the vision of God.

211. Entertain lofty divine thoughts. You will have divine life.

212. Purify your heart. Control the mind. Renounce egoism. You will soon find eternal bliss.

213. Have singleness of purpose, strong faith and resolute will. You can conquer the three worlds.

214. This inner peace, this ineffable bliss of meditation and samadhi, the deep silence, this supreme eternal satisfaction is Brahman or the Absolute.

215. Do not follow the promptings of the lower mind, but follow the promptings of the higher mind.

216. There is in the heart of every man the supreme abode of eternal bliss, the perennial fountain of joy, the pool of nectar, the divine centre!

217. Entertain sublime, divine thoughts. You will have always favourable circumstances and environments.

218. Close your eyes, Withdraw the senses. Look within. Meditate and realise the light of lights that never fades.

219. Love all. Be sincere and unselfish. Serve all. You will have great influence and success in life.

220. When the lower nature is purged out you will become divine.

221. You will enter the path of divinity only when you give up lust, greed and anger.

222. Hatred causes restlessness, disease, rupture, friction, quarrels and great war.

223. He who has controlled himself can control others.

224. He who can obey can command others.

225. Mind can be controlled only by long practice and protracted discipline.

226. Heaven and hell are internal states of mind.

227. Where there are love and selflessness there is heaven. Where there are hatred and selfishness there is hell.

228. Obey, you will have liberty.

229. He who is carried away by his own cravings and tendencies is a weak man.

230. Selfishness leads to self-destruction.

231. Train the mind to be over vigilant and reflective.

232. Bliss is that internal state of perfect satisfaction, joy and peace.

233. Make others happy. You will be really happy.

234. Love is the greatest power on earth.

235. Be silent and calm. You can turn out more work. You can meditate more.

HAVE INTENSITY OF PURPOSE

X

236. Purify your heart. Become as simple as a child. Open your heart more and more to the glorious light of the Eternal.

237. Good character is the beginning of saintliness and divinity.

238. A man of character will have always great influence and success.

239. A selfish man is always miserable. He has neither peace nor happiness.

240. Divine law or order governs every thing. Everything that happens is just.

241. Soar high in the realms of bliss on the wings of dispassion and meditation.

242. Success in life and in yoga has its root in character.

243. If you wish to become one with the Eternal, come now and practise purity and meditation.

244. Have intensity of purpose. You will attain sanguine success. You will conquer all obstacles.

245. Don't neglect small works, attend to details. Do everything in a perfect manner.

246, There is but one religion, the religion of Truth.

247. Religion of Truth is religion of love.

248, Religion of Truth is self-realisation or entering into the heart of the Eternal.

249. The aim of self-discipline is the attainment of knowledge of the Imperishable.

250. The wanderer, the glutton, the talkative man, the sensualist, the slothful, the indolent, can have no knowledge of the Eternal.

251. If the obstacles in the path of Truth are intense your will-power also will become more powerful.

252. Strong yearning for liberation will remove all obstacles.

253. You must know yourself if you wish to have knowledge of the imperishable.

254. Humility is all-powerful. It is a divine quality. It is a weapon to kill egoism.

255. Inner spiritual strength, perfect peace, bliss, knowledge of the immortal soul are the fruits of meditation.

256. In the time of trial a spiritual man or a yogi stands, when others fall.

257. It is very difficult to reach the peak of perfection. The path is slippery, rugged and precipitous.

CLIMB THE PEAK OF PERFECTION

XI

258. You can climb the peak through resolute will, intense dispassion and renunciation and rigorous meditation.

259, An object is very dear to you because love is at the heart of it.

260. Sublime, divine, thought is very powerful. It is a dynamic, transmuting force.

261. A yogi or a sage knows himself as divine, because he has realised the divine consciousness.

262. Seek diligently the path of Truth. Tread it carefully and vigilanty. You may slip and fall.

263. Love is harmlessness. Love is kindness. Love is compassion.

264. Nothing can tempt you if you grow in meditation, if you are regular in meditation.

265. He who is pure at heart has found divinity.

266. Renunciation of egoism is the direct way to the Eternal.

267. Knowledge of the Imperishable bestows perfect freedom and independence.

268. Where egoism is immortality is not; where immortality is, egoism is not.

269. Concentration will give you great power. Collect the scattered rays of the mind.

270. Lust and greed make you a spiritual bankrupt. Purity and meditation bestow on you inexhaustible divine wealth.

271. A yogi becomes the master-builder of the temple of the Truth.

272. Pass through the gate of wisdom. You will reach the illimitable domain of eternal bliss.

273. He who is endowed with discrimination and power of concentration climbs rapidly to the peak of illumination.

274. Your real guru or preceptor is in your own heart. He is the Inner Ruler or Indweller.

275. Mumukshuttwa or longing for the final liberation is the hunger for spiritual food of knowledge of the Eternal.

276. Mind is the mirror through which the Eternal appears as the universe of names and forms.

277. Be in the world, but be not of the world. This is eternal wisdom. This is the highest yoga.

278. The wise man is always a student. He is ever eager to learn. He never poses to be a teacher.

279. To aim at high things is the cry for spiritual food.

280. This visible world is the mirror of the invisible Brahman.

281. You are a slave of circumatances and environments because you do not meditate regularly.

282. A man of little learning and little understanding is ever eager to teach. He wants to take up the role of a preceptor. He is not eager to learn.

283. You will easily get illumination in solitude. Solitude has its own charms. Prepare yourself for life in seclusion.

284. All weaknesses, pain, grief are due to ignorance and forgetfulness of the true nature of the immortal soul, or spiritual starvation.

285. Control and conserve energy through silence, Brahmacharya, pranayama. You will have wonderful meditation.

286. Understand the nature and power of thought. You will become a master of circumstances and environments.

287. Love a man who dislikes you. You will grow strong.

288. A calm, peaceful man is a spiritual power. He can turn out tremendous work in a short space of time.

289. Money wasted can be restored, but time wasted is lost for ever.

290. Practice of non-injury, celibacy, truthfulness, will give you happiness and wonderful health too.

291. Brahman or the Eternal lives itself. It does not want any support.

292. Find out your centre. That centre is perfect harmony, eternal bliss, your own Immortal Soul!

SELF-REALISATION IS HERE AND NOW

XII

293. Constant repetition of a thought becomes a steady habit.

294. Break evil habits. You will develop your will power.

295. Do every action in a thorough manner. You will develop a strong will power.

296. Self-realisation is here and now. It is becoming one with the Eternal. It is not a mere imaginary or speculative something,

297. Truth or Brahman is extremely simple. It needs no argument to support it.

298. You make your own character through your actions. Character is destiny.

299. Where egoism is not, there are bliss and immortality.

300. Learn to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the permanent and the impermanent, the shadow and the substance, matter and spirit.

301. Divine Life is the way of self-conquest. It is the pathway to blessedness and immortality.

302. Samadhi is the joy of the Yogis. Equal vision is the delight of the sages.

303. Kill this little 'I' and find out the holy eternal abode in the heart where peace lives.

304. God has His throne in the hearts of pure souls.

305. Live righteously. Act truthfully. Meditate regularly. Attain knowledge of the Imperishable. There is no other way to wisdom and peace.

306. Joy is to the pure. Peace is to the sinless. Happiness is to the virtuous. Perfection is to the knower. Immortality is to the sage.

307. Annihilate the desires. Slay egoism.

Subdue the mind. Subjugate the senses. Overcome the six enemies or shad-ripus. This is the holy warfare of aspirants.

308. He who has no discrimination is really blind.

309. The lamp of faith must be steadily fed by association with sages and vigilantly trimmed by Japa and meditation.

310. You can elevate others only if you have elevated and purified yourself.

311. Sat-sang is the first pillar in the temple of self-realisation.

312. It is better to be a whole-hearted worldling than a half-hearted aspirant.

313. God is just. The Divine law is just. He who believes in this remains unperturbed in all trials and adversities.

314. Love God fully and intensely with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul. You will be wholly absorbed in Him.

315. Thoughts repeat themselves, through association, habit and practice.

THOUGHT DETERMINES CHARACTER

XIII

316. Egoism is the root of the tree of ignorance. It is nourished by the currents of likes and dislikes.

317. Love, humility, forgiveness, patience,

compassion, courage, integrity, non-injury, purity, aspiration are divine qualities.

318. Hatred, pride, harshness, revenge, anger, cruelty, greed are brutal qualities.

319. A yogi or a sage is invincible. He is one with the Divine. No one can overcome him.

320. Real religion is beyond argument. It can only be lived.

321. Action follows thought. To live is to think and act. Thoughts and actions mould a man's character.

322. Belief determines conduct. Thought determines character.

323. Man is changed by every thought he thinks, by every action he does.

324. Obey the law, you are blessed; disobey the law, you are injured.

325. Purity is the key-note of the Divine life.

326. He who gets mastery over the mind and the senses is invincible. He cannot be overcome by anyone.

327. Love, kindness, compassion, charitable acts, soften and change the heart.

328. Rudeness, cruelty, revenge, harden the heart.

329. A worldling cannot understand a saintly man as he has an impure mind, as he is veiled by passion and selfishness.

330. A thirsty aspirant has entered into a

new birth. He has a new heart and a new mind. He has an awakened vision.

331. It is Brahmamuhurta now! Rejoice! Climb up to the peak of eternal bliss now. Do not delay even a second.

332. How sublime is the immortal soul! How glorious is the abode of eternal peace! How indescribable is the everlasting bliss of the Absolute!

333. He who is simple and pure at heart can attain the Kingdom of eternal Bliss!

334. If you enter into argument about Truth, Truth is lost.

335. Think you are a student. Then only you can learn,

336. To have knowledge of the Immortal Soul, to become identical with the eternal, is the supreme aim of existence.

337. Do not enter the by-ways and lanes when you tread the path of Truth, which tempt and take you to the illusory realms. Beware! Go straight to the abode of Eternal Bliss.

338. The great law of cause and effect, or the law of Karma, is unfailing Justice.

339. Selfishness is the seed of the tree of ignorance. Passion is the flower. Sin and suffering are the fruits.

340. You yourself create your own pleasures and pains through your own thoughts and actions.

341. Habit is repetition. Character is fixed habit.

342. You bind yourself through your own thought. Annihilation of thoughts is Moksha or Freedom!

343. Suffer calmly. Act nobly. Live peacefully. Think rightly. Speak sweetly. Behave politely. You will soon enter the Kingdom of Eternal Bliss.

344. If you are good, the whole world is good to you.

345. Attain God-realisation through selfless service, Brahmacharya, Japa, Kirtan and meditation.

346. Do not believe a thing because another man has said it so, because you read it in a book. Find out the truth for yourself.

347. Worry less but laugh more. Talk less but do more.

348. Contentment is a gift of God which you get through faith in the Lord and self-surrender.

349. Anger brings destruction to man.

350. Feed the poor; nurse the sick; see yourself in them; see God in them.

351. Do not speak or act anything which may cause even the slightest pain to any living being.

352. Do not plan. Do not worry about anything. nay nothing, even of tomorrow.

353. If you want God, love all beings whole heartedly.

354. If you want joy serve the distressed.

355. If you treat others with contempt, you cannot get the grace of the Lord.

356. To fight for a righteous cause has a divine sanction.

357. Devotion to God destroys all sins and desires.

358. To the man who craves for nothing, who has subdued his senses and mind, who is even-minded to all and is satisfied in his own Atma, all the quarters are full of bliss.

359. It is very difficult to understand the mind of a man.

360. Abandon the longing for worldly objects and comforts. Endure all hardships, heat and cold. Be calm and well-behaved. Control the senses. You will attain soon the Knowledge of the Imperishable and Immortality,

361. Fix your mind on the Innermost Self. Reflect and meditate. Devote your mind, heart and speech to the Lord. You will go beyond the three gunas and attain Self-realisation.

362. If you feel oneness with all, this is indeed true love.

363. He who loves all beings without distinction is indeed worshipping best his God.

364. No other association causes so much misery and bondage as that of women, and those who associate with them.

365. Let your eyes look with kindness, your tongue speak with sweetness, your hand touch with softness.

366. No power is beyond the reach of a Yogi who has controlled his mind, senses and who concentrates on the Lord.

367. There is no action, change or evolution of any kind in Brahman or the Absolute.

368. Gita is a source of power and wisdom. It teaches you to embrace Dharma and desert adharma. It imparts lessons on ethics, philosophy, Adwaita, devotion and Yoga.

369. The philosophy of Gita is suitable to each and every person in this world.

370. Life is a wonderful gift of God. Place this life at the lotus feet of the Lord as a flower.

371. The philosophy of Adwaita is not suitable to all. Even one per cent of people is not fit to understand the Vedanta philosophy.

372. If one who worships the Lord has hatred for others, he has no real devotion.

373. He who helps, instigates or abets another in doing a sinful action is also liable to share the same fate as the sinner.

374. Forgiveness is the greatest virtue which shines forth in all its splendour in the devotees.

375. Control the mind perfectly. Fix the mind at the lotus feet of the Lord. This is the very gist of Yoga.

376. God is the friend of the poor and the helpless and the shelter of the distressed.

377. This world which consists of friends, enemies, neutrals, which affects you with pleasure and pain is only a creation of your mind which is a product of ignorance.

378. Power, beauty, fame, prosperity, strength, fortitude, are manifestations of the Lord.

379. The householder's life sprang from the thigh of the Lord, the life of a Brahmachari from His heart, the life of a Vanaprasta from His chest, and the life of a Sannyasi from His head.

380. Mind is responsible for the feelings of pleasure and pain. Control of mind is the highest Yoga.

381. The three kinds of Tap or sufferings are pre-determined and pre-destined. Bear them silently.

382. Conception, embryo-stage, birth, childhood, boyhood, youth, middle age, decay and death are the nine stages of man.

383. Bear enmity to none. Do not vex others and do not be vexed by others.

384. Non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-attachment, shame, non-accumulation of wealth, faith in God, chastity, silence, patience,

forgiveness, fearlessness are the twelve Yamas or Restraints.

385. Purity of mind, purity of body, repetition of Lord's name, austerity, offering of oblations in the sacred fire, faith in one's own Self, hospitality, worship of God, visiting of holy places, working for the good of others, contentment, service unto the Guru are the twelve Niyamas or observances.

386. Renunciation must proceed from inner urge and spiritual development but not from some trivial disappointments and difficulties.

387. Sadhana is more important than getting into contact with queer people.

388. Continually remember the Lord who has given you existence and intelligences. Lead the life of self-restraint and self-denial. Spend all your time in some thought or action that is associated with the Lord. You will soon attain God-realisation.

389. Take the fullest advantage of this human birth. Have a rich inner divine life. May divine grace illumine your spiritual path. May the divine power actuate you to perform great, noble and selfless actions. May the divine grace transform you into divinity.

CHAPTER II

SIVA TATTWA

In Me the Universe had its origin,
In Me alone the whole subsists;
In Me it is lost this—Siva,
The Timeless, It is I Myself,
Sivoham! Sivoham!! Sivoham!!!

Salutations to Lord Siva, the vanquisher of Cupid, the bestower of eternal bliss and immortality, the protector of all beings, destroyer of sins, the Lord of the gods, who wears a tiger-skin, the best among objects of worship, through whose matted hair the Ganges flows.

Lord Siva is the pure, changeless, attributeless, all-pervading transcendental consciousness. He is the inactive (nishkriya) Purusha. Prakriti is dancing in his breast and performing the creative, preservative and destructive processes.

When there is neither light nor darkness, neither form nor energy, neither sound nor matter, when there is no manifestation of phenomenal existence, then Siva alone exists in Himself. He is timeless, spaceless, birthless, deathless, decayless. He is beyond the pairs of opposites. He is the Impersonal Absolute Brahman. He is untouched by pleasure and plain, good and evil. He cannot be seen by the eyes but He can be realised within the heart through devotion and meditation.

Siva is also the Supreme personal God when He is identified with His power. He is then omnipotent, omniscient active God. He dances in supreme joy and creates, sustains and destroys with the rhythm of his dancing movements.

He destroys all bondage, limitation and sorrow of his devotees. He is the giver of Mukti or the final emancipation. He is the universal Self. He is the true Self of all creatures. He is the dweller in the cremation-ground, in the region of the dead, those who are dead to the world.

The Jivas and the world-originate from him, exist in him, are sustained and rejected by him and are ultimately merged in him. He is the support, source substratum of the whole world. He is an embodiment of truth, Beauty, Goodness and bliss. He is Satyam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram, Kantam.

He is the God of gods, Deva-Deva. He is the great deity—Mahadeva. He is the god of manes (Prajapati). He is the most awe-inspiring and terrifying deity, Rudra, with Trishul or trident in his hand. He is the most early pleased (ashutosha). He is accessible to all, The untouchable, chandalas and the illiterate rustics, can approach him.

He is the source of all knowledge and wisdom. He is an ideal yogi and muni. He is the ideal head of an ideal family with Uma as his devoted wife, Lord Subrahmanya, the brave general of strength and courage, Lord Ganesh, the remover of all obstacles.

SADASIVA

At the end of pralaya, the Supreme Lord thinks of re-creation of the world. He is then known by the name Sadasiva. He is the root-cause of creation. From Sadasiva creation begins. In Manusmriti he is called Swayambhu. Sadasiva is unmanifested, he destroys the Tamas caused by Pralaya and shines as the self-resplendent light bringing forth the five great elements etc., into being.

The Siva Purana says that Siva is beyond both Prakriti and Purush. Siva is the Maheshwara. He is the witness, well-wisher and nourisher of all beings. The Gita says. "Upadrashtanumanta cha Bharta Bhokta Maheshwara."

Maheshwara conducts the work of creation according to his will and pleasure. The Sruti says, "Mayam tu prakritim Viddhi Mayinam tu Maheshwaram." Know Prakrti to be Maya and Maheshwara to be the wielder of Maya or Prakriti. The Sakti of Siva works in two different ways. Moola Prakriti and Daivi Prakriti. Moola Prakriti is Apara Parakriti from which the five elements and other visible objects and the Anthakarana are evolved. Para Prakriti is chaitanya sakti which converts the Apara Prakriti and gives name and form to it. Apara Prakriti is Avidya and Para Prakriti is Vidya. The controller and dispenser of these two Prakritis is Lord Siva.

Siva is distinct from Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra.

Lord Siva is the Lord of innumerable crores of Brahmandas or worlds. Ishwara united with

Maya gives rise to Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra out of Raja, Sattwa and Tama Gunas respectively under the command of Lord Siva. Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra are the trinities of the world.

There is no difference between the trinities, Brahma, Rudra and Vishnu. By the command of Maheshwara these three do the creative, destructive and preservative duties of the world. The work of all the three deities is done conjointly. They all have one view and one definite purpose in creating, preserving and destroying the visible universe of names and forms. He who regards the three deities as distinct and different, Siva Purana says, is undoubtedly a devil or evil spirit.

The Lord who is beyond the three Gunas, Maheshwara, has four aspects : viz., Brahma, Kala, Rudra and Vishnu. Siva is the support for all the four. He is the substratum for Sakti also. Siva is distinct from the Rudra included in the trinities. Rudra is really one though according to the different functions He is considered to have eleven different forms.

The first face of Siva does Krida or play, the second does penance, the third destroys or dissolves the world, the fourth protects the people and the fifth being knowledge-fully covers the entire universe by its power. He is Isana the creator and promoter of all beings, from within.

The first form of Siva is the enjoyer of Prakriti as Kshetrajna Purusha. The second is Tatpurusha resting in Sattwa-guna, rooted in Bhogya-Prakriti, the Prakriti-enjoyed. The third is Ghora rooted in the eightfold buddhi like dharma, etc. The fourth Vamadeva is rooted in Ahamkara and the fifth is Sadyojata, the presiding deity of the mind. The eight forms of Siva are Sarva, Bhava, Rudra, Ugra, Bheema, Pasupati, Ishana and Mahadeva, respectively, rooted in earth, water, fire, air, ether, kshetrajna, sun and moon.

Ardhanareeshwara.

Brahma was unable to create and bring forth creatures from his mental creation. To know the method of creation he did Tapas. As a result of his tapas Adyasakti arose in Brahma's mind. Through the help of adyasakti Brahma meditated upon Tryambakeshwar. Pleased by the penance of Brahma, Lord Siva appeared in the form of Ardhanareeshwara (half male and half female). Brahma Praised Ardhanareeshwara. Lord Siva then created from his body a goddess by name Parama-Sakti. Brahma said to the goddess. "I was not able to bring forth creatures by my mental creation. Though I created the Devatas yet they could not multiply. Therefore I wish to bring forth creatures by intercourse. Before your appearance or till now I was not able to create the endless female species. Therefore, O Devi, be merciful and take birth as the daughter of my son, Daksha."

World-Teacher.

The most auspicious and useful work beneficial to mankind ever carried out by Lord Siva is to impart the knowledge of Yoga, Bhakti, knowledge etc., to the world. He blesses those who deserve His grace and who cannot get out of Samsara without His grace. He is not only the world-teacher but an ideal example to the Jivanmukta or sage. He teaches by his very actions in his daily life.

Pasupatha Yoga.

Uniting the self with the true Siva Tattwa by the control of the senses is real wearing of Bhasma, because Lord Siva through His third eye of wisdom burnt passion to ashes. The meditation of pranava should be done trough Japa. One should attain the real Gyana, Yoga and Bhakti by steady practice. In the heart there is a ten-petalled lotus. It has ten Nadis. It is the Jivatma's Abode. This Jivatma lives in a subtle form in the mind and it is Chitta or Purusha itself. One should ascend to the moon by cutting open or transcending the Dasagni nadi by the regular practice of Yoga as instructed by the Guru and practising dispassion, righteousness and equality. The moon then gradually attains fullness, as it gets itself pleased or satisfied with the Sadhaka on account of his regular application in Yoga and purification of Nadis. In this state the Sadhaka overcomes waking and sleeping state and through meditation merges himself in the object meditated upon in this waking state itself.

CHAPTER III

THE SAIVA SIDDHANTA PHILOSOPHY

SIVA AND TATTWAS

Satyam Sivam Subham Sundaram Kantam.

The Saiva Siddhanta system is the distilled essence of Vedanta. It prevailed in Southern India even before the Christian Era. Tinnevelly and Madura are the centres of Saiva Siddhanta school. Saivites elaborated a distinctive philosophy called the Saiva Siddhanta about the eleventh century A. D. Even Saivism is a very popular creed in South India. It is a rival school of Vaishnavism.

Tirumular's work—Tirumanthram—is the foundation upon which the later structure of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy was built. The twenty eight Saiva Agamas, the hymns of the Saiva saints form the chief sources of southern Saivism.

In the books which treat of Saivism there is a reference to four schools viz., Nakulisa-pasupata, the Saiva, the Pratyabhijna and the Rasesvara.

Lord Siva is the supreme Reality. He is eternal, formless, independent, omnipresent, one without a second, beginningless, causeless, taintless, self-existent, ever free, ever pure. He is

not limited by time. He is infinite bliss and infinite intelligence.

Lord Siva pervades the whole world by His Sakti. He works through His Sakti. Sakti is conscious energy of Lord Siva. She is the very body of Lord Siva. The potter is the first cause for the pot. The stick and the wheel are the instrumental causes. The clay is the material cause of the pot. Similarly Lord Siva is the first cause of the world. Sakti is the instrumental cause. Maya is the material cause.

Lord Siva is the God of love. His grace is infinite. He is the saviour and Guru. He is engaged in freeing the souls from the thraldom of matter. He assumes the form of a Guru out of the intense love for mankind. He wishes that all should know Him and attain the blissful Siva Pada. He watches the activities of the individual souls and helps them in their onward march.

In the Saiva Siddhanta there are thirty-six tattvas. The Pancha Kanchukas or the five-fold envelop viz., Niyati (order), Kala (time), Raga (Interest), Vidya (knowledge), Bala (power) are above the Purusha. Maya, Suddha Vidya, Iswara, Sadasiva, Sakti and Siva are above Kala. Sadasiva, Ishwara and Suddha Vidya constitute Vidya Tattvas. The other thirty-two form the Atma Tattvas. Siva Tattva is a class by itself.

Maya evolves into the subtle principles and then into the gross. The individual soul experiences pleasure and pain through Vidya. Siva Tattva is the basis of all consciousness and

action. It is undifferentiated (Niskala) Suddha maya. The Sakti of Siva starts her activities. Then Siva becomes the experiencer. Then he is called Sadasiva known also by the name Sadakhya, who is not really separate from Siva. The Suddhamaya becomes active. Then Siva, the experiencer becomes the Ruler. He is then Ishwara, who is not really separate from Sadasiva. Suddhavidya is the cause of true knowledge.

The five activities of the Lord (Pancha-Krityas) are Srishti (creation), sthithi (preservation), Samhara (destruction), Tirobhava (veiling) and Anugraha (grace). These, separately considered, are the activities of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshwara and Sadasiva.

In the five-lettered Manthram (Panchakshari) Namasivaya, Na is the screening power of the Lord that makes the soul to move in the world, Ma is the bond that binds him in the samsaric wheel of births and deaths. Si is the symbol for Lord Siva, Va stands for His grace and Ya stands for the soul. If the soul turns towards Na and Ma he will be sunk in worldliness. If he associates himself with Va he will move towards Lord Siva.

Hearing the Lilas of Lord Siva and the significance of Panchakshara is 'hearing'. Reflection on the meaning of Panchakshara is 'Manana' or 'Chintan'. To develop love and devotion for Lord Siva and meditate on Him is Sivadhyanam. To become immersed in 'Siva-

nanda' is Nishta or Samadhi. He who attains this stage is called Jivanmukta.

PATHI-PASU-PASAM

'Pathi' is Lord Siva. It is the object of all the Vedas and the Agamas to explain the concepts of Lord (Pathi), bound souls (Pasu) which really means cattle and bondage (Pasam). Lord Siva is infinite, Eternal, one without a second. He is changeless and indivisible. He is the embodiment of knowledge and bliss. He energises the intelligence of all souls. He is beyond the reach of mind and speech. He is the ultimate goal of all. He is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. He is self-luminous, self-existent, self-contained, and self-delight.

'Pasu' are the individual souls who are sunk in the quagmire of Samsara. They assume bodies to work out their good and evil actions and are born as lower and higher beings according to their nature of Karma. They do virtuous and vicious actions in the course of experiencing the endless fruits of their Karma and have countless births and deaths. Ultimately they attain the grace of Lord Siva through meritorious acts and their ignorance is dispelled. They attain salvation and become one with Lord Siva.

'Pasam' is bond. The web of bonds is distinguished into Avidya or Anavamala, Karma and Maya. Anavamala is egoism. It is the taint due to the false notion of finiteness which the soul

has. The soul imagines itself to be finite and confined to the body and of limited knowledge and power. It erroneously identifies itself with the perishable body and mistakes the body for its reality. It has forgotten its essential divine nature.

'Karma' is the cause of bodies and manifold bodily experience and births and deaths. It is beginningless. It is the cause of the conjunction of the conscious soul with the unconscious body. It is an auxiliary of Avidya. It is done through thought, word and deed. It takes the form of merit and sin and produces pleasure and pain. It is subtle and unseen (Adrishta). It exists during creation and merges into the substratum of Maya during Pralaya. It cannot be destroyed. It must work out its results.

Maya is the material cause of the world. It is unconscious or unintelligent, omnipresent, imperishable. It is the seed of the world. The four categories viz, Thanu, Karana Bhuvana, Bhogam beginning with the bodies spring up from Maya. It permeates all its developments and causes perversion in the Karmic souls. During Pralaya it is the basic resort of all souls. It is itself a bond for the souls. All these processes in it are due to the energising influence by Lord Siva. Just as the trunk, the leaf and the fruit grow from the seed, so also the universe from Kala to earth springs from Maya.

The real Namam, the root of sound is evolved from pure Maya by the will of Lord Siva. From

Nadam the real Bindu springs up. From it the real Sadasivam originates and gives birth to Ishwar. Suddhavidya is developed from Ishwar. The world originates from Bindu and develops into various forms.

3. SADHANA

One will develop love and devotion for Lord Siva if he is freed from egoism. Sariyai, Kiriyai, Yoga and Gnana are the four Sadhana or steps to kill egoism and attain Lord Siva. Erecting temples, cleaning them, making garlands of flowers, singing Lord's praises, burning lamps in the temples, making flower gardens constitute Sariyai. Kiriyai is to perform Puja, Archanas. Yoga is restraint of the senses and contemplation on the internal light. Gnana is to understand the true significance of Pathi, Pasu, Pasam and to become one with Siva by constant meditation on Him after removing the three mals viz., Anavam (egoism), Karma (action) and Maya (illusion).

The worship of the all-pervading, eternal supreme Being through external forms is called Sariyai. The requisite initiation for this is Samaya Dikshai. The worship of the cosmic form of the Eternal Ruler of the universe externally and internally is called Kriyai. The internal worship of Him as formless is called Yogam. For Kiriyai and Yogam the requisite initiation is called Visesha Dikshai. The direct realisation of Lord Siva through Gyana Guru is

called Gyanam. The initiation that leads to it is called Nirvana Dikshai.

The aspirant should free himself from the three kinds of Malam viz., Anavam, Karma and Maya. Then only he becomes one with Lord Siva and enjoys Sivanandam. He should thoroughly annihilate his egoism, free himself from the bondage and Karma and destroy the Maya which is the basis of all impurities.

Guru or the spiritual preceptor is very essential for attaining the final emancipation. Siva is full of grace. He helps the aspirants. He showers His grace on those who worship Him with faith and devotion and who have childlike trust in Him. Siva Himself is the Guru. The grace of Siva is the road to salvation. Siva lives in the Guru and looks with intense love on the sincere aspirant through the eyes of the Guru. Only if you have love for mankind you can love God.

If the aspirant establishes a relationship between himelf and Lord Siva he will grow in devotion quickly. He can have the mental attitude or Bhav—Dasyabhav or the relationship of Master and servant which Tirunavakarasar had, or the Vatsalya bhav wherein Lord Siva is the father and the aspirant is the child of Lord Siva which Tirugnanasambandhar had or the Sakhya Bhav or the relationship of friend (Lord Siva is regarded as the friend of the aspirant) which Sundarar had or the Sanmarga wherein Lord Siva is the very life of the aspirant which

Manikavasagar had, which corresponds to the Madhurya Bhav or Atma Nivedan of the Vaishnavites.

The devotee becomes one with Siva like salt with water, milk with milk when the three Mals or Pasa are destroyed, but he cannot do the five functions of creation etc. God only can perform the five functions.

The liberated soul is called a Jivanmukta. Though he lives in the body he is one in feeling with the absolute. He does not perform works which can produce further bodies. As he is free from egoism works cannot bind him. He will do meritorious acts for the solidarity of the world (Lokasangraha). He lives in the body until his Prarabdha Karma is exhausted. All his present actions are consumed by the grace of the Lord. The Jivanmukta does all actions on account of the impulsion of the Lord within nim.

Glory to Lord Siva and His Sakti.

4. ASHTAMURTI

Siva is spoken of as being in eight forms (Ashtamurthi). The eight forms of Siva are the five elements, the sun, the moon and the priest who performs sacrifice.

Vishnu appeared in the Mohini form after the churning of the milk ocean. Siva embraced Vishnu in that form. Sastha is the offspring of Siva and Mohini. Sastha is called also by the name Hari Hari Putra or the son of Harihara.

Appar wanted all Saivas to regard Vishnu as only another aspect of Siva.

According to Appar there are three aspects of Siva. (1) The lower Siva who dissolves the world and who liberates Jivas from their bondage. (2) The higher form called Parapara. In this form Siva appears as Siva and Sakti (Ardhanareeshwara). It has the name Paramjyoti. Brahma and Vishnu were not able to comprehend this Jyoti. (3) Beyond these two forme is the Param. or the ultimate being from whom Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra originate. It is purely the Siva form. It is formless. It is the Sivam of the Saiva Siddhanta. It is Para Brahma of the Upanishads and Vedantins.

The Mahavishnu of Vishnu Purana corresponds to Param of Siva Siddhantis. Narayana or the Higher Vishnu corresponds to the Param Jyoti of Appar or Saiva Siddhantin. The lower Vishnu does the function of preservation. He corresponds to the lower Siva.

What is the inner meaning of all the Siva allusions about Vishnu worshipping Siva and all the Vaishnava allusions about Siva worshipping Vishnu ? The lower Siva must take Narayana, the Para Para or Paramjyoti as His superior. The lower Vishnu must take Paramjyoti or the Parapara as his superior. The higher Vishnu and higher Siva are identical. They are inferior to Param, the Highest.

In that highest condition called Siva Mukti there is no duality. No one can see anything.

One merges himself in Sivam or the Highest. If you wish to see you will have to come to the stage immediately below the Highest.

The Siva Murti or manifestation is inferior to the real "Sivam" which is formless.

According to the Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy the Tattvas are reckoned as ninetysix. They are as follows :—

24 Atma Tatvas, 10 Nadis, 5 Avasthas or conditions, 3 Malas or impurities, 3 Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), 3 Mandalas (Surya, the sun Agni, the fire and Chandra (the moon), three humours, (Vata Pitta and Slesma), 8 Vikaras or modifications (Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada, Matsarya, Dambha and Asuya), 6 Adharas, 7 Dhatus, 10 vayus, 5 Koshas and 9 doorways. The twentyfour Tattvas are the five elements *Bhutas*, 5 tanmatras (Sabda etc), 5 Gyana Indriyas, 5 Karmendriyas and 4 Karanas (Manas, Buddhi. Chitta and Ahamkara). All these 96 relate to the body. Over and above 96, there are the five Kanchukas or coverings. They are Niyati, Kala, Kala, Raga and Vidya. The five enter the body and cause weariness to the Tattvas of the body and afflict the body.

5. SUDDHA SAIVA

The Suddha Saiva does not attain the final emancipation by Krya alone. He attains only Salokya. Jnana in Krya leads to Salokya. The world of Siva. Jnana in Kriya leads him to

Samipya (proximity to Siva). Jnana in yoga bestows on him Sarupya (likeness in form). Jnana in Jnana leads him to Sayujya, merging or absorption.

'Ambalam' means 'open space of the heart' or Chidakasa or Chidambaram.

Anda lingam is the Visvarupa or the God's form of the Universe.

He who brings about the destruction of the world is Siva or Rudra. That is the reason why he is held superior to Brahma and Vishnu.

The Siddhantins divide Jivas or Pasus into three orders viz., Vijnana Kalar, Pralaya Kalar and Sakalar. Vijnana Kalar have only the Anava mala (egoism). Pralaya Kalar have Anava and Maya. Sakalar have all the malas, Anava, Kadva and Maya The malas affect only the jivas and not Siva. Those who are freed from the malas or impurities become identical with Siva They are Siddhas or perfected beings.

CHAPTER IV

PHILOSOPHY OF SYMBOLS

Lord Siva represents the destructive aspect of Brahman. That portion of Brahman that is enveloped by Tamo Guna Pradhana Maya is Lord Siva who is the all-pervading Ishwara and who also dwells in Mount Kailas. He is the bhandara or store-house for wisdom. Siva minus Parvati or Kali or Durga is Nirguna Brahman Himself. With Maya-Parvati He becomes the Saguna Brahman for the purpose of pious devotion of His devotees. Devotees of Rama must worship Lord Siva for 3 or 6 months before they take to worship of Rama. Rama Himself worshipped Lord Siva at the famous Rameshwaram. Lord Siva is the Lord of Ascetics and Lord of Yogins, robed in space (Digambara).

His trisul (trident) that is held in His right hand represents the three Gunas - Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. That is the emblem of Sovereignty. He wields the world through these three Gunas. The Dhumru in His left hand represents the Shabda Brahman. It represents OM from which all languages are formed. It is He who formed the Sanskrit language out of the Dhumru.

The crescent moon indicates that He has controlled the mind perfectly. The flow of the

Ganges represents the nectar of Immortality. Elephant represents symbolically pride. His wearing the skin of the elephant denotes that He has controlled pride. Tiger represents lust, His sitting on tiger's skin indicates that He has conquered lust. His holding a deer on one hand indicates that He has removed the chanchalata (tossing) of the mind. Deer jumps from one place to another swiftly. His wearing of serpents denotes wisdom and eternity. Serpents live for a large number of years. He is Trilochana, the three-eyed One, in the centre of whose forehead is the third fire, the eye of wisdom.

"Hoam" is the Bija Akshara of Lord-Siva.

He is "Sivam (Auspicious, Subham), Sundaram (beautiful), Kantam (effulgent).

"Santam Sivam Adwaitam"

(Mandhuk Upanishad.)

I bow with folded hands crores of times at the lotus-feet of that Lord Siva who is non-dual, who is the Adhishthan, or support for the world and all minds, who is Sat-Chit-Ananda, who is the Ruler, the Antaryamin, the Sakshi (silent-witness) for everything, who is self-effulgent, self-existent and self-contained (Paripoorna), who is the remover of the primitive Avidya and who is the Adi-Guru or Parama—Guru or Jagad-Guru.

That Lord Siva I am in essence. Shivoham, Shivoham, Shivoham.

SNAKE ON THE BODY OF SIVA

Serpent is the Jiva or the individual soul which rests upon Siva, the Paramatma or the Supreme soul. The five hoods mean the five senses or the five tattvas viz., earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The five hoods or the five serpents represent the five pranas, which hiss in the body like the serpent. The inhalation and exhalation are like the hissing of the serpent. Lord Siva himself became the five Tanmatras, the five Gynanendriyas, the five Karmendriyas and other groups of five. The individual soul enjoys the worldly objects through these Tattvas. When the individual attains knowledge through control of the senses and the mind he finds his eternal resting abode in Lord Siva the supreme soul. This is the esoteric significance of Lord Siva wearing the snake on his body.

Lord Siva is absolutely fearless. Srutis declare, "This Brahman is fearless, Abhayam, Immortal, Amritam." Worldly people are afraid even at the very sight of a snake but Lord Siva is wearing serpents as ornaments in His body. This indicates that Lord Siva is absolutely fearless and immortal.

Generally serpents live for hundreds of years. Wearing of serpents by Lord Siva signifies that He is Eternal!

SIGNIFICANCE OF BHASMA, NANDI, ETC.

Namasivaya is the Mantra of Lord Siva. 'Na' represents earth and Brahma; 'Ma' repre-

sents water and Vishnu; 'Si' fire and Rudra; 'Va' Vayu and Maheswar; 'ya' Akasa and Sadasiva. 'Ya' is Jiva.

Lord Siva has white complexion. What is the significance of white colour? He teaches silently that people should have pure heart and entertain pure thoughts and should be free from crookedness, diplomacy, cunningness, jealousy, hatred etc.

He wears three white lined Bhasma or Vibhuti on His forehead. What is the significance of this? He teaches silently that people should destroy the three impurities viz. Anvam (egoism), Karma (action with expectation of fruits), Maya (illusion) and the three desires or Eshana viz., desire for landed property, desire for woman, desire for gold and the three Vasanas viz., Lokavasana, dehavasana and Shastravasana and then attain Him with a pure heart.

What does the Balipeeta or altar which stands in front of the sanctum sanctorum of a Siva's temple represent? People should destroy their egoism and mine-ness (Ahamta and Mamta) before they attain the Lord. This is the significance.

What does Nandi or the bull which is in the front of Sivalinga represent? Nandi is the attendant or door-keeper of Siva. He is the vehicle of Lord Siva. He represents satsang. If you make association with the sages you are sure to attain God-realisation. Sages will show you the way to reach Him. They will remove pitfalls or

snares that lie on your path, They will clear your doubts and instil in your heart dispassion, discrimination and knowledge. There is no other safe boat than Satsangh to reach the other shore of fear lessness and immortality. Even a moment's satsangh or association with the sages is a great blessing to the aspirants and the worldly-minded persons. They get firm conviction in the existence of God through Satsangh. The sages remove the worldly Samskaras. The company of sages is a formidable fortress to protect oneself from the temptations of Maya.

Lord Siva represents the destructive aspect of the Godhead. He is seen absorbed on the mountain peak of Kailas. He is an embodiment of serenity, renunciation and indifference to the world. The third eye in the centre of His forehead represents His destructive energy which, when let loose destroys the world. Nandi is His favourite. He is the door-keeper. He is seen hushing all nature so that the Lord may not be disturbed in His Samadhi. He has five faces, ten hands, ten eyes, two feet.

Rishabham or the bull represents Dharma Devata. Lord Siva rides on the bull. Bull is His vehicle. This denotes that Lord Siva is the protector of Dharma, is an embodiment of Dharma or righteousness.

Deer represents the Vedas. Its four legs are the four Vedas. Lord Siva is holding the deer on His hand. This indicates that He is the Lord of the Vedas.

He has sword in one of His hands. This signifies that He is the destroyer of births and deaths. The fire in one of His hands shows that He protects the Jivas by burning all fetters.

4. PHILOSOPHY OF ABHISEKAM

Salutations and adorations to the blissful Lord Siva, the lover of Uma or Parvathi, the Lord of all beings (Pasupathi).

"Alankarapriyo Vishnu, Abhiseka priya Sivaha—Lord Vishnu is very fond of Alankar viz., fine dress, beautiful ornaments etc, Siva is fond of Abhisekam," In Siva temples a pot made up of copper or brass with a hole in the centre is kept hanging over the image or Linga of Siva and water is falling on the image through out day and night. Pouring over the linga water, milk, ghee, curd, honey, cocanut water, Panchamrita etc., is Abhisekam. Abhisekam is done for Lord Siva. Rudri is chanted along with the Abhisekam. Lord Siva is propitiated by Abhisekam.

Lord Siva drank the poison that emanated from the ocean and wore the Ganges and moon on His head to cool His head. He has the fiery third eye. Constant Abhisekam cools this eye.

The greatest and the highest Abhisekam is to pour the waters of the pure love on the Atma-linga of the lotus of the heart. The external Abhisekam with various objects will help the growth of devotion and adoration for Lord Siva

and eventually lead to internal Abhisekam with pure abundant flow of love.

Abhiseka is part of Siva Pooja. Without Abhisekam worship of Siva is incomplete. During Abhisekam Rudri, Purushasooktam, Chamka, Mahamrityunjaya Japa etc is chanted in a particular rhythm and order. Monday is very important day for Lord Siva and the thirteenth day of the fortnight (pradosha) is very sacred. On these days devotees of Siva worship Him with special pooja, Abhiseka with Ekadasa-Rudri, Archana, offering plenty of Prasad and illumination.

In Ekadasa Rudri Abhiseka every Rudri is chanted with distinctive articles for Abhiseka. Ganges water, milk, ghee, honey, rose water, cocoanut water, sandal paste, Panchamrita, scented oil, sugarcane juice, lime juice,—are all made use of for Abhiseka. After every Abhiseka pure water is poured over the head of Siva. When Rudri is repeated once the different articles of Abhisekam are made use of after every stanza of the Rudri. The Abhiseka water or other articles used for Abhiseka is considered very sacred and bestow immense benefits on the devotees who take it as the Lord's Prasad. It purifies the heart and destroys countless sins. You must take it with intense Bhav and faith.

When you do Abhiseka with Bhav and devotion your mind is concentrated. Your heart is filled with the image of Lord and divine thoughts. You forget your body and its rela-

tions and surroundings. Egoism gradually vanishes. When there is forgetfulness you begin to enjoy and taste the eternal bliss of Lord Siva. Recitation of Rudri or OM Namasivaya purifies the mind and fills it with Sattva.

If you do Abhisekam with Rudripat in the name of a person suffering from any disease he will be soon freed from that disease. Incurable diseases are cured by Abhisekam. Abhiseka bestows health, wealth, prosperity, progeny etc. Abhisekam on Monday is most auspicious.

By offering Panchamrita, honey, milk etc. to the Lord thoughts of your body diminish. Selfishness slowly vanishes. You derive immense joy. You begin to increase your offerings unto the Lord. Therefore self-sacifice and self-surrender come in. Naturally there is an outpouring from your heart, "I am thine my Lord. All is thine my Lord".

Kannappa Nayanar, a great devotee of Lord Siva, a hunter by profession did Abhiseka with the water in his mouth for the lingam at Kalahasti in South India and propitiated Lord Siva. Lord Siva is pleased by pure devotion. It is the mental Bhav that counts and not the outward show. Lord Siva said to the temple priest, "This water from the mouth of Kannappa, my beloved devotee, is more pure than the water of the Ganges.

A devotee should be regular in doing Abhisekam for the Lord. He should get by heart Rudri and Chamakam. Ekadasa Rudri is more

powerful and effective. In Northern India every man or woman takes a lota of water and pours it on the image of Siva. This also causes beneficial results and brings about the fulfilment of one's desire. Abhisekam on Sivaratri day is very effective.

May you all recite Rudripat which describes the glory of Lord Siva and His manifestations in every living being, in every animate and inanimate being! May you do Abhisekam daily and thus obtain the grace ef Lord Siva! May Lord Viswanath bless you all!

5. FRUIT OF ABHISHEK AND RUDRA JAPA IN SIVA'S TEMPLE

Chamaka is divided into eleven sections. Each of these is then combined with Namaka (Rudra) and repeated. This is called Rudra. Eleven such Rudras make one Laghu Rudra. Eleven such Laghu Rudras make one Maharudra Eleven such Maharudras make one Atirudra.

Rudra is to be repeated after performing the initial Sankalpa, Pooja, Nyasa, Anga, Panchamritasnan and Dhyan. The fruit of Rudra Japa is stated as shown below:—

No. of Japa	Fruit of Japa.
1 Rudra	Freedom from Balagriha (diseases common to children)
3 ,,	Freedom from imminent difficulties with which one is faced.

5 „	Freedom from the evil effects of certain planets occupying unfavourable position.
7 „	Freedom from great fear.
9 „	One repeating Rudri 9 times acquires the fruit of one Vajapeya sacrifice ; he also attains peace of mind.
11 „	He gets the favour of kings and great wealth.
33 „	Attainment of wishes for objects and having no enemies.
77 „	Enjoyment of great happiness.
99 „	He attains son, grandson, wealth, grain, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha and wards off clearly death.
1 Maha rudra	He attains the favour of kings and becomes the Lord of great wealth.
3 „	He fulfills impossible tasks.
5 „	Acquires vast lands.
7 „	He attains the seven worlds.
9 „	Becomes free from births and deaths.
1 Atirudra	Performing one atirudra man becomes God.

Materials for Abhisek: Pure water, milk, sugarcane juice, ghee, honey, waters of sacred rivers, sea water.

For getting rain Abhiseka should be done with pure water. For freedom from diseases, and for begetting a son Abhisek should be done with milk. If Abhiseka is done with milk even a barren woman begets children. The person also attains plenty of cows. If Abhiseka is done with Kusa water one becomes free from all diseases. He who desires wealth should perform Abhiseka with ghee, honey and sugarcane juice. He who desires Moksha should do Abhiseka with sacred waters.

CHAPTER V

1. PHILOSOPHY OF SIVA TANDAVA.

I

पादस्याविर्भवन्तीं अवनतिं अवने रक्षतः स्वैरपातैः
संकोचे नैव दोष्णां मुहुरभि नयतः सर्वलोकातिगानाम् ।
दृष्टिं रक्षेषु नोग्रज्वलनकणमु चं बन्धनो दाह भीतेश्
इत्याधारानुरोधात् त्रिपुर विजयिनः पातुवो दुःख नृत्तम् ॥

The Tandava or celestial dance of Lord Siva is extremely thrilling and charming, exquisitely graceful in pose and rhythm and intensely piercing in effect.

Nritya or Tandava is an inseparable, sacred movement of the various limbs of the body in accordance with the iuner divine Bhav. Nritya is a divine science. The Adigurus for this celestial Nritya were Lord Siva, Krishna and Mother Kali. In Nritya the six Bhavas viz., Srishti, Samhar, Vidya, Avidya, Gathi and Agathi are demonstrated.

The dance of Lord Siva is for the welfare of the world. The object of His dance is to free the souls from the fetters of Maya, from the three bonds of Anavamal, Karma and Mayamal. He is not the destroyer but He is the regenerator. He is the mangal Data and Ananda Data, bestower of auspiciousness and bliss. He is more easily pleased than Lord Hari. He grants boons quickly, for a little tapas or a little recitation of His five letters.

Aghad Bhum is His song of dance. When Siva starts His dance Brahma, Vishnu, the Siva Ganas and Kali with Her bowl of skull join Him. Have you not seen the picture of Pradosha Nritya? It will give you an idea of the dance of Siva.

Kali was very proud of her ability in dancing. Siva started dancing to quell Her pride. He danced very beautifully, very artistically. Kali had to put Her face down in shame.

Lord Siva wears a deer on the left upper hand. He has trident on the right lower arm. He has fire and Damaru and Malu or a kind of weapon. He wears five serpents as ornaments. He wears a garland of skulls He is pressing with His feet the demon Muyalaka, a dwarf holding a cobra. He faces south. Panchakshari itself is His body. Lord Siva says, "Control the five senses which are hissing like serpents. The mind is jumping like a deer. Control the mind. Burn it in the fire of meditation. Strike it down with the rod of Trisula of discrimination. You

can attain Me." This is the philosophical significance of the picture of Lord Siva.

You can witness the dance of Siva in the rising waves of the ocean, in the oscillation of the mind, in the movements of the senses and the pranas, in the rotation of the planets and constellations, in cosmic pralaya, in epidemics of infectious diseases, in huge inundations and volcanic eruptions, in earthquakes, landslips, lightning and thunder, in huge conflagrations and cyclonic storm.

As soon as the Guna Samya Avastha wherein the three Gunas exist in a state of equilibrium is disturbed by the will of the Lord, the Gunas manifest and quintuplication of elements take place. There is vibration of OMkara or Sabdha Brahmam. There is manifestation of primal energy. This is the dance of Siva. The whole cosmic play or activity or lila is the dance of Siva. All movements within the cosmos are His dance. He gazes on Prakriti and energises Her. Mind, Prana, matter begin to dance. When He begins to dance the Sakti Tattva manifests. From Sakti Nada proceeds and from Nada, Bindu originates. Then the universe of names and forms is projected. The undifferentiated matter, energy and sound become differentiated.

The burning grounds are the abodes of Siva. Rudra is the destructive aspect of the Lord. Lord Siva dances in the crematorium with Kali

in His ten-armed form. The Siva Ganas also join with Him in the dance.

Nataraja of Chidambaram is the expert dancer. He has four hands. He wears the Ganges and the crescent moon on his matted locks. He holds Damaru in his right hand. He shows Abhaya Mudra to his devotees with His raised left hand. The significance is 'O devotees! do not be afraid. I shall protect you all.' One left hand holds the fire. The other right hand points down on the Asura Muyalaka who is holding a cobra. He has raised the left foot in a beautiful manner.

The sound of the drum invites the individual souls to his feet. It represents OMkara. All the sanskrit alphabets have come out of the play of the Damaru. Creation arises from Damaru. The hand which shows Abhaya Mudra gives protection. Destruction proceeds from fire. The raised foot indicates Maya or illusion. The hand which points down shows that His feet are the sole refuge of the individual souls. Tiruakshi represents Omkara or Pranava.

Chidambaram is a sacred place of pilgrimage in south India. All the Tamil saints have sung hymns in praise of Nataraja. There is Akasa lingam here which indicates that Lord Siva is formless and attributeless. The popular saying goes, "He who dies in Benares with Ram nam in his lips and heart attains salvation. He who remembers Arunachalam or Tiruvannamalai attains Mukti. He who gets Darshan of Nata-

raja attains final emancipation. Real Chidambaram is within the heart. Nataraja dances in the hearts of devotees who have burnt egoism, lust, hatred, pride and jealousy.

He dances quite gently. If He dances vehemently the whole earth will sink down at once. He dances with His eyes closed because the sparks from His eyes will consume the entire universe. The five activities of the Lord Panchakrityas viz., Sristi (creation), Sthithi (Preservation), Samhara (destruction), Tirobhava (illusion) and Anugraha (grace) are the dance of Siva.

May you all comprehend the true significance of the dance of Siva. May you all dance in ecstacy in tune with Lord Siva and merge in Him and enjoy the Sivananda, the final beatitude of life!

2. PHILOSOPHY OF SIVA TANDAVA

II

Lord Siva is an embodiment of wisdom. He is the light of lights. He is Paramjvoti or supreme Light. He is self-luminous or Svayam Jyoti. The dance of Siva represents the rhythm and movement of the world-spirit. At His dance the evil forces and darkness quiver and vanish.

In the night of Brahman or during Pralaya Prakriti is inert, motionless. There is Guna Samya Avastha. The three Gunas are in a state of equilibrium or poise. She cannot dance

till Lord Siva wills it. Lord Siva rises from His profound silence and begins to dance. The undifferentiated sound becomes differentiated through the vibration set up by the movements of His Damaru or drum. Sabda Brahman comes into being. The undifferentiated energy also becomes differentiatd. The equipoise in the Gunas becomes disturbed. The three Gunas Sattva, Rajas and Tamas manifest. All the spheres, the atoms and the electrons also dance rhythmically and in an orderly manner. Atoms dance in the molecule and molecules dance in all bodies. Stars dance in time and space. Prakriti also begins to dance about Him as His glory or Vibhuti. The Prana begins to operate on Akasa or subtle matter. Various forms manifest. Hiranyagarbha or the golden egg or cosmic mind also manifests.

When the time comes Lord Siva destroys all names and forms by fire while dancing. There is stillness again.

This is the symbolism involved in the form of Nataraja. The deer in the hand of Siva represents Asuddha Maya. The axe represents knowledge which destroys ignorance. The drum, the outstretched arm that carries fire, the water (Ganga), the hand with the axe, the foot standing on the Asura Muyalakan are the formless or Sukshma Panchakshara.

Srishti (creation) is in the drum, Sthithi (preservation) is in the Abhaya hand; Samhara (destruction) is in the hand that holds the axe

Tirobhava (veiling) is in the pressing foot; and Anugraha (or blessing) is in the uplifted foot.

There are various kinds of dances of Siva. There are the Samhara dance, the five dances, six dances, the eight dances, the Kodu Kotti dance, the Pandam dance, the Kodu dance. The Kodu Kotti is the dance after the destruction of everything. Pandam is the dance after the destruction of the three cities, wearing the ashes of those cities. Kodu or Kapalam is the dance holding Brahma's head in the hand. Samhara is the dance at the time of dissolution or Pralaya.

Srishti, Sthithi, Samhara, Tirobhava, and Anugraha and also Muni-Tandava, Anavarata Tandava and Ananda Tandava constitute the eight dances. Sivananda dance, Sundara dance, the golden city dance, the golden Chidambaram dance and the wonderful dance form the five dances. The five funitious dances and the Ananda dance in the end form the six dances.

Lord Siva is the only dancer. He is the Master or expert dancer. He is the King of dancers. He quelled the pride of Kali. Lord Siva's destruction is not a single act but is a series of acts. There is a different kind of dance at every stage.

May Lord Nataraja, the great dancer help you in the attainment of Sivanandam or the eternal bliss of Siva!!

3. LORD NATARAJA—THE GREAT DANCER

'Ya' in Namasivaya represents Jiva or the individual soul. The Panchakshara Namasivaya forms the body of Lord Siva. The hand that wears fire is 'Na'. The foot that presses the demon Muyalaka is 'Ma'. The hand that holds Damaru is 'Si'. The right and left hands that move about are 'Va'. The hand that shows "Abhaya" is 'Ya'.

Once upon a time a group of Rishis abandoned their faith in the true Lord and took to the worship of false deities. Lord Siva wanted to teach them a lesson. He stirred in them strange passions. The Rishis became very furious. They created many evils through their power of penance and let them loose upon Siva. Lord Siva overcame them and finally defeated the great Kali, a creation of the Rishis by the cosmic dance.

At the time of Sri Nataraja's dance Patanjali Rishi and Vyagrapada were witnessing the dance and enjoying it. They were standing on either side of the Lord. Even in paintings and sculpture of the Nataraja's Murti you will find the figures of Patanjali and Vyagrapada on either side of Nataraja. The lower part of the body of Vyagrapada will resemble that of tiger and the corresponding part of Patanjali that of the serpent.

The most wonderful dance of Nataraja is the Urdhava Tandava. In this dance the left leg is lifted up and the toe points to the sky. This is

the most difficult form of dance. Nataraj defeated Kali by this pose in dancing. Kali successfully competed with Nataraja in all other modes of dance. Nataraja while dancing lost his ear ring. He succeeded by means of his toe, in this form of dance, in restoring the ornament to its original place without the knowledge of the audience.

Nataraja danced with his right leg lifted upwards. This is the Ghajahastha pose in dancing or Nritya. He danced continuously without changing His legs once.

Thers is another dance pose of Siva on the head of an elephant. In this form Lord Siva is known as Gajasena Murthi. At the foot of Lord Siva there is the head of an elephant monster. Lord Siva has eight hands. He holds the trident, the drum and the nose in His three right hands. He holds the shield and the skull in his two left hands. The third left hand is held in Vismaya pose.

Siva killed the elephant and used the skin as His garment. An Asura assumed the form of an elephant to kill the Brahmins who were sitting round the Linga of Viswanath in Benares absorbed in meditation. Lord Siva came out suddenly from the Linga and killed the elephant monster.

4. DANCE OF SIVA

The flood of nineteen-twentyfour
Was horrible in Rikhikesh
It carried away many Mahatmas and Sadhus
This is the dance of Siva.

The impetuous Chandrabhaga
Turned its course in 1943
People crossed it with difficulty
With the help of elephant
This is the dance of Siva.

In the morning of eleventh January 1945
There was fall of snow
On the surrounding Himalayas
The chill was terrible
This is the Dance of Siva.

Lord Vishwanath dwells now
In a place where there was forest
He pleases the whole world
He bestows health and long life
This is the dance of Siva.

Forests become Ashrams
Islands become an ocean
Ocean becomes an Island
Cities become deserts
This is the dance of Siva.

Siva gazes His Sakti
Then there is the atomic dance
There is the dance of Prakriti
Lord Siva merely witnesses
This is the dance of Siva.

Then Prana vibrates, mind moves
Senses function, Buddhi operates
Heart pumps, lungs breathe
Stomach digests, intestines excrete
This is the dance of Siva

This is a world of change
A changing thing is perishable
Know the Imperishable
Which is changeless
And become Immortal.

CHAPTER VI

1. SAKTI YOGA PHILOSOPHY

I

The power or active aspect of the immanent God is Sakti. Sakti is the embodiment of power. She is the supporter of the vast universe. She is the supreme power by which the world is upheld. She is the universal mother. She is Durga, Kali, Chandi, Chamundi, Tripurasundari, Rajeswari. There is no difference between God and His Sakti, just as there is no difference between fire and its burning power.

He who worships Sakti, that is, God in Mother form, as the supreme power which creates, sustains and withdraws the universe, is a Sakta. All women are forms of the Divine Mother.

Siva is the unchanging consciousness. Sakti is His changing power which appears as mind and matter. Saktivada or Saktadarshana is a form of monism or Adwaitavada.

A Sakta does Sadhana which helps the union of Siva and Sakti through the awakening of the forces within the body. He becomes a Siddha in the Sadhana when he is able to awaken Kundalini and pierce the six chakras. This is to be done in a perfect practical way under the guidance of a Guru who has become perfect. The Sakti must be awakened by Dhyana, by

Bhava, by Japa, by Mantra Sakti. The mother, the embodiment of the fifty letters is present in the various letters in the different Chakras. When the chords of a musical instrument, are struck harmoniously, fine music is produced. Even so, when the chords of the letters are struck in their order, the Mother who moves in the six chakras and who is the very self of the letters awakens herself. The Sadhaka attains Siddhi easily when she is roused. It is difficult to say when and how she shows Herself and to what Sadhaka. Sadhana means unfolding, rousing up or awakening of power or Sakti. Mode of Sadhana depends upon the tendencies and capacities of the Sadhaka.

Sakti may be termed as that by which we live and have our being in this universe. In this world all the wants of the child are provided by the mother. The child's growth, development and sustenance are looked after by the mother. Even so all the necessaries of life and its activities in this world and the energy needed for it depends upon sakti or the universal Mother.

No one can free himself from the thraldom of mind and matter without Mother's grace. The fetters of Maya are too hard to break. If you worship Her as the great Mother you can very easily go beyond Prakriti through Her benign grace and blessings. She will remove all obstacles in the path and lead you safely into the illimitable domain of eternal bliss and make you free. When she is pleased and bestows Her

blessings on you, then alone you can free yourself from the bondage of this formidable Samsara.

The first syllable which a child or a quadruped utters is the name of the beloved mother. Is there any child which does not owe its all to the affection and love of its mother? It is the mother who protects you, consoles you, cheers you and nurses you. She is your friend, philosopher, protector and guide throughout your life. Human mother is a manifestation of the universal Mother.

The supreme Lord is represented as Siva and His power is represented as his wife, Sakti or Durga or Kali. Just as the husband and wife look after the well-being of the family, so also Lord Siva and His Sakti are engaged in looking after the affairs of the world.

Radha, Durga, Laksmi, Saraswathi and Savitri are the five primary forms of Prakriti or Devi. Durga destroyed Madhu and Kaitabha through Vishnu. As Mahalaksmi she destroyed the Asura Mahisha and as Saraswathi she destroyed Sumbha and Nisumbha with their companions Dhumralochana, Chanda, Munda and Raktabija.

When Vishnu and Mahadeva destroyed various Asuras, the power of Devi was behind them. Devi took Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra and gave them necessary Sakti to proceed with the work of creation, preservation and destruction. She is at the centre of the universe. She is in

Muladhara chakra in our bodies. She vitalises the body through the Sushumna. She vitalises the universe from the summit of Mount Meru.

In this system of Sakti philosophy Siva is omnipresent, impersonal, inactive. He is pure consciousness. Sakti is dynamic. Siva and Sakti are related as Prakasa and Vimarsa. Sakti or Vimarsa is the power that is latent in the pure consciousness. Vimarsa gives rise to the world of distinctions. Siva is chit. Sakti is Chidrupini. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva do their functions of creation, preservation and destructions in obedience to Sakti. Sakti is endowed with Iccha (will), Jnana (knowledge) and Kriya (action). Siva and Sakti are one. Sakti Tattva and Siva Tattva are inseparable. Siva is always with Sakti. There are thirty-six tattvas in Sakti philosophy. Sakti is in Sakti Tattva, Nada in Sadakhya Tattva, Bindu in Iswara Tattva. The creative aspect of the supreme Siva is called Siva Tattva. Siva Tattva is the first creative movement. Sakti Tattva is the will of Siva. It is the seed and womb of the entire world.

The first manifestation is called the sadakhya or sadasiva Tattva. In this Tattva there is the beginning of formation of ideas. There is Nada Sakti in this Tattva. Next comes Ishwara Tattva. This Tattva is called Bindu. The fourth Tattva is vidya or Suddhavidya. Then Prakriti modifies into the Tattvas of mind, senses and the matter which constitutes the world.

Nada, Bindu are all names for different aspects of Sakti. Nada is really Siva Sakti. Siva has two aspects. In one aspect he is the supreme changeless one who is satchitananda. This is para samvit. In the other aspect he changes as the world. The cause of the change is Siva Tattva. This Siva Tattva and Sakti Tattva are inseparable. Sakti Tattva is the first dynamic aspect of Brahman.

Nishkala Siva is Nirguna Siva. He is not connected with the creative Sakti. Sakala Siva is associated with the creative Sakti. Maya or Prakriti is within the womb of Sakti. Maya is the matrix of the world. Maya is potential in the state of dissolution. She is dynamic in creation. Maya evolves into the several material elements and other pysical parts of all sentient creatures under the direction of Sakti. There are thirty-six tattvas in Sakti philosophy. In Sakti philosophy we have Brahman, Sakti, Nada, Bindu and Suddhamaya. In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy we have Siva, Sakti, Sadakhya and the Suddhamaya. The rest of the evolution in Sakti philosophy is the same as in Saiva Siddhanta philosophy.

Knowledge of Sakti leads to salvation. "Saktijnanam vina devi nirvanam naiva jayati—O Devi without the knowledge of Sakti Mukti cannot be attained" (Ishwara says to Devi). The Jiva or the individual soul thinks when he is under the influence of Maya that he is the doer and the enjoyer and identifies himself with the body.

Through the grace of Sakti and through Sadhana or self-culture the individual soul frees himself from all fetters attains spiritual insight and merges himself in the Supreme.

There is in reality nothing but the one self. The experienced is nothing but the experiencer. Brahman appears as the world through the mirror of Mind or Maya. An object is nothing but the one Self appearing through Maya as non-self to itself as subject. Triputi or knower, knowledge, knowable vanishes in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Supreme Siva or Brahman alone exists.

In the Kenopanishad it is said that the gods became puffed up with a victory over the Asuras. They wrongly took the success to be the result of their own valour and prowess. The Lord wanted to teach them a lesson. He appeared before them in the form of a Yaksha, a huge form the beginning and end of which were not visible. The Devas wanted to find out the identity of this form and sent Agni for this purpose. The Yaksha asked Agni, "what is your name and power?" Agni replied, "I am Agni (Jatavedas). I can burn up the whole universe in a minute". The Yaksha placed before Agni a dry blade of grass and asked him to burn it. Agni was not able to burn it. He ran away from the Yaksha in shame. The gods then sent Vayu to enquire who he was. Vayu approached the Yaksha. The Yaksha said to Vayu "who are you ? what is your power?" Vayu said, "I am wind-god. I can blow the whole world in a minute." The Yaksha then

placed a blade of grass before Vayu and told him to blow that away. Vayu could not make it move an inch from its place. He left the place in shame. Last of all came Indra himself. When Indra reached the place he found that the Yaksha had vanished.

Then Uma appeared before Indra and revealed to him the real identity of the Yaksha. She said to Indra, "It is the power of the Divine Mother and not that of the gods that crowned the gods with victory. It is the Sakti of Uma or Haimavati, sister of Krishna that is the source of the strength of all the gods". Sakti is the great teacher of Jnana. She sheds wisdom on her devotees.

May you all obtain the grace of Sakti or the universal Mother and enjoy the supreme bliss of the final emancipation.

2. SAKTI YOGA PHILOSOPHY

II

Sakti is Chidroopini. She is pure, blissful Consciousness. She is the Mother of Nature. She is Nature itself. She is the power of Lord Siva or Brahman. She runs this world-show. She maintains the sportive play of Lila of the Lord. She is Jagad Janani, creator of the world, Mahishasuramardinee, destroyer of Mahishasura, Bhrantinashinee (destroyer of illusion or Avidya), and Daridrya-nashini (destroyer of poverty).

Devi is Sakti of Lord Siva. She is Jada Sakti and Chit Sakti. She is Iccha Sakti, Kriya

Sakti and Jnana Sakti. She is Maya Sakti. Sakti is Prakriti, Maya, Mahamaya, Sri Vidya. Sakti is Brahman itself. She is Lalita, Kundalini, Rajeshwari, and Tripurasundari, Sati, Parvati. Sati manifested to Lord Siva in the ten forms as the Dasa Maha Vidya, viz., Kali, Bagalamukhi, Chinnamasta, Bhuvaneshwari, Matangi, Shodasi, Dhoomavati, Tripurasundari, Tara and Bhairavi.

Worship of Sakti or Saktism is one of the oldest and most widespread religions in the world. Everybody in this world wants power, loves to possess power. He is elated by power. He wants to domineer over others through power. War is the outcome of greed for power. Scientists are followers of Saktism. He who wishes to develop will-power and charming personality is a follower of Saktism. In reality, every man in this world is a follower of Saktism.

Scientists say now that everything is energy only and that energy is the physical ultimate of all forms of matter. The followers of the Sakta School of philosophy have said the same thing, long ago. They further say that this energy is only a limited manifestation of the Infinite Supreme Power or Maha Sakti.

Sakti is always with Siva. They are inseparable like fire and heat. Sakti evolves Nada and Nada Bindu. The world is a manifestation of Sakti. Shuddha Maya is Chit Sakti. Prakriti is Jada Sakti. Nada, Bindu and the rest are only names for different aspects of Sakti.

The countless universes are only dust of divine Mother's holy feet. Her glory is ineffable. Her splendour is indescribable. Her greatness is unfathomable. She showers Her grace on Her sincere devotees. She leads the individual soul from Chakra to Chakra, from plane to plane and unifies him with Lord Siva in the Sahasrara.

The body is Sakti, The needs of the body are the needs of Sakti. When man enjoys it is Sakti who enjoys through him. His eyes, ears, hands and feet are Hers. She sees through his hands, and hears through his ears. Body, mind, prana, egoism, intellect, organs and all the other functions are Her manifestations.

Saktism speaks of personal and the impersonal aspects of Godhead. Brahma is Nishkala or without Prakriti and Sakala or with Prakriti. The Vedantin speaks of Nirupadhika Brahman (Pure Nirguna Brahma without Maya) and Sopadhika Brahma (with Upadhi or Maya) or Saguna Brahman. It is all the same. Names only are different. It is a play of words or Sabda Jalam. People fight on words only, carry on lingual warfare-hair-splitting, logical chopping and intellectual gymnastics. In reality the essence is one. Clay is the truth. All the modifications such as pot, etc., are in name only. In Nirguna Brahma Sakti is potential, whereas in Saguna Brahma it is kinetic or dynamic.

The basis of Saktism is the Veda. Saktism upholds that the only source and authority

(Pramana) regarding transcendental or supersensual matters such as the nature of Brahman, etc., is Veda. Saktism is only Vedanta. The Saktas have the same spiritual experience as that of a Vedantin.

The Devi-Sookta of the Rig-Veda, the Sri Sookta, Durga Sookta, Bhoo Sookta and Neela Sookta, and the specific Sakta Upanishads such as Tripuratapini Upanishat, Sitopanishat, Devi Upanishat, Saubhagya-Upanishat, Saraswati Upanishat, Bhavanopanishat, Bahvrichopanishat, etc, emphatically declare about the Mother aspect of God. The Kena Upanishat also speaks of Uma Hemavathi who imparted wisdom of the Self to Indra and the Devas.

Divine Mother is everywhere triple. She is endowed with the three gunas, viz., Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. She manifests as will (Iccha Sakti), Action (Kriya Sakti) and Knowledge (Jnana Sakti). She is Brahma Sakti (Saraswati) in conjunction with Brahma, Vishnu Sakti (Lakshmi) in conjunction with Lord Vishnu, Siva Sakti (Gouri) in conjunction with Lord Siva. Hence she is called Tripurasundari.

The abode of Tripurasundari, the Divine Mother is called Sri Nagara. This magnificent abode is surrounded by twenty-five ramparts, which represent the twenty-five Tattwas. The resplendent Chintamani palace is in the middle. The Divine Mother sits in the Bindu Peetha in Sri Chakra in that wonderful palace. There is a similar abode for Her in the body of man

also. The whole world is Her body. Mountains are Her bones. Rivers are Her veins. Ocean is Her bladder. Sun and moon are Her eyes. Wind is Her breath. Agni is her mouth.

The Sakta enjoys Bhukti (enjoyment in the world) and Mukti (liberation from all worlds). Siva is an embodiment of Bliss and Knowledge. Siva himself appears in the form of man with a life — mixture of pleasure and pain. If you remember this point always, all dualism, all hatred, jealousy, pride will vanish. You must consider every human function as worship of a religious act. Answering calls of nature, micturition, talking, eating, walking, seeing, hearing become worship of Lord, if you develop the right attitude. It is Siva who works in and through man. Where then is egoism or individuality? All human actions are divine actions. One universal life throbs in the hearts of all, sees in the eyes of all, works in the hands of all, hears in the ears of all. What a magnificent experience it is, if one can feel this by crushing this little 'I' ! The old Samskaras, the old vasanas, the old habits of thinking, stand in the way of your realising this experience-Whole.

The aspirant thinks that the world is identical with the divine Mother. He moves about thinking his own form to be the form of the divine mother and thus beholds oneness everywhere. He also feels that the Divine Mother is identical with para Brahman.

The advanced Sadhak feels, "I am the Devi

and the Devi is in me'. He worships himself as Devi instead of adoring any external object. He says "Saham" 'I am she' (Devi).

Saktism is not mere theory, or philosophy. It prescribes systematic Sadhana of Yoga, regular discipline, according to the temperament, capacity and degree of evolution of the Sadhak. It helps the aspirant to arouse the kundalini and unite her with Lord Siva and to enjoy the Supreme bliss or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. When Kundalini sleeps man is awake to the world. He has objective consciousness. When she awakes, he sleeps. He loses all consciousness of the world and becomes one with the Lord. In Samadhi the body is maintained by the nectar which flows from the union of Siva and Sakti with Sahasrara.

Guru is indispensable for the practice of Sakti Yoga Sadhana. He initiates the aspirant and transmits the divine Sakti.

Physical contact with a female is gross Maithuna. This is due to Pasu Bhava or animal disposition or brutal instinct. Mother Kundalini Sakti unites with Lord Siva in Sahasrara during Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is real Maithuna or blissful union. This is due to Divya Bhava or divine disposition. You must rise from Pasu Bhava to Divya Bhava, through satsang, service of guru, renunciation and dispassion, discrimination, Japa and meditation.

Worship of the Divine Mother with intense faith and perfect devotion and self-surrender will

help you to attain Her grace. Through Her grace alone you can attain knowledge of the Imperishable.

Glory to Tripurasundari, the World-Mother, who is also Raja-Rajeshwari and Lalita Devi. May her blessings be upon you all.

3. SIVA AND SAKTI

Sakti Tattva is really the negative aspect of the Siva Tattva. Though they are spoken of separately they are really one. Sakti Tattva is the will of Siva.

Ambal, Ambikai, Gauri, Jnanambika, Durga, Kali, Rajeshwari, Tripurasundari are all other names for Sakti. Sakti is Herself pure blissful consciousness and is nature itself born of the creative play of Her thought. The Sakti cult is the conception of God as the universal Mother.

Sakti is spoken of as Mother, because that is the aspect of the Supreme in which she is regarded as the genetrix and nourisher of the Universe. But God is neither male nor female. He is named according to the body in which He is manifested.

Hinduism is the only religion in the world which has emphasised much the motherhood of God. The Devi Sookta appears in the tenth mandal of the Rig Veda. It was revealed by Bak, the daughter of Maharishi Ambrin. In this Rig Vedic hymn addressed to the Divine Mother, Bak speaks of her realisation of God as

Mother who pervades the whole universe. In Bengal Mother worship is very prevalent. 'Ma' is always on the lips of every Bengalee.

Siva and Sakti are essentially one. It is said in the very first verse of Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa that Saki and Siva stand to each other in the same relationship as the word and its meaning. Just as heat and fire are inseparable, so Sakti and Siva are inseparable. Lord Siva cannot do anything without Sakti. This is emphasised by Sri Sankaracharya in the first verse of Saundarya Lahari.

Sakti is like the snake with motion. Siva is like the motionless snake. Waveless ocean is Siva. Ocean with waves is Sakti. The transcendental supreme being is Siva. The manifested, immanent aspect of the supreme is Sakti. Siva is attributeless. He is Niskriya. Sakti is with attributes. She creates. Sakti is compared to a rope made up of tricoloured threads.

Mother Kali dances on the breast of Siva. She has a terrible form but she is not really terrible. She is all-merciful and gentle. She wears a garland made up of the skulls. What does this mean? She wears the heads of Her devotees. How loving and affectionate she is to Her devotees!

Kali is the divine Mother. She is the Sakti or power of Lord Siva. She is the dynamic aspect of Siva. Siva is the static aspect. Lord Siva is like a dead corpse. What does this signify? He is absolutely calm, motionless, breathless

with His eyes closed in Samadhi. He is actionless, changeless. He is untouched by the cosmic play or Lila that is eternally going on on His breast,

He is absolutely dead to the world. He is beyond the three Gunas. There is no duality, no plurality, no relativity, no differentiation between subject and object, no distinction, no difference, no Triputi, no Dwandwas, no Raga Dwesha, no good and evil in Him. He is ever pure, Nirlipta (unattached). And yet He is the source, substratum, support, first cause for this universe. He simply gazes. Sakti is vitalised. She works and creates. In His mere presence Sakti keeps up the play of this universe or Lila. The whole world is a mere vibration or spandan in Him. He is superconscious and yet He has cosmic consciousness. He constituted all the names aud forms and yet He is above all names and forms. This is a great marvel and a supreme mystery which cannot be comprehended by the finite intellect.

Without Siva, Sakti has no existence and without Sakti Siva has no expression. It is through Sakti that the Impersonal Supreme Being Siva or Nirguna Brahman becomes the Personal Being or Saguna Brahman. Siva or Nirguna Brahman becomes the Personal Being or Saguna Brahman. Siva is the soul of Durga or Kali. Durga or Kali is identical with Siva. Siva is Satchitananda. Durga or Kali is Satchitananda Mayee. Siva and Sakti are one and

neither is higher than the other. Sakti is chit, Chidrupini, Chinmatra Rupini.

4. SIVA AND PARVATI

O Devi! all auspicious one, giver of success and prosperity, we bow to Thee! Shower peace and amity on this earth and protect us ever more by your kind compassion at a glance!

The daughter of the king of Parvatas, Himavan, is Parvati. She is the wife or Sakti of Lord Siva. She is the matrix of the universe. She is the revealer of Brahman. She is not only Loka Mata or world mother but also Brahma Vidya. One of her names is Sivajnana Pradayini. She is also called Siva Deotee, Sivaradhya, Sivamoorthi, and Sivankaree.

The grace of Devi is an indispensable factor for the attainment of God-realisation. Paravathi or Sakti is all-in all. You must rouse the Sakti by Yoga. Then the grace of Sakti will lead you to God-realisation and the attainment of the final emancipation and the achievement of infinite, eternal, supreme bliss.

The glorious story of Parvati is related in detail in the Maheswara Khanda of the Skanda Purana. Sati, the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, the son of Brahma, was wedded to Lord Siva. Daksha did not like his son-in-law on account of his queer form, strange manners and peculiar habits. Daksha performed a sacrifice. He did not invite his daughter and son-in-law. Sati felt the insult and went to her father and ques-

tioned him. He gave her a displeasing reply. Sati got enraged at this. She did not want any more to be called his daughter. She preferred to offer her body to fire and to be born again as Parvati to marry Siva. She created fire through her Yoga's power and destroyed herself in the Yogagni.

Lord Siva sent Virabhadra. He destroyed the sacrifice and drove away all the Devas who assembled there. The head of Daksha was cut off and thrown into the fire. Lord Siva had a goat's head stuck to the body of Daksha at the request of Brahma.

Lord Siva repaired to the Himalayas to do austerities. Asura Taraka had a boon from Brahma that he should die only at the hands of the son of Siva and Parvati. Therefore the Devas requested Himavan to have Sati as his daughter. Himavan agreed. Sati was born as Parvati, the daughter of Himavan. She served Lord Siva during his penance and worshipped Him. Lord Siva married Parvati.

Narada proceeded to Kailasa and saw Siva and Parvati with one body, half male, half-female in the form of Ardhanareeswara. He wanted to see their play at dice. Lord Siva said that he won the game. Parvati said that she was victorious. There was a quarrel. Siva left Parvati and went to practise austerities. Parvati assumed the form of a huntress and met Siva. Siva fell in love with the huntress. He went with her to her father to get his consent for the marriage.

Narada informed Lord Siva that the huntress is Parvati. Narada told Parvati to apologise to Her Lord. They were reunited.

Siva assumed the form of Arunachala hill as a linga He subdued the pride of Brahma and Vishnu who were quarrelling as to their relative greatness. Arunachala is a Tejas Linga. Parvati saw Siva as Arunachala Ishwara. Siva took Parvati back to His side and made her again Ardhanari

Asura Taraka greatly oppressed the Devas. Mahi Sagara Sangama Kshetra was his capital. Lord Subrmania, the second son of Parvati, killed the Asura on the seventh day after his birth.

Parvati created a child with the face of an elephant for her pleasure. He was Lord Ganesa. He was made the Lord of all creatures to remove their obstacles. One day Lord Siva offered a fruit saying that it would be given to that child who would go round the world first. Lord Subramania proceeded on a tour round the world. Lord Ganesa went round His father Siva, the Maha Linga who enveloped the whole universe and got the fruit.

Parvati had a dark skin. One day Lord Siva playfully referred to her dark colour. She was much touched by Siva's remark. She went to the Himalayas to perform austerities. She attained a beautiful complexion and came to be called Gauri. Gauri joined Siva as Ardhanariswari by the grace of Brahma.

One day Parvati came behind Lord Siva and

closed His eyes. The whole universe lost life and light. Siva asked Parvati to practise austerities in order to make amends for her folly. She proceeded to Kanchi (Conjeevaram) and did rigorous penance. Lord Siva created a flood. The Siva Linga which Parvati was worshipping was about to be washed away. She embraced the Linga. The Linga remained there as Ekambareswara. She remained there as Kamakshi for the welfare of the world.

Parvati ever dwells with Siva as His Sakti. She is the Divine Mother of this Universe. She sheds wisdom and grace on Her devotees and makes them attain union with Her Lord. Salutations to Parvati and Siva, the real parents of all beings.

5. THE DIVINE MOTHER

Sri Sankaracharya begins his Saundarya Lahari with a sloka in which he shows that the combination of Siva and Sakti is the basis of all existence. Kalidasa prays in his first sloka to Parvathi and Lord Siva as the joint parents of the universe.

Children are more familiar with the mother than with the father. Mother is an embodiment of affection, tenderness and love. She looks after the wants of the children. Whenever a child wants anything it approaches the mother rather than the father. In spiritual matters also the aspirant has more concern with Mother Kali than with father Siva. Siva is indifferent to the external world. He is unattached. He is

lost in Samadhi with His eyes closed. It is Sakti or the Divine Mother alone who really looks after the affairs of the world. She will introduce to Her Lord for the attainment of final emancipation when she is pleased with the earnestness of the devotee.

Siva and Sakti are inseparable. This is shown in Ardhanariswara—Siva and Parvathi (with one body, half-male and half-female). Lord Siva has Parvathi as His left half of His body.

Siva Gyana leads us on to the realisation of Self and bestows on us eternal bliss and frees us from births and deaths. It shows us the light of life. It is the eye of intuition. It is the third eye of Siva, This third eye destroys all illusions and passions.

Sakti is thought of in various forms. Saraswathi is the goddess of learning. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth. Parvathi or Uma is the bliss-bestowing Goddess.

The Markandeya Purana contains seven hundred verses which are known as the Sapta Sati or the Chandi or the Devi Mahatmya. It is one of the most famous religious texts of the Hindus. It ranks almost equal with the Gita. It describes in an allegorical form that in the path of salvation the chief obstacles are our own desire, anger, greed and ignorance and we can overcome them through the grace of divine mother if we sincerely worship Her.

The book gives a beautiful description of the three aspects of the Mother as Mahakali, Maha-

lakshmi, and Maha Saraswathi—the Tamasic, the Rajasic and the Sattvic aspects of the Divine Mother.

The Devas were oppressed by the Asuras. The Gods invoked the blessings of Divine Mother She appeared as the above three forms and destroyed the Asuras-and protected the Gods. The Divine Mother has given to men as well as Gods, Her definite and infallible promise is that whenever they would remember Her in danger or difficulties She will save them.

6. SAKTI ENERGISES THE TRIMURTIS

O Lord Siva ! silent adorations unto Thee ! Thou art the only refuge, the only object of adoration, the one Governor of the Universe, the self effulgent—Being. Thou art the creator, preserver and destroyer of the Universe. Thou art the Highest, the Immovable, the Absolute.

Sakti is the energy or the vital power that makes any activity possible. When a man does any work he does it only by virtue of his Sakti. If he is unable to do the work he says that he has no Sakti to do that work. Hence Sakti is that which enables one to work. Sakti is Devi Sakti is the Divine Mother. Mind is Sakti. Prana is Sakti. Will is Sakti.

Devi Bhagavta deals with the forms of Prakriti. Devi took the Trimurtis to her abode in Manidwipa, gave them their consorts Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati and sent them out for the life of the universe in the new Kalpa.

Lord Narayna created Brahma from his navel. Brahma did not know what to do. Vishnu and Siva also did not know how to set going the life of a new Universe in a new Kalpa after the dissolution. They were lifted in a Vimana or celestial car and they soon reached a strange region and they were fransformed into women. They were in a land of women headed by a Devi. It was Manidwipa in the Sudha Samudra, the ocean of nectar. The newly made women stayed there, for a hundred years. They did not know who they were, why they were there and what they were to do.

Then they were put in the company of men and they themselves became men. They were coupled, Brahma with Saraswati, Vishnu with Lakshmi and Siva with Parvati. They found themselves at once in their original places and then they knew what to do. They understood their functions. The Trimurtis attained Sakti through association with the Devi.

Parvati is the Sakti of Lord Siva who bestows Jnana and Mukti on men. Lakshmi is the Sakti of Vishnu who gives prosperity to the people. Saraswti is the Sakti of Brahma who creates the world. Radha is the Sakti of Lord Krishna who leads humanity to Mukti through Bhakti.

May Sakti bless you all with Sakti !

7. MOTHER GANGES

The Ganges is the most sacred river of India. Lord Krishna says in the Gita, "I am the Ganges

among rivers". No germ can flourish in the waters of the Ganges. It is saturated with antiseptic minerals. Even in the west doctors prescribed Ganges water for rubbing in the treatment of diseases of the skin. Ganges is not merely a river. It is a sacred Tirtha. It is possessed of mysterious powers which are not found in any other rivers of the world. Even scientists have admitted the efficacy of the Ganges water.

Dr. F. C. Harrison of McGill university, Canada, writes, "A peculiar fact, which has never been satisfactorily explained, is the quick death (in three or five hours) of the cholera vibrio in the waters of Ganges. When one remembers sewage, by numerous corpses of natives (often dead of cholera) and by the bathing of thousands of natives, it seems remarkable that the belief of the Hindus, that the water of this river is pure and cannot be defiled, and that they can safely drink it and bathe in it, should be confirmed by means of modern bacterioligical research." A well known French physician Dr. D. Herelle, made similar investigations into the mystery of the Ganges. He observed some of the floating corpses of men dead of dysentery and cholera and was surprised to find "that only a few feet below the bodies, where one would expect to find millions of these dysentery and cholera germs, "there were no germs at all." He then grew germs from patients having the disease and to these cultures added water from the Ganges. When he incubated the mixture for a period much to his surprise the germs were completely destroyed."

A British physician Dr. C.E. Nelson, F.R. C.S. tells us of another striking fact. He says that "ships leaving Calcutta for England take their water from the Hugli river which is one of the mouths of the filthy Ganges and this Ganges water will remain fresh all the way to England. On the other hand, ships ldaving England for India find that the water they take on in London will not stay fresh till they reach Bombay, the nearest Indian port, which is a week closer to England than Calcutta. They must replenish their water supply at Port Said, Suez or at Aden on the Red Sea." It is no wonder that the Indian people should hold that the Ganges is very sacred and possessed of mysterious powers.

For a Hindu the word "Ganges" or "Ganga" has its own sacred association. Every Hindu thirsts for a dip in the Ganges, and for a drop of water at the time of his death. Aspirants and mendicants build their huts on the banks of the Ganges for practising penance and meditation. Bhishma spoke very highly on the glory of the Ganges in his parting instructions to the Pandavas from his bed of arrows.

Wherever a pious Hindu goes to take his bath, he invokes first the Ganges and feels Her presence in the water before he takes a plunge in the river. If he lives in a place far away from the Ganges he intensely yearns to see Her on some day and blesses his being by bathing in the holy waters. He carries some water to his house

and carefully saves it in a vessel so that he may use it for purposes of purification.

Hindus believe that all their sins are washed away if they take a dip in the sacred waters of the Ganges.

In the Satya yuga all places were sacred. In the Treata Yuga Pushkara was considered as the most holy place. In the Dwapara Yuga Kurukshetra was regarded as the most sacred place. In Kali Yuga the Ganges has that glory. Devi Bhagavat says, "He who utters the name of Ganga even from hundreds of miles afar is freed from sins and attains the abode of Lord Hari."

The Ganges came out of the Supreme Being. She entered the feet of Lord Hari and reached Vakunta. She issued from Goloka and passed through the regions of Vishnu, Brahma, Siva, Dhruva, Chandra, Surya, Tapas, Jana, Maha and reached Indraloka and flowed as Mandakini.

The Ganges entered the matted locks of Lord Siva at the request of Bhagiratha who did rigorous penance for the descent of Ganga to Patala for the redemption of his ancestors, the thousand sons of Sagara, who had been burnt to ashes by the sage Kapila.

Thereupon she flowed down from the locks of Lord Siva. She was drunk up by the sage Janku as the water inundated the Yajnasala of the sage. Then again she issued out of the ear of the sage and acquired the name of Janhavi

She is also known by the name Bhagirathi, daughter of Bhagiratha. The Ganges flowed into Patala as Bhagirathi. The ancestors of the king were raised to Svarga by the touch of the sacred waters of the Ganges.

Ganga had to take a human form on account of her own fault in behaviour in the presence of Brahma. She became the wife of Santanu. Santanu also was a celestial being known as king Mahabhisha. He had to take birth in the world for his fault in conduct in the presence of Brahma by showing vanity. Ganga gave birth to Bhishma, the illustrious hero and sage.

Ganga consented to bear the seed of Lord Siva which was transferred to her by Agni. She gave to the world Lord Subramania, the great commander of the army of Devas, who killed the formidable Asura Taraka.

Ganges is the form of Vishnu. Her sight is soul-stirring and elevating. She flows in the valleys and lives by the side of Parvathi, daughter of Himavan. How magnificient she is when she flows in the valley of Rikhikesh! She has a blue colour like that of the ocean. The water is extremely clear and sweet. Rich people from the plains get water from Rikhikesh. They are taken in big copper vessels to far off places in India.

To have a look at the Ganges in Rikhikesh is soul-elevating. To sit for a few minutes on a block of stone by the side of the Ganges is a

blessing. To stay for some months in Rikhikesh on the bank of the Ganges and do anushtan or Purascharan is great Tapas, which will take the aspirant to the abode of Lord Hari. To live for ever on the banks of the Ganges and spend the life in meditation is Sivanandam.

May Mother Ganga bless you all ! May she help you to live on Her banks and practise Yoga and Tapas.

8. TRIPURA RAHASYA

The three cities are Anavamal (egoism), Karma (bondage of Karma) and Maya, the illusory power of Lord Siva which veils the individual souls. Destroy the first city Anavamal through self-surrender to Lord Siva and consequent descent of His grace (Anugraha). Annihilate the second impurity viz., Karma through consecrating the fruits of your actions to the Lord and destroying the idea 'I am the doer' by developing the Nimitta Bhav, the Bhav that Lord Siva is working through your various organs and that you are a mere instrument in His hands (Sariyai and Kriyai). You will not be bound by actions. You will attain purity of heart and through purity of heart realisation of Sivanandam or eternal bliss of Siva. Annihilate the third impurity viz., Maya through the recitation of Panchakshara, worship of Guru, hearing and reflection of the attributes of the Lord and His various lilas and meditation on His form and Satchitananda aspect.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Destroy Tamas through Rajas and convert Rajas into Sattva by developing various virtuous qualities, by taking Sattvic food, by Satsangh, Japa of Panchakshari and meditation on Lord Siva. Transcend Sattva also. You will attain oneness with Lord Siva.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Annihilate the evil tendencies or Asubha Vasanas viz., lust, anger, greed, hatred, jealousy, through Subha Vasanas or good tendencies viz., Japa, meditation, study of religious books, Kirtan or singing Lord's praise. You will enjoy the eternal bliss of Siva.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is TripuraRahasya.

Serve the Guru. Purify your heart by serving him with faith and devotion. Learn the Yogic practices which lead to the awakening of Kundalini from him and practise them Study the Yoga Shastras under him. Observe celibacy. Kill the Shadripus or six enemies. Look within. Take the Kundalini throngh the Sushumna Nadi and break the granthis through the chakras and unite Her with Her Lord Sadasiva at the Sahasrara Chakra at the crown of the head and enjoy the eternal bliss of Lord Siva.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Kill the three bodies i. e, transcend the three bodies viz., the gross or physical body (Sthula deha) subtle body (Suksma deha) and causal body (Karana sarira). Go above the five sheaths or Koshas (Annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya and anandamaya) through meditation on Lord Siva and attain Siva Sayujya.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Become a witness of the three states viz., waking, dreaming and deep-sleep states. Stand as a spectator. Withdraw yourself from the objective consciousness. Live within. Attain the Turiya state or the fourth state or Siva Pada.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Go above physical consciousness, sub-consciousness and mental consciousness and attain the superconscious state or Nirvikalpa or Asamprajnata Samadhi. This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. The is Tripura Rahasya.

Go above instinct, reason, understanding and open the eye of intuition, the third eye of Siva (Divya chakshu) and merge yourself in the supreme light of Siva. Go above thinking willing and feeling and enter the supreme silence or thoughtless state of Siva Nirvana.

This is the destruction of the three cities or castles. This is Tripura Rahasya.

Tripura Sundari is the Sakti of Lord Siva. She and Siva are one. She is extremely beautiful.

She attracts the devotee to Her blissful Self and sheds wisdom, devotion and divine light on them. Hence she is called Tripura Sundari. She helps the aspirants to destroy the three cities or castles mentioned above.

The whole world is under Her control. The entire universe is under the sway of Her three Gunas. All the ties and bonds of Karma can be broken down, the wheel of births and deaths can be rent asunder only by Her worship and benign grace. All sins can be destroyed and the eternal bliss of Siva can be realised only through singing Her praise and repetition of Her names.

She is called Tripura as the three cities. The body of a man or a woman is one of the forms assumed by Her. The whole world is Her body. All the Devas are Her forms only. All the triplets of the sacred texts are contained in Her. The triplets viz., the three Gunas, the three states of consciousness, the three fires, the three bodies, the three worlds, the triple power, Iccha Sakti, Kriya sakti and Gyana sakti, the three swarams, Udatta, Anudatta and swarita, the trivarnikas, the three kinds of Karmas viz., sanchit, Agamya, and Prarabdha, the Trimurtis, the three letters A, U, M and the triad Pramata, Pramana and Prameya, knower, knowledge and knowable, seer, sight, seen are all contained in Tripurasundari.

All the Devatas dwell in this body. They are the presiding deities of the various organs. The Lord Thyagaraja dwells in Mooladhara, Jambukeswar is Swadhistana, Arunachaleswara in

Manipur, Nataraja in Anahata, Kalahasteeswara in Vishuddha, Visweshwar in Ajna, Srikanteswar in Sahasrara.

All the sacred places are in this body. Kedar in the forehead, Amaravathi in the tip of the nose, Kurukshetra in the breasts, Prayag in the heart.

All the nine planets have their special abodes in the body. Sun is in the Nadachakra, moon in the Bindu chakra, Mars in the eyes, Mercury in the heart, Jupiter in the Manipoor, Venus in Swadhishtana, Saturn in the navel, Rahu in the face and Ketu in the thorax.

Countless rivers and hills are also alloted special places in the body. Whatever is found in the outer world is found in the body also. This body is microcosm. It is Pindanda.

This is Tripura Rahasya.

May you obtain the grace of Tripurasundari and understand the Tripura Rahasya and attain sivananda or eternal bliss of Lord siva :

9. KAMAKSHI AND THE DUMB POET

The word 'Mooka' means dumb. A certain dovotee was performing rigorous austerities in the temple of goddess Kamakshi at Kanchi (Conjeevaram) to obtain Her Grace. Kamakshi appeared in the form of a beautiful maiden before the devotee to bless him. The devotee took her to be an ordinary human maiden and did not show any veneration. She left him and found a

person sleeping in another corner of the temple. He was dumb from his birth. She woke him up. He was extremely joyous when he saw her. The goddess wrote the Bijakshara on his tongue and blessed him with the power of speech. He became the celebrated Mooka Kavi. He sang five hundred verses called the Panchasati which describe the glory of Devi, of Her lotus feet, of Her grace, of Her gracious glance and of her loving maternal smile. One hundred verses are devoted to each of these five aspects. Hence the work is called Mukapanchasati.

The dumb poet became the Acharya of the Kama Koti Peeta at Kumbakonam and occupied the seat for thirty-nine years,

The Muka Panchadasi is read with intense devotion during the Navaratri celebrations in South India by all religious minded persons.

Kalidasa was an unlettered shepherd. He also was turned into India's most talented poet through the benign grace of Mother Kali. Kalidasa in his famous Syamaladandaka has praised Devi in a charming manner.

Glory to the Devi! who is the giver of the power of speech!

10. HYMN OF FORGIVENESS TO MOTHER

Mother is more dear to the child than the father. Mother is gentle, soft, sweet, tender and affectionate. She is full of smiles. Father is

stiff, harsh, rude, rough and hard-hearted. The child runs towards the mother for getting presents, sweets, fruits and other gifts. The child can open the heart more freely towards the mother than to the father.

Even so poets and saints also are more familiar with the divine Mother than with the divine father. They open their heart more freely towards the Divine Mother. They have found much more intimate cries of the heart when they speak of the Deity as their Mother than when they address themselves to God as father. Go through the following hymn to Mother by Sri Sankara. You will feel and realise the truth of the above statement.

By my ignorance of Thy commands
By my poverty and sloth
I had not the power to do that which I should have done

Hence my omission to worship Thy feet
But O Mother, auspicious deliverer of all
All this should be forgiven me,
For, a bad son may sometimes be born but a bad mother never.

Oh Mother ! Thou hast many sons on earth
But I, Thy son, am of no worth
Yet it is not meet that Thou shouldst abandon me
For, a bad son may sometimes be born, but a bad mother never.

Oh Mother of the world! Oh Mother!
I have not worshipped Thy feet
Nor have I given abundant wealth to Thee
Yet the affection which Thou bestowest on
me is without compare
For, a bad son may sometimes be born, but a
bad mother never.

CHAPTER VII

VEERASAIVISM AND KASHMIR SAIVISM

1. VEERASAIVISM

Veerasaiva philosophy is only Sakti Visishtadvaita philosophy. It is a phase of the Agamanta. It underwent radical changes in the hands of Sri Basavanna and his colleagues. Basava was the Prime Minister to a Jain king named Bijjala who ruled over Kalyan (1157-1167) which is sixty miles from Gulbarga in the Nizam's dominions.

Basavanna was a magnetic personality. He exercised tremendous influence over the people. He held a spiritual conference. Three hundred Veerasaiva saints assembled. There were sixty women saints also. Akka Mahadevi, the illustrious lady saint was also present on that grand occasion. Veera Saivism became Lingayitism in the hands of Basava. Lingayitism is the special faith of the Carnatic Veerasaivas. Sharanas are the saints of the Lingayat faith or cult.

Veerasaivism or Lingayitism shows the way to attain the Lakshya or Lord Siva. Lord Siva, Lord Subramania, Rishaba king, Santa Lingar, Kumara Devi, Sivaprakasa had all expounded lucidly the system of philosophy. Veeragama is the chief source for this system of philosophy.

Those who embrace this faith live in great numbers in Karnataka Desa, Mysore etc.

Ordinary Saivites keep the Sivalinga in a box and worship it during the time of Pooja. The Lingayats keep a small linga in a small silver or golden box and wear it in the body with a chain attached to the box. Wearing the Linga in the body will remind one of the Lord and help His constant remembrance. The Christian also wears the cross in the neck. This also has the same object in view.

Sakti in Veersaiva philosophy is identical with Siva. Sakti works. Siva is the silent witness. Siva is infinite, self-luminous, eternal, all-pervading. He is an ocean of peace. He is stupendous silence. Siva illumines everything. He is all-full and self-contained. He is ever free and perfect. The whole world is an expression of the Divine Will. In Veerasaiva philosophy the world movement is not an illusion but an integral play.

2. KASHMERE SAIVISM.

This is known by the name Pratyabhijna system. The Agamas are the basis for Kashmere Saivism. The Agamanta called Pratyabhijna Darsana flourished in Kashmir. The twenty eight Agamas were written in Sanskrit in the valley of Kashmir in order to make the meaning clear to every one. This Agamanta arose in North India long before Jainism came into prominence. There it was known by the name

Pratyabhijna Darsana. Then it spread westwardly and southwards. In Western India it was known by the name Vira Maheswara Darsanam and in South India it was called Suddha Saiva Darsanam.

Siva is the only reality of the universe. Siva is infinite consciousness. He is independent, eternal, formless, secondless, omnipresent. Siva is the subject and the object, the experiencer and the experienced. The world exists within consciousness.

God creates by the mere force of His will. Karma, material cause like Prakriti, Maya which produces illusion, forms etc., are not admitted in this system. God makes the world appear in Himself just as objects appear in a mirror. He is not affected by the objects of his creation just as the mirror is not affected by the reflected image in it. He appears in the form of souls by His own wonderful power inherent in Him. God is the substratum of this world. His activity (Spanda or vibration) produces all distinctions.

Siva is the changless Reality. He is the underlying basic substratum for the whole world. His Sakti or energy has infinite aspects. Chit (intelligence), Ananda (bliss), Iccha (will), Jnana (knowledge) and Kriya (creative power) are her chief aspects.

Sakti functions as chit, then the Absolute becomes the pure experience known as Siva Tattva. The Ananda of Sakti functions and life comes in. Then there is the second stage of

Sakti Tattva. The third stage is the will for self-expression. Then comes the fourth stage-Ishwaratattva with its power and will to create the world. It is the stage of conscious experience (Jnana) of being. In the fifth stage there is the knower and also the object of knowledge. Action (Kriya) starts now. This is the stage of Suddhavidya. There are thirtysix tattvas or principles in this system.

Bondage is due to ignorance (Ajnana). The soul thinks 'I am infinite', 'I am the body'. It forgets that the soul is identical with Siva and that the world is wholly unreal apart from Siva.

Pratyabhijna or recognition of the reality is all that is needed for attaining the final emancipation. When the soul recognises itself as God, it rests in the eternal bliss of oneness with God. The liberated soul is merged in Siva as water in water or milk in milk when the imagination of duality has disappeared.

Vasu Gupta (eighth century A. D.) wrote the Siva Sutra and taught it to Kallata. Siva Drishti written by Somanatha may be considered equal in merit to Tirumandiram of Tirumular. Vasu Gupta's Spanda Karika, Somanatha's Siva Drishti (930 A.D.), Abhinava Gupta's Paramarthasara and Pratyabhijna Vimarsini, Keemaraja's Siva Sutra Vimarsini are some of the important works of this school.

They accept the Saiva agamas and the Siddhanta works as authoritative. They modify them in the light of Sankara's Adwaita. Soma-

natha's Siva Drishti, Utpala's Pratyabhijna Sutra and Abhinava Gupta's works support non-dualism.

CHAPTER VIII

1. LORD SIVA AND HIS LILAS

Siva is known by the name 'Girisha', as He is the Lord of the Mount Kailasa.

Siva is called 'Tryambaka' because He had a third eye in His forehead, the eye of wisdom (Jnana Chakshu).

The word Siva is derived from the root "Hri" to take and the affix Ach, for He removes (Harati) all ills. 'Hara' means He who at the time of dissolution (Pralaya) withdraws the world within Himself.

Siva is holding in His hands Parasu (axe), deer. He is making with the other two hands the Vara and Abhaya Mudras. The deer here is Brahma. Siva is very powerful. Even Brahma is under His control.

TRIPURARI

Siva was the destroyer of the Asura Tripura. He destroyed the Tripura or the three cities of the Asuras which were built of gold, silver and iron by Maya. The Asuras oppressed all theists being protected by the three cities. Siva is called Tripura because He destroyed the Asura Tripura and the cities Tripura.

SIVA JYOTI

Brahma and Vishnu were one day disputing which of the two were the greater. Siva appeared in the form of an Infinite Jyoti or fiery Linga in order to destroy their pride. Brahma and Vishnu set out to measure the Jyoti. They failed in their attempts.

NILAKANTA

When the ocean was churned, a terrible poison came out. Siva swallowed this in order to save the world. This caused a blue stain on His throat. So He is called by the name Nilakanta.

RAVANA AND SIVA

Ravana was a great devotee of Lord Siva. He used to go every day to Mount Kailasa to worship Lord Siva. He found this very troublesome. He thought within himself to bring the whole mountain to his abode in Lanka (Ceylon) in order to save himself from the trouble of a daily journey to Mount Kailasa. He began to pull up the mountain which trembled. Parvathi, consort of Siva, got frightened. She embraced Lord Siva. Siva pressed Ravana with His toe and sent him down to the nether world.

HARI AND SIVA

Hari used to worship Siva daily with a thousand lotuses. One day one lotus was missing. He plucked out His own eye to make the number of a thousand. Siva gave Vishnu the

Sudarshan Chakra or discus being very much pleased with his devotion. It is this Sudarshana Chakra which Vishnu always bears. This discus is itself an embodiment of devotion.

BRAHMA'S BOON

A Rakshasa worshipped Brahma and asked Him to grant him the power to destroy the whole world. Brahma was partially unwilling to grant him this boon. He consented in a half-hearted manner and asked him to wait. The Devas hearing this were terribly frightened and went to Siva and told Him everything. Siva danced in order to delay the granting of this boon by Brahma, to distract him and thus to save the world.

BIRTH OF SUBRAMANYA

The Asura Taraka drove all the gods from heaven. The gods went to Brahma. Brahma said to the gods. "The Asura has acquired his power through my grace. I cannot destroy him. I shall suggest to you one plan. Go to Lord Siva. He is in Yoga Samadhi. He must be tempted to unite with Parvathi. A powerful son will be born unto Him. He will destroy the Asura."

Thereupon Indra asked Cupid (Kama) to go with his wife Rati and his companion Vasanta (the spring) to Mount Kailasa, the abode of Lord Siva. The three persons at once proceeded to Kailasa. Spring season appeared there. All the Rishis were surprised at this. Kama stood

behind a tree and shot an arrow at Siva. At this moment Parvathi was worshipping Siva and offering flowers in His hand. Her hand touched the hands of Siva. Siva felt suddenly a thrill of passion and His seed came out. Siva was wondering what was it that thus distracted Him from His Yoga. He looked round and witnessed Kama behind a tree. He opened His third eye. A fire flashed and burnt Kama to ashes.

Siva's seed was thrown into fire. Fire (God of Agni) was not able to bear it. He threw it into the Ganges. Ganges threw it into a forest of reeds where Kartikeya called the reed-born (Sara Janma, Saravana Bhava) was born. Kartikeya became the commander of the Devas and destroyed the Asura as Brahma intended.

2. LORD SIVA AND DAKSHA

Daksha goes to attend the sacrifice of the sages who are the progenitors of the world, and not being honoured by Rudra who has come before him, Daksha reproaches him and leaves the place. Nandisvara in his turn curses Daksha and other Brahmins. Rudra then leaves the place of sacrifice.

Sati, daughter of Daksha, known also by the name Dakshayani requests Siva permission to attend her father's sacrifice the Brihaspati-sava ; and Siva shows how inadvisable it would be.

In spite of her Lord's advice, Sati goes to Daksha's sacrifice. Disregarded by her father

and enraged at finding no offering made to Rudra, she praises the greatness of her Lord, censures Daksha and by the Yoga method casts off her body.

Hearing of Sati's casting off her body Sankara creates in his anger Virabhadra out of his jata (or matted locks) and causes Daksha's death.

Informed by the gods of the destruction of Daksha Brahma pacifies Rudra and Daksha and others are revived.

Being pleased with Brahma's praise, Siva goes along with the gods to the scene of sacrifice; Daksha and others are revived; Vishnu issuing forth from the sacrificial fire is praised by Daksha and others. After the closing ceremony of ablutions, the gods return home. Maitreya describes the benefit of listening to this story, the birth of Sati as Parvati, and that of Skanda.

3. DAKSHINAMOORTHY.

On the Mount Kailas, with Parvati Devi by His side, Lord Siva was sitting in a hall beautifully decorated by precious stones. At that time, Devi, worshipped the Lord and requested Him to alter the name of Dakshayani given to her before, for being the daughter of Dakshan. This Dakshan was killed by Lord Shiva for his disrespect and arrogance. On hearing this request Lord Siva ordained that Devi should be born as the daughter of Parvatha Raj who was doing rigorous Tapas for getting a child. He also told

Parvati that He will come over to her and marry her. Thus ordained, Parvati Devi was born as the child of Paravath Raj and since her fifth year began to do rigorous Tapas for being the bride of Lord Siva.

During the absence of Devi, when Lord Siva was alone, the sons of Brahma Deva, who are great sages, Sanaka, Sananthan, Sanatana and Sanatkumar, came to have Darshan of Lord Siva and prostrated before Him. They entreated the Lord to teach them the way to remove Avidya and attain salvation. They expressed that inspite of the vast study of scriptures they had no internal peace and they were in need of learning the inner secrets by knowing which they can attain salvation.

Lord Siva, hearing this appeal made by the sages, assumed the form of Dakshinamoorthy and remaining as the Guru Supreme, began to teach them the inner secrets by keeping Mowna and showing the Chin Mudra by his hand. The sages began to meditate on the lines shown by the Lord and attained the state of inexpressible and illimitable joy.

Thus Lord Siva came to be known as Dakshinamoorthy.

May the Blessings of Lord Dakshinamoorthy be upon us all.

May you all dive deep and enjoy the everlasting Peace and
Bliss through His Grace !!!

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

4. TRIPURA SAMHARA

This occurs in the Karna Parva of the Maha Bharata section 33-35 verses 1391.

In times of yore there was a war between the Devas and the Asuras. The Asuras were defeated, in the battle. The three sons of the Asura Taraka wanted to take revenge on the Devas. They performed rigorous penance and obtained a boon from Brahma the creator. By virtue of this boon they could not be conquered by any one save somebody who could destroy their three castles by a single arrow.

They made three castles one of gold in heaven, the second of silver in air and the third of iron on earth. They began to oppress the gods and the Rishis. Thereupon all the gods made a complaint to Brahma. Brahma replied that no one save Mahadeva who knows the Yoga and the Sankhya through particular penance could vanquish these Asuras. All the gods approached Mahadeva and provided him with a chariot out of all forms of the universe. They also supplied Him with a bow and arrow, the constitueut parts of which were Vishnu, Soma and Agni. They requested Mahadeva to discharge the arrow against the three castles. Brahma became the charioteer. Mahadeva discharged the arrow against the three castles. The three castles fell down in the twinkling of an eye. Then all the gods eulogised Mahadeva and departed to heaven.

Mahadeva said to the gods that He himself could not destroy the Asuras as they were very strong but that they themselves would be able to vanquish with the help of half his strength. The gods replied that they could not bear half his strength and that he should take up the task with the help of half their strength. Mahadeva agreed to this. He became stronger than all the gods. Hence He was called Mahadeva or the great God.

5. LORD SIVA CURSES AND PARDONS NARKIRAR

Once a Pandya king of Madura felt that his queen's hair had some kind of natural fragrance. A doubt arose in his mind as to whether human hair could have natural fragrance or could be rendered fragrant only through association with flowers or scents. He went to the Sangam or the Tamil Acadamy the next day, suspended a bag containing one thousand gold pieces and said to the poets, "Anyone who would write a poem clearing the doubt he entertained in his mind will get the gold pieces as a prize." Many poets composed poems but they were not able to satisfy the king.

Darumi, a Brahmin priest in the temple, was extremely poor. He requested Lord Siva thus, "O all-merciful Lord! I am very poor. I wish to marry now. Relieve me of my poverty. Help me to get these golden pieces now. I take refuge in thee alone." Lord Siva gave him a

poem and said, "Take this poem to the Sangam You will get the golden pieces."

The king was immensely pleased with the song as it cleared his doubt but the Sangam poets did not accept it. Narkirar said that there was a flaw in the poem. The poor priest was greatly afflicted at heart. He came back to the temple, stood in front of the Lord and said, "O Lord! why did you give me the poem which contained a flaw? Nobody will take you for the Lord. I feel very much for this. The meaning of the poem is "O fair-winged bee! you spend your time in gathering flower-dust. Do not speak out of love, but speak out of truth. Is there any among the flowers known to you that is more fragrant than the hair of this damsel who is most loving, is of the colour of the peacock and has beautiful rows of teeth."

Thereupon Lord Siva assumed the form of a poet, went to the Sangam and said, "Which poet found out flaw in the poem?" Narkirar said, "It is I who said that there is flaw." Lord Siva asked "What is the flaw". Narkirar said "There is no flaw in the composition of words. There is a flaw in the meaning." Lord Siva said, "May I know what defect is there in the meaning?" Narkirar said, "The hair of a damsel has no natural fragrance. It gets the fragrance from association with the flowers." Lord Siva said. "Does the hair of Padmini also possess fragrance by association with the flowers?" Narkirar said, "Yes." Lord Siva,

"Does the hair of celestial damsels also possess fragrance by association with the flowers." Narkirar replied, "Yes". Their hair become fragrant by association with Mandara flowers." Lord Siva said "Does the hair of Uma Devi who is on the left side of Lord Siva whom you worship possess fragrance by association with the flower." Narkirar, "Yes" Quite so."

Lord Siva slightly opened his third eye. Narkirar : "I am not afraid of this third eye. Even if you are Lord Siva, even if you show eyes throughout your whole body there is flaw in this poem." The fire from the third eye of Lord Siva fell upon Narkirar. Narkirar was not able to bear the heat. At once he jumped into the neighbouring lotus-tank to cool himself.

Then all the poets approached Lord Siva and said, "O Lord! Pardon Narkirar." Lord Siva appeared before Narkirar. Through the grace of Lord Siva his body was rendered cool. He repented for his mistake and said, "I pointed defect even for the hairs of Uma Devi. No one but the Lord can pardon me." He sang a song with intense devotion. Lord Siva entered the tank and brought him to the shore.

Then Narkirar and other poets gave the purse of gold to Daruni.

6. KNOW YOUR GURU

Devotion to the Lord dawns in the heart of a man who has done virtuous actions in his previous births without expectation of fruits and

egoism or the idea of agency. Devotion leads to knowledge of Self and through Jnana he attains Moksha or the final emancipation.

In days of yore Veera Sindhu was the king of Kalinga country. He did severe Tapas, meditation and Yoga in his previous birth but did not attain Moksha. He became a Yoga Brishta as he had to enjoy the fruits of some residual Karmas in this last birth of a king. He took his birth as the son of a king. When he attained the proper age he was crowned as the king of Kalinga. He ruled the kingdom for a period of ten years.

Owing to the force of previous spiritual Samskaras, the grace of the Lord, discrimination and dispassion dawned in his heart. He reflected within himself, "I am doing the same acts of eating, drinking, and sleeping. My several forefathers who ruled the country had been reduced to dust. I have no peace of mind despite my wealth and dominion. I should get a Guru and obtain initiation from him to get knowledge of Atma and reach the abode of immortality and eternal bliss."

King Veerasindu sent invitation to all Pandits, Sannyasins, Sadhus, and Mahatmas. He wrote in the letter thus, "I will give half of my dominion to that supreme Guru who will give me the right initiation and make me realise the Self. If he fails to do so he will be put in the prison."

Many Pandits and Sadhus saw the king. One gave him Taraka Mantra, another gave Panchakshara, a third gave him Ashtakshara but no one was able to satisfy the king. He put them all in the prison. He had initiation into these Mantras in his previous births.

King Veerasindhu became very restless as he did not obtain his Guru. Lord Siva assumed the form of an ordinary cooly. He had a very black complexion. He wore some rags and appeared before the king. The king went in advance to receive him. Through the grace of the Lord he came to know that this cooly is no other than the Lord. The cooly raised his hand towards the king and said "stop" and vanished immediately. The king understood that the Guru has commanded him to stop the mind and control its movements. The king closed his eyes while he was standing and did not allow the mind to think of the sensual objects. He controlled all the modifications of the mind. It was easy for him as he practised Yoga and meditation in his previous birth. He entered into Nirvikalpa Samadhi and became like a statue. He did not open his eyes.

The ministers were waiting in the Durbar Hall for hours together. King Veerasindhu did not open his eyes for days together. Then the ministers reflected "The king is in Samadhi now. We do not know when he will return from the Samadhi. We will have to manage the affairs of the state." They removed the ring from his

fingers and used it for putting the seal in the papers of the state.

The king opened his eyes after six years and asked the ministers. "Where is my Guru?" The ministers replied, "O venerable king! The Guru said a word to your Majesty and vanished at once. You are standing here like a statue for the last six years. We are conducting the affairs of the state with the aid of your ring. Here is the seal of your ring in all the registers and papers"

The king was struck with awe and wonder. He thought within himself, "Six years have passed like a second. I enjoyed supreme bliss. I have no desire to rule the state after tasting the supreme bliss." He left the palace and entered the forest and sat in Samadhi.

The force of Yogic Samskaras of the king that was generated by this practice of Yoga in his previous birth helped him in the attainment of the beautitude in this birth. Those who have not much piety and religious inclination in this birth should do Japa, Kirtan, meditation, and study of religious books. They should live in the company of sages. They will develop good religious Samskaras. This will be a valuable asset for them in the next birth. They will start the practice of Yoga in the next birth in the early age.

It is difficult to say in what form the Guru or the Lord will appear before you to initiate

you. He may come in the form of a leper as Sri Hanuman did, or in the form of an untouchable as Lord Krishna did, or in the form of a groom as Lord Siva. The aspirants must be very careful and vigilant to detect the Lord in the various forms which He assumes.

7. LORD SIVA DRINKS POISON

Once the Devas and the Asuras had a formidable fight for a very long period, Many Devas and Asuras died in the fight. The Devas thought that they should prolong their life by drinking nectar and then continue the war. They approached Brahma with this desire in view. Brahma said, "This work cannot be done by me. It can be done only by Lord Vishnu." Thereupon Brahma and the Devas approached Lord Hari in Ksheerasagar.

Lord Hari asked the Devas and Asuras to churn the ocean with the help of Mandaragiri as churning rod and Vasuki as the rope. Vasuki the serpent was much tormented by the churning process. It vomitted the poison. The terrible poison began to burn the people into ashes. The Devas, the Asuras and the Rishis began to fly away. Lord Vishnu was not able to destroy the poison. His body also became very black. He ran to Kailas along with the Devas and Brahma to see Lord Siva. He reported to Lord Siva all that had happened. Thereupon Lord Siva collected the poison and kept it as a drop in the palm of his hand and

swallowed it. Then Lord Vishnu and Brahma requested Lord Siva to keep it in His neck as a mark of their protection. Lord Siva did it accordingly. From that day onwards Lord Siva is called by the name "Neelakanta" or bluenecked one or 'Kalakanta Murthi'. Then Lord Siva said to them, "If you churn again you will get nectar and several other things." They all started again the churning of the ocean and obtained nectar and other things. All the Devas drank the nectar and rejoiced heartily.

8. LORD SIVA RIDES ON THE BULL

Turning of Chatur Yuga two thousand times is a day of Brahma. Such thirty days make a month for Him. Such twelve months make an year for Him. Such hundred years make the full life of Brahma. The whole life period of Brahma is a day for Lord Vishnu. After one hundred years Lord Vishnu also will pass away or merge Himself in Parabrahman. All the Andas will perish. On account of the heavy blowing of Prachand Vayu the seven oceans will ebb high and cover the whole world. Lord Siva alone will exist. He will burn everything into ashes through His fiery third eye and then dance,

The Dharma Devata or the Lord of Virtue reflected within himself "How can I attain immortality? If I approach Lord Siva only I can attain this." He assumed the form of a bull, went to Lord Siva and said, "My venerable Lord! Kindly accept me as Thy vehicle and thus protect me."

Lord Siva agreed to the humble request of the god of Dharma and said, "Conduct the Dharma with four feet in the Krita Yuga, with three feet in Treta Yuga, with two feet in the Dwapara Yuga, with one foot in Kali Yuga. On account of My grace you will be endowed with all splendour and powers. You will be always my vehicle. You will be one with Me."

When Lord Siva destroyed Tripura or the three cities, Lord Vishnu assumed the form of a bull and supported Lord Siva.

9. LORD SIVA WEARS THE GANGES ON HIS HEAD

Once upon a time in Mount Kailasa Parvathi closed the eyes of Lord Siva with her hands. Thereupon the sun, moon and fire did not shine forth. This caused terrible havoc in the world. All were enveloped by darkness for a long period. Lord Siva opened His third eye a bit. The sun, moon and fire began to shine again and all darkness vanished.

Parvathi was frightened. She removed her hands and dropped down the perspiration from Her fingers. This perspiration was turned into ten Ganges with countless branches. These rivers did much havoc to the world. Thereupon Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Indra ran to Lord Siva and requested Him to avert this catastrophe.

Lord Siva felt compassionate and brought the whole waters in one hair of his matted locks.

Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Indra requested Lord Siva to give a little of the water of the Ganges for their worlds. Lord Siva gave them a little. They became Virajanadi in Vaikunta, Manasa Tirtha in Satyaloka and Devaganga in Indraloka. King Bhagiratha brought down the Ganges from Brahmaloka to save the sixty-thousand sons of Sagara.

10. LORD SIVA'S LILA OF BEGGING

The Rishis of Darukavan thought that there was no use in loving and adoring Lord Siva and they could attain Moksha through the performance of sacrifices. They left off worship of the Lord and did sacrifices vigorously.

Then Lord Siva said to Lord Hari, "Assume the form of Mohini and enter the abode of all Rishis in Daruka forest. They have no regard for me now. They are treading the wrong path now. We should teach them a severe lesson. Excite their passion and delude them. Destroy their Vratas!" He also put on the form of a mendicant-beggar.

Thereupon Lord Hari assumed the form of Mohini and entered the dwelling places of the Rishis in Darukavan. All the Rishis lost their power of understanding and discrimination and and followed the Mohini under the strong excitement of passion.

Lord Siva entered the Parnakutirs of the wives of the Rishis, sang the Srutis and hymns beautifully and roamed about as a mendicant

beggar. The wives of Rishis became excited and followed Lord Siva. They entreated Him in a variety of ways to satisfy them. Lord Siva multiplied Himself and appeared in the mind of each woman. All the wives of the Rishis enjoyed heartily. They all brought forth in the morning eighteen thousand Rishis with matted locks, Danda-Kamandalu. They all prayed to Lord Siva. Lord Siva blessed them to do Tapas in the forest. The Rishis acted accordingly.

The Rishis witnessed the condition of their wives and said we were deluded by the enchanting Mohini. The mendicant beggar spoiled the chastity of our wives. Lo! how powerful is lust! Mysterious is Maya!

11. LORD SIVA WEARS TRIDENT, DEER ETC

The Rishis of Darukavan performed Yajna to destroy Lord Siva. A cruel tiger came out of the fire. They commanded the tiger to kill Lord Siva. Lord Siva killed the tiger and wore the skin around His waist. Then they created a trident to kill the Lord. Lord Siva wore it in His hand as His instrument. Then they created a deer with sharp horns to kill the Lord. Lord Siva wore it in His left hand.

Later on they created countless black cobras to kill the Lord. Lord Siva wore them as His ornaments. Then they created countless Bhuta Ganas to kill the Lord. Lord Siva made them as His army. Then they created a Damaru to kill

the Lord. Lord Siva wore it in His hand. Then they created an Asura Muyalaka to kill the Lord. Muyalaka marched with the Yajna fire to destroy Lord Siva. Lord Siva held the fire as Malu in His hand and kept the Asura under His feet.

12. LORD SIVA HAS UMA ON HIS LEFT

After the Samhara was over, Lord Brahma born of the grace of Lord Siva thought of creating all beings. He created Sanaka, Sanandan, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata. They did not enter the life of house-holders. They developed wisdom and became great Yogis.

Lord Brahma went to Vaikunta and saw Lord Hari and said to Him "O venerable Lord ! I am not able to continue the creation. Sanaka, Sanandan etc., have become Yogis. They do not wish to become householders. Kindly suggest to me a way to continue my work of creation." Lord Vishnu said, "This is not in my power. Let us go to Lord Siva who abides in Kailasa."

Brahma and Vishnu saw the Lord of Kailasa and said to Him, "O God of gods! The creative work of Brahma has been stopped as the four Kumaras have become Yogis. Kindly bliss Him to continue his creative work.

Lord Siva looked at the left side of His chest. Uma took Her birth from Lord Siva's left side. Lord Siva said to them, "Now there is no difficulty in creation. It will continue without any hitch." Thereupon Brahma and others repair-

ed to their respective abodes. Then Lord Brahma created the worlds through the grace of Lord Siva. Men and women lived together happily and brought forth offspring. The whole appearance is Saktimay. Lord Siva witnesses Prakriti's activities.

13. LORD SIVA WEARS ELEPHANT'S SKIN

In days of yore Gayasura did severe penance. Brahma appeared before him and asked him, "O Gayasura! I am pleased with your penance. What boon do you want?" Gayasura said, "O venerable Lord! give me prowess and inexhaustible wealth." "I have given you what you desired. But if you fight against Lord Siva you will lose your boon." Then Lord Brahma vanished.

Thereupon Gayasura did Dikvijaya, and defeated the Devas and Indra. He troubled the Munis and the Rishis also. They repaired to Benares and fell at the feet of Lord Vishwanath and said, "Gayasura is trying to kill us. Protect us. O Lord! there is no other refuge for us."

Gayasura attacked Lord Vishwanath also. The Lord killed the Asura, tore the skin and wore it as His garment. Then the Devas and the Rishis praised the Lord and became happy.

14. LORD SIVA—THE FUEL SELLER

Varaguna Pandian was the king of Pandiya kingdom. His capital was at Madura. He was like Indra. Yemanathan, skilled in Vina came

to his durbar from Northern India. He played thrilling songs in Vina. The king appreciated Yemanathan's music, gave him rich presents and kept him in a separate bangalow. Yemanathan was very much puffed up owing to his skill in music.

Varaguna Pandian understood that Yemanathan was proud of his knowledge of music. He called his durbar musician Bhanabhadra and said to him, "O Bhadra! Will you be able to attain victory over the new musician Yemanathan?" Bhanabhadra relpied, "I can certainly defeat him through your grace and the blessings of Lord Somasundara of Madura." The king said, "Well then, come tomorrow and exhibit your skill in music."

The disciples of Yemanathan roamed about in all the streets and lanes of Madura, played on Vina and vigorously advertised about their skill in music. Bhanabhadra heard this and reflected within himself. "These disciples are very efficient in music and Vina. If the disciples possess such knowledge, what must be the splendour and glory of their Guru. How can I attain victory over this Master-musician?" Then he prayed to Lord Siva, "Kindly help me now to defeat Yemanathan. I am in need of Thy grace."

Then the Lord assumed the form of a wood cutter, wore a rag around his body and torn shoes in his feet. He had a Vina in his hand and a bundle of fuel on his head. He went to the

house where Yemanathan was living and sat on the verandah. He took his Vina and played in a marvellous manner. He sang beautifully along with Vina.

Yemanathan was struck with wonder when he heard the wonderful music. He came out and asked the fuel-seller, "O fuel seller! who are you?" The fuel seller replied, "I am one of the disciples and servant of Bhanbhadra, the durbar singer of Varaguna Pandian. He has many disciples. As I became old my master abandoned me and told me that I am unfit for singing."

Yemanathan requested the fuel-seller to sing again. He sang again Satari Raga which melted the heart of Yemanathan. Lord Siva who acted the part of fuel-seller vanished with his bundle of firewood.

Yemanathan thought within himself, "I have not heard this Satari Raga till now. It is Devaraga. If this old man can sing this raga in such a beautiful manner what must be the knowledge and glory of his master? Surely God only ought to have taught him this Raga. I cannot stand before Bhanabhadra. Let me leave this place at once." Yemanathan's heart was filled with fear and shame. He left all the things and left the house at midnight along with his disciples.

Lord Somasundara appeared in the dream of Bhanabhadra and said, "Do not be afraid. I put on the form of fuel seller, sat on the verandah of the house in which Yemanathan lived and

played on the Vina. He was struck with wonder and ran away at midnight. Be at ease now."

Bhanabhadra got up in the morning, went to the temple at Madura and worshipped Lord Somasunara. Then he went to the durbar of Varaguna Pandian. The king sent a servant to call Yemanathan. The servant searched in several places. He was not able to find out the new musician. The neighbours of the house in which Yemanathan lived said, "One fuel-seller came and sang. The new singer left the place at midnight. This only we know."

The servant reported the matter to the king. The king said to Bhanabhadra, "Could you tell me what you did after leaving me?" Bhanabhadra told the king, "My venerable Lord! I went to my house and prayed to Lord Somasundara to bless me. He appeared in my dream and said, "I put on the form of a fuel-seller, sang Satari Raga in the house of Yemanathan. I drove him away." I at once woke up. This is what happened.

Varaguna Pandian came to know that this was the lila of Lord Siva. He admired the devotion of Bhadra and gave him rich presents. He said to Bhadra, "The Lord who made Brahma and the Devas as His servant, became your servant and blessed you. We are all your servants only. I am your servant. In future sing the praise of Lord Somasundara always."

Bhanabhadra rejoiced heartily. He was ever devoted to Lord Somasundara.

15. THERE ARE THE 25 LILAS (SPORTIVE PLAYS) OR MANIFESTATION OF LORD SIVA

1. Wearing of moon on the head.
2. Living with Uma Devi.
3. Riding on ox.
4. Tandava dance with Kali.
5. Marriage with Parvathi.
6. Begging.
7. Burning of Manmatha or the God of Love.
8. Victory over Yama or the God of Death.
9. Burning of Tripuras.
10. Killing of Ialandarasura.
11. Killing of Gajasura.
12. Incarnation of Virbhadra.
13. Harihara.
14. Ardhanareeswara.
15. Transforming into Kirata.
16. Assuming the form of Kankalla.
17. Blessing Chandushwara.
18. Drinking poison.
19. Giving of Chakra.
20. Destroying of obstacles.
21. Having sons of Uma Devi with Him.
22. Becoming Ekapada Rudra.
23. Being in Easy pose (Sukhasana).
24. Assuming the form of Dakshinamoorthy.
25. Assuming Lingha form.

CHAPTER IX

SIVA YOGA SADHANA

1 SECRET OF PANCHAKSHARA

Panchakshara is a Mahamantra which is composed of five letters Namasivaya. A Mantra is that which removes all obstacles and miseries of one who reflects on it and bestows eternal bliss and immortality. Panchakshara is the best among seven crores of mantras. There are seven kandhas in Yajurveda. There is Rudradhyayi in the centre of the middle kandha. In this Rudradhyayi there are one thousand Rudra mantras. Namasivaya or the Siva Panchakshara mantra shines in the centre of these one thousand Rudra mantras.

Yajurveda is the head of Parameshwara, who is the Veda Purusha. Rudram which is in the middle is the face, Panchakshara is His eye, Siva which is in the centre of the Namasivaya is the apple of the eye. He who does japa of this Panchakshara is freed from births and deaths and attains eternal bliss. This is the emphatic declaration of the Vedas. This Panchakshara is the body of Lord Nataraja. This is the abode of Lord Siva. If you add Om to the Namasivaya in the beginning, then it becomes Shadakshara or six-lettered mantra. Om Namo Mahadevaya is the eight-lettered mantra or Ashtakshara.

Panchakshara is of six kinds viz., Sthula Panchakshara (Namasivaya), Sukshma Panchakshara (Sivayanamah), Karana Panchakshara (Sivaya Siva), Mahakarana Panchakshara (Siva), Mahamanu or Mukti Panchakshara (Si).

'Namaha' means 'Prostration'. 'Sivayanamah' means 'Prostration unto Lord Siva.' The Jiva is the servant of Lord Siva from the Deha drishti. 'Nama' represents Jivatma. 'Siva' represents Paramatma. Aya denotes 'aikhyam' or identity of Jiva and Paramatma. Hence Sivayanamaha is a Mahavakhya like 'Tat Twam Asi' which signifies the identity between the individual and the supreme soul.

Pranava denotes the external form of the Lord, (Paddy) Panchakshara the internal swaroop (rice). Paranava and Panchakshara are one. The five letters denote the five actions or pancha krityam of the Lord viz., Srishti (creation), Sthithi (preservation), Samhara (destruction), Tirodhana (veiling), Anugraha (blessing), the five elements and all creations through the combination of the five elements.

'Na' represents Tiroddhana. Ma the mala or impurity, Si Lord Siva. Va the Arul sakti and Ya the individual soul.

Take bath or wash the face, hands and feet. Wear bhasma and Rudraksha mala. Sit on Padmasan or Sukhasan facing East or North in a quiet place or room. Repeat silently the

Panchakshara and meditate on the form of Lord Siva. Keep the image in the heart or the space between the eye brows.

If you practise meditation regularly your heart will be purified. All samskaras and sins will be burnt in toto. You will attain Siva Yoga nishta or nirvikalpa samadhi. You will attain the glorious Siva pada or Siva gati and become one with Lord Siva. You will enjoy the eternal bliss of Sivanandam and become immortal.

May Lord Siva bless you all!

2. MEDITATION OF LORD SIVA

Saguna Meditation:—Saguna meditation is meditation on a form. An archer first aims at a grosser bigger object. Then he takes up a medium object. Finally, he shoots at finer and more subtle objects. Even so one should take to Saguna meditation to start with and when the mind is trained and disciplined well, he can have Nirakara, Nirguna Meditation. Saguna Meditation is meditation on a concrete object. Saguna Meditation is peculiarly pleasing to the Bhakta, who loves to gaze on the peculiar form of his Ishta. Saguna Upasana removes Vikshepa. For three or six months practise Thratak on Siva's picture.

Meditate on the mental picture of the Moorthy from half to two hours only in the Trikuti (space between the eyebrows). See and feel that the Lord is present in every object of the universe. When you meditate, mentally repeat the Mantra of the

Devata Om Nama Sivaya; think of the attributes of the Deity such as omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience. Feel that Sattwic qualities from the Ishtam flows towards you. Feel that you possess these Sattwic qualities This is Sattwic of Shuddha Bhavana. You will have Darshan of your Ishtam in one or two years, if you are sincere in your Sadhana. Follow this plan. This will help concentration. Move the mind on the various parts of the Moorthy, the picture or idol of Lord Siva and meditate as follows:—Sit upon your usual Asan. Repeat His name and think of His attributes like bliss, radiance, love etc., gazing at His picture all the while. Then enthrone Him in the lotus of your heart or between your eyebrows amidst a blazing light. Now mentally think of His lotus feet offering your devout salutations. Take the mind to the elephant skin worn round the waist. Then to the necklace of Rudraksha beads, adorning His chest, and the beautiful blue hue of His throat (Nilakantha), serene countenance, radiating the majestic asura of profound meditation, the indrawn half-closed meditative eyes, the mysterious third eye in the centre of the forehead. Next take the mind up to the matted lock, the cool crescent moon, and the sacred Ganges sprouting from the Jata. Rotate your mind on the trident (Trishula) in one hand then, the Damaru, in the other. Run your mind over the whole form till you complete all the details Then fix your mind either on the face or upon the starting point (feet). Repeat the entire pro-

cess again and again, as many times as you can. By constant practice you will ultimately be established in meditation and have communion with Siva.

Nirguna Meditation :—This is Meditation of Lord Siva, in His all pervasive, unmanifested aspect, as the Supreme Para Brahman. In this form of meditation, you meditate on Lord Siva as the Supreme Brahman without form, attributeless, eternal, infinite. Meditate on Him as the Shuddha, Satchidananda Vyapaka Atman, Nitya Shuddha Siddha Buddha, Mukta eternally free Brahman, An unlimited Ocean of pure Consciouness. Now identify yourself with this transcendental Swaroop of Siva. Feel that you are Chaitanya, Akhanda, Paripoorna, Ekarasa, Shanta, Unchanging Existence,

Every atom, every molecule, every nerve, vein, artery, should powerfully vibrate with these ideas. Lip repetition of Sivoham will not produce much benefit. It should be through heart, head and soul. This feeling should be kept up continuously. Negate the body-idea while repeating Sivoham mentally. When you chant Sivoham feel—

Infinity I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All Light I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All joy I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All glory I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All power I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All knowledge I am	Sivoham	Sivoham
All Ananda I am	Sivoham	Sivoham

Meditate on the above ideas constantly. Constant effort with zeal and enthusiasm is an indispensable requisite. Repeat mentally the above ideas incessantly. You will realise.

Aum Tat Sat Aum

3. SIVA POOJA

Lord Siva is worshipped in His Saguna aspect in the form of Sivalingam. Generally Sivabhaktas do Panchayatana Pooja. In this Pooja Lord Siva, Ganesha, Parvathi, Suryanarayana Salagram are all duly worshipped.

Get the Panchayatana Moorties on an auspicious day. Install them with great faith in your own house. Conduct special prayers Archan, Pooja, Abhiseka and feeding of Brahmins, Mahatmas and poor on a grand scale. Install the deity in a separate room. Worship the Lord daily with all sincerity and faith. You will have all wealth, peace of mind, attainment of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha also. You will lead a prosperous life and enter the Immortal abode of Siva Sayujya on death.

Collect plenty of bel leaves for Lord Siva's worship. Get ready dhoop, dipa, camphor, sandal sticks, fresh water, plenty of flowers, food offerings to the Lord, a seat to sit upon, a bell, conch and other things required for the Pooja before you begin the worship. Get up in the early morning before sunrise. Wash your face. Take bath. Wear silk dress or a dress separately kept for Pooja purposes. Decorate the pooja

room nicely. Enter the room chanting Lord's names, glorifying Him, repeating hymns in His praise and prostrating before the Lord. Wash your feet before entering the room. Sit in a comfortable posture and commence your worship. You have to first of all do Sankalpa for beginning the Pooja in the prescribed method. You should then do Kalasa (water vessel), Sankha (conch), Atma (Self) and Peeta (Lord's seat) Pooja in their order. You should then offer shodasopachara pooja to the Lord. You should then repeat Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, Rudripat, Purushasookta, Gayatri and do Abhiseka with pure water, milk, sugarcane juice, ghee and other articles according to your capacity or with pure water alone. Rudrabhiseka is highly beneficial. If you do Rudri Japa and Abhisek all your worries and agonies will disappear and you will attain the highest beatitude of human existence by the grace of Lord Viswanath Rudri is a great purifier. There is invisible hidden power in Rudri and Purushasookta. There is a wonderful inspiration in the recitation of Rudri. Start the worship and realise its glory and splendour for yourself.

After Abhiseka decorate the Lord nicely with sandal paste and flowers. Then do Archana repeating His names "Om Sivaya Namah" "OM Maheswaraya Namah" etc. Do daily 108 or 1008 Archanas if possible. After Archana do Arati with different kinds of lights, single Arati, Triple Arati, Pancharati and Karpura Arati.

Ring bells, cymbals, conch etc., during Arati. Offer sacred Prasad or Naivedyam to the Lord.

After Arati is over sing the praises of the Lord like Mahimna stotra, Panchakshara stotra etc., waiving the Chamara. In the end repeat the prayers " Kayenavacha ", " Atmatwam Girijamati ", Karacharana-kritam " etc. Offer everything to the Lord. Feel that you are a mere instrument in His hands. Do everything for obtaining the divine grace only. Develop Nimitta Bhav. Serve the Bhaktas. The Lord is much pleased with the service of His devotees. Distribute the Prasad among the Bhaktas in the end. Take the Prasad with great faith. The glory of Bhagavan's prasad is indescribable. Vibhuti, flowers are all taken as Prasad and applied to the forehead. (You can get the detailed Pooja Vidhi from your own Purohit or refer the book Nityanhikam published by R. S. Vadhyar & Sons, Booksellers, Kalpathi, Palghat S. I. Ry. The book is in both Sanskrit and English as well.)

When you advance in Saguna worship with external objects of worship you can begin Manasic Pooja. You will have Darshan of the Lord and final emancipation.

Have special Poojas on Mondays, Pradosha (thirteenth day of every fortnight—Trayodashi). These days and Sivaratri (in the month of February) are very sacred for Lord Siva. Celebrate the Sivaratri in a grand scale. Fast the whole day. Have Trikala Pōoja, special Abhiseka,

Ekadasarudrijapa, Sahasrarchana, vigil in the night, study of hymns of Lord Siva, Sivapuran, hearing discourses on the Lilas of Lord Siva. After Pooja on the next day break your fast with Abhiseka water. Offer sacred food offerings and partake of the Divine Prasad. You will have great mental peace, and spiritual advancement. Never miss this opportunity. Daily worship is a sure remedy for all ills. You will never suffer from poverty. Take my word and begin the Pooja right from this day onwards.

4. SIVA MANASA POOJA

Manasa Pooja is mental worship. Manasic Pooja is more powerful and effective than the external worship with flowers, sandals etc. You will have more concentration when you do Manasic Pooja.

Mentally enthrone the Lord in a Singhasana, set with diamonds, pearls, emeralds etc. Offer Him a seat. Offer Arghyam, Madhuvarga and various sorts of flowers, clothes etc. Apply sandal paste to his fore-head and body. Burn incense and Agarbatti (scented sticks). Waive lights. Burn camphor and do Arathi. Offer various kinds of fruits, sweetmeats, Payasa, cocoanut and Mahanaivedyam. Do Shodasaupachara or the sixteen kinds of offerings in worship.

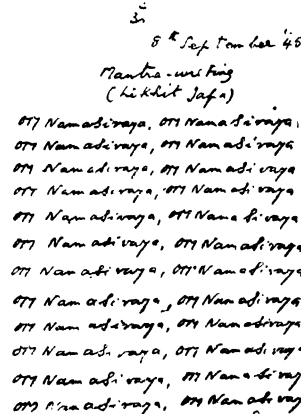
5. PANCHAKSHAR MANTRA WRITING

Write down in a fine note book 'Om Nama Sivaya' for half an hour or more. You will have

more concentration by taking recourse to this sadhana. Write the mantra in ink clearly. When you write the Mantra observe Mouna. You may write the mantra in any language. Give up looking thither and hither. Repeat the Mantra mentally also when you write the Mantra. Write the whole mantra at once. When the mantra note book is completed keep it in a box in your meditation room. Be regular in your practice.

Keep a small note book in your pocket and write the mantra when you get leisure in the office. Have three things in your pocket viz. Gita, Mantra note book and a Japa mala or rosary. You will be immensely benefited.

Here is a specimen of mantra-writing.



6. SIVA GYANAM

Japa and meditation of the sacred names of Lord Siva will free you from all sins and lead you to the attainment of Siva Gyanam or eternal bliss and immortality. Sivanama is the very soul of all Mantras.

Lord Siva has manifested in the world in sixty different aspects. Vrishabharudha, Harihara, Nataraja, Bhairava, Dakshinamurthy, Ardhanariswara, Bhikshatana, Somasekaramurti, Urdhvanatana, Kalasambara, Jalandhara, Surasamhara, Lingodbhava are His forms.

Siva means that which is eternally happy or auspicious, Paramamangala. Om and Siva are one. Mandukya Upanishad says, "Santam Sivam Adwaitam." Even an outcaste can meditate on the name of Lord Siva.

Siva manifests in the Gayatri Mantra, Agni and in the Sun. When you repeat Gayatri and when you worship the Agni and the Sun, you should meditate on Lord Siva.

Japa of Panchakshara and meditation of Lord Siva should be particularly done in the Pradosha Kala or just before sunset. The Pradosha when comes on the thirteenth tithi after a full moon or a new moonday is known as the Mahapradosha. The Devas visit Siva temples for the worship of the Lord at this period. You can worship the Devas also if you visit temples during Mahopradosha. Devotees of Lord Siva observe full fast on Mahapradosha days.

A devotee of Lord Siva should apply Vibhuti to forehead and body. He should wear a Rudrakshamala. He should worship the Sivalinga with leaves of the Bilwa tree. He should do Japa and meditation of the Panchakshara 'Om Nama Sivay'. Lord Siva is propitiated by everyone of these actions. Vibhuti or Bhasma is very sacred. It is worn by Lord Siva Himself. The bead of a Rudraksamala represents the third eye in the forehead of Lord Siva. Bilva leaves are regarded to be one of the five abodes of Lakshmi or the Goddess of wealth.

It is Siva only who causes bondage and Mukti for the Jivas. It is Siva who makes the Jivas realise their essential Divine Nature. Siva made Maya as the body, senses and the Universe and thrust the Jivas into the Maya. He created the idea of egoism, 'I' ness in them. He bound them in karma and made them experience pleasure and pain according to the nature of their karmas, virtuous actions or vicious deeds. This is the state of bondage of the Jivas.

Gradually it is Siva only who releases them from the fetters of egoism, Karma and Maya and makes them shine as Siva. This is the state of Moksha or freedom. It is only through the grace of Lord Siva, they attain the state of final emancipation.

The Jivas have no independence, when they are under the influence of the three impurities, i. e., Anavam, Karma and Maya. They are endowed with a little knowledge (alpagyana).

The Jiva must first know his nature and his relationship with Lord Siva in order to attain His grace. Life or prana is in the body. Lord Siva is within the prana. He is the prana of pranas, and yet He is distant from the Pranas. and body. If there is no prana in the body, the body becomes a corpse. It cannot perform any action. Siva is the support for this body, Prana and Jiva. The Jiva cannot do any action without Siva. It is Siva who illumines the intellect. Just as the eye cannot see without the light of the sun although it is endowed with the power to see, so also the intellect cannot function without the light of Lord Siva.

The four sadhana viz., Sarigai, Kriya, Yoga Jnanam, are the four steps to attain Salvation. They are like the bud, flower, unripe fruit and ripe fruit.

Lord Siva gradually frees the individual Souls from egoism, Karma and Maya. The Jivas gradually become disgusted with the sensual pleasures. They become balanced in pleasure and pain. Through the grace of the Lord they understand that Karma is the cause for births and deaths. They begin to do actions for the Lord, serve the devotees of the Lord and attain purity of mind. They understand that the soul or Siva is distant from the body, senses and mind and is beyond the reach of mind and speech. They get initiation into the significance of Om Namasivaya or Panchakshara Mantra and meditate on Siva.

They practise Siva Yoga. Their hearts melt. Seer, sight and visibles vanish. All the activities of senses, mind and intellect cease. They bathe Lord Siva with the Stream of Divine Love that is generated in their heart and offer their heart as flower unto the Lord.

They hear the sound 'chilam bosai' and march forward through the path of the sound and behold the vision of Nataraja in the Chidakasha and are immersed in the ocean of Sivananda. They become one with the Lord, just as camphor melts in the fire.

Om Santi ! Santi ! ! Santi ! ! !

7. WORSHIP OF SIVALINGAM.

The popular belief is that the Siva Lingam represents the phallus or the virile organ, the emblem of the generative power or principle in nature. This is not only a serious mistake but a grave blunder. In the post-Vedic period the Linga became symbolical of the generative power of Lord Siva. Linga is the differentiating mark. It is certainly not the sex mark. You will find in the Linga Purana:

Pradhanam Prakriti Yadahurlingamuttamam
Gandhavarnarasairheenam Sabda-sparshodi-varjitam

The foremost lingam which is primary and is devoid of smell, colour, taste, hearing, touch, etc., is spoken of as Prakriti (Nature).

Linga means "Mark" in Sanskrit. It is a symbol which points to an inference. When you

see a big flood in a river you infer that there had been heavy rains the previous day. When you see smoke you infer that there is fire. This vast world of countless forms is a Linga of the Omnipotent Lord. The Siva linga is a symbol of Lord Siva. When you look at the Linga your mind is at once elevated and you begin to think of the Lord.

Lord Siva is really formless. He has no form of his own and yet all forms are His forms. All forms are pervaded by Lord Siva. Every form is the form or Linga of Lord Siva.

There is a mysterious power or indescribable Sakti in the Linga to induce concentration of the mind. Just as the mind is focussed easily in crystal gazing, so also the mind attains one-pointedness of mind when it looks at the Lingam. That is the reason why the ancient Rishis of India and the seers have prescribed lingam for being installed in the temples of Lord Siva.

Siva Linga speaks to you in the unmistakable language of silence, "I am one without a second. I am formless" Pure, pious souls only can understand this language. A curious passionate, impure foreigner of little understanding or intelligence says sarcastically, "Oh the Hindus worship the phallus or sex organ. They are ignorant people. They have no philosophy." When a foreigner tries to learn Tamil or Hindustani language he first tries to pick up some vulgar words. This is his curiosity nature. Even so the curious foreigner tries to find out

some defects in the worship of symbol. Linga is only the outword symbol of the formless being, Lord Siva who is the indivisible, all-pervading, eternal, auspicious, ever-pure, immortal essence of this vast universe, who is the undying soul seated in the chambers of your heart, who is your Indweller, innermost Self or Atma, and who is identical with the Supreme Brahman.

A Siva Linga consists of three parts, the lowest of which is the Brahma Pitha, the middle one the Vishnu Pitha and the uppermost one, the Siva-Pitha.

Some are Swayambhu-lingas, some are Narmadeshwars. There are twelve Jyotirlingas and five Pancha Bhuta Lingas in India. The twelve Jyotir Lingas are Kedarnath, Kasi Viswanath, Somanath, Baijnath, Rameshwar, Ghushneshwar, Bhima Shanker, Maha Kala, Mallika Arjun, Amaleshwar, Nageshwar, Tryambakeshwar. The five Pancha Bhuta Lingas are Kalahastishwar, Jambukeshwar, Arunachaleshwar, Exambareshwar (Conjeevaram) and Nataraja of Chidambaram. The temple of Lord Mahalinga at Tiruvidai Mardur known also as Madhyarjuna is regarded as the great Siva temple of South India.

Sphatikalinga is also a symbol of Lord Siva. This is prescribed for Aradhana or worship of Lord Siva. It is made up of quartz. It has no colour of its own but takes on the colour of the substances which come in contact with it. It represents the Nirguna Brahman or the attribu-

teless Supreme Self or formless and attributeless Siva.

For a sincere devotee the Linga is not a block of stone. It is all radiant tejas or chaitanya. The Linga talks to him, makes him shed profuse tears, produce horripulation and melting of heart, raises him above body consciousness and helps to commune with the Lord and attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Lord Rama worshipped the Siva Linga at Rameshwar. Ravana the learned scholar worshipped the golden Linga. What a lot of mystic Sakti there should be in the Linga!

May you all attain the formless Siva through the worship of the Linga! The symbol of Lord Siva which helps concentration of mind and which serves as a prop for the mind to lean upon in the beginning for the neopphytes!

SIVA LINGA IS CHINMAYA

The light of consciousness manifesting out of Sadashiva, is in reality the Sivalinga. From Him all the moving and unmoving creations take their origin. He is the Linga or cause of everything. In Him the whole world merges itself finally. The Siva Purana says, "Peetamambamayam Sarvam Siva-lingascha Chinmayam." The support of peetam of all is Prakriti or Parvati and Linga is Chinmaya Purusha, the effulgent light which is self-luminous. Union of Prakriti, Parvati and Purusha or Sivalingam is the cause of the world. In Sanatkumarasamhita,

the Siva Purana, Lord Siva says, "O Parvati, daughter of mountain, there is none dearer to me than the man who worships me in the linga knowing that Linga is the root cause of everything and knowing the world to be linga maya or chaitanya-maya.

The lingam is like an egg. It represents the Brahmanda. Whatever that is contained in the Brahmanda is in the Lingam. The whole world is the form of Lord Siva. The world is a lingam. Lingam also is the form of Lord Siva.

Linga signifies that the creation is effected by the Union of Prakriti and Purusha. It means, Laya, Jnanam, Vyapyam, Prakash, Arthaprakasha Samarthya and the symbol which denotes the above meaning. Linga means the place of dissolution for the world and all beings. It signifies also, "Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Truth, Knowledge and Infinnity." It indicates that Lord Siva is endowed with all-pervading, and self luminous nature. Linga is a symbol which makes us understand the various kinds of Artha which are indicated above.

There are six lingas, viz., Anda Linga, Pinda linga, Sadashivalinga, Atma linga, Jnana linga, and Sivalinga. These lingas are taken to mean the characteristics by which the Anda (the Universe), Pinda (the body), Sadashiva, etc., are to be recognised and understood.

The Union of Linga with Yoni is a representation of the Eternal Union between the static and the dynamic aspects of the Absolute Reality.

This represents the Eternal Spiritual Communion of the paternal and the maternal principles from which all the phenomenal diversities have originated. This is an eternal communion of the Changeless Being and the Dynamic Power or Sakti from which all changes flow.

Further, the lower sexual propensities in the aspirants are eradicated by this sublime conception. The spiritualisation and divinisation of Linga and Yoni helps the aspirants to free themselves from sexual thoughts. All base thoughts gradually vanish by entertaining this lofty idea. All sexual relations in this world are spiritualised as the manifestations of the ultimate Creative Principle, of the eternal Self-enjoyment and Self-multiplication of Lord Siva in and through His Power or Sakti.

The union of Linga with Yoni symbolises the creation of this universe by Lord Siva in conjunction with His Sakti or Power.

The so-called educated men of the modern age have no spiritual insight and philosophical penetration. Hence they criticise the union of Linga with Yoni as immoral and obscene owing to their extreme ignorance and lack of enquiry, deep thinking and Satsang or association with Sages. This is highly deplorable and lamentable indeed ! May Lord grant wisdom to these poor ignorant souls !

8. WAY TO ATTAIN LORD SIVA

Tirumular's Tirumanthram is a work of stanzas, said to be composed in the course of

three thousand years. It deals with the practical and theoretical aspects of Saiva religion and philosophy. The treatment of Pathi (Lord Siva), Pasu (the individual soul) and Pasam (attachment) in the old method is found in this book. The following is Tirumular's exposition in his Tirumanthram.

God alone is the Guru or the spiritual teacher. He shows Siva or Sat. Sad-Guru is Ambalam or Chidakasa Siva. You will have to search the Guru in your own heart. Knowledge, devotion, purity, Siddhis, are obtained through the grace of the Guru. The grace descends on virtuous aspirants who have purity, dispassion etc.

The thirsting aspirant should get help from Guru Param. Guru Param imparts spiritual instructions to the aspirant. Then Suddha Guru confers upon him Divine Grace. When the aspirant obtains the divine Grace, he gets several powers, purity, the power to know the Mantras, higher Siddhis etc. Then the Sad-Guru reveals him in the Chidakasa, breaks the three bonds viz., Anava (egoism), Karma (action) and Maya (the illusion) and helps him to enter the illimitable domain of Moksha or supreme abode of eternal bliss. Siva Guru presents himself later on and manifests Sat, Asat and Satasat. When the Jiva attains this final knowledge he becomes Sivam himself. The Guru who presents himself in the earlier and later stages is Siva Himself.

The devotee attains the grace of the Lord

when he meditates on Him in the chambers of his heart, in the space between the two eyebrows and in the head. The holy feet of the Lord are highly eulogised. Tirumular says, "The holy feet of my Lord are Mantra, beauty and truth."

Gneya or that which is to be known is Siva Ananda which is a product of Siva and His grace, Sakti. The Gnata (knower) is the individual soul or Jiva. He knows Siva by abiding in Siva Ananda and obtains Gnanam or knowledge.

Moksha is the attainment of Siva Ananda. He who attains Moksha will attain supreme knowledge of Siva. He who gets established in Siva Ananda will attain knowledge and Moksha (the final emancipation). The Jiva who knows Siva Ananda dwells for ever in it. He attains Siva and Sakti in Siva Ananda. He is endowed with true knowledge which is really union of Siva and Sakti. Lord Siva shows the path which leads on to Moksha to the aspirant who is endowed with dispassion, non-attachment, renunciation, who praises Him always and performs regular worship.

The devotee of Lord Siva gets strength to resist the temptations of the world and Indra through his Tapas or austerity. He does not care at all for the celestial pleasures offered by Indra. He is quite contented with the supreme bliss attained through union with Lord Siva.

When the Sadhak does rigorous austerities and concentration he attains several powers.

Indra and other Devas get terribly afraid that they will lose their position. Hence they put several obstacles on his path and tempt him in a variety of ways by offering celestial car, damsels and tempt him with various sorts of celestial pleasures. But the firm Sadhak stands adamant. He never yields and marches direct to the goal viz., Siva Padam or the immortal seat of eternal bliss. He who yields gets a downfall. Viswamitra had a downfall.

Sage Tirumular says, "Abandon pride of learning. Introspect. Look within. You will be firmly established in Sivam. Nothing will shake you. You will be freed from the trammels of births and deaths."

Saiva Siddhants teaches Adwaitam only. It is Siva Adwaitam.

9. PRASAD MAHIMA—GREATNESS OF PRASAD

Prasad is that which gives Peace. During Kirtan, worship, Pooja, Havan and Arati, Badam, Kismis, milk, sweets, fruits are offered to the Lord. Pooja is done by Bhel leaves, flowers, Tulsi, Vibhuti and these are given as Prasad from the Lord. They are charged with mysterious powers by the chanting of Mantras during Pooja and Havan.

Prasad is a great purifier. Prasad is a panacea. Prasad is a Spiritual Elixir. Prasad is the Grace of the Lord. Prasad is an embodiment of Shakti. Prasad is Divinity in manifes-

tation. Many sincere aspirants get wonderful experiences from Prasad alone. Many incurable diseases are cured. Prasad energises, vivifies, invigorates and infuses devotion. It should be taken with great faith.

Live for a week in Brindaban, Pandharpur or Benares. You will realise the glory and miraculous effects of Prasad. Prasad bestows good health, long life, Peace and Prosperity to all. Glory to Prasad, the bestower of Peace and Bliss; Glory to the Lord of the Prasad, Giver of Immortality and undying happiness.

VIBHUTI—is the Prasad of Lord Siva. To be applied on the forehead. A small portion can be taken in.

KUMKUM—is the Prasad of Sri Devi or Shakti. To be applied at the space between the eye-brows (Ajna or Bhrumadhya).

TULSI—is the Prasad of Lord Vishnu, Rama or Krishna to be taken in. Badam, Kismis, sweets, fruits, etc, to be taken in.

All these Prasad are given on all important religious functions.

10. BENEFIT OF PILGRIMAGE

You will find a description of Oertel's treatment in books on Medicine for certain cardiac affections (heart troubles). The patient is asked to climb up hills slowly. So this Kailas trip besides the spiritual benefit removes many kinds of minor heart troubles. The heart is invigorated and strength-

ened. The whole cardiac-vascular, nervous, pulmonary, alimentary, integumentary systems are thoroughly overhauled and purified. There is no necessasity for Kuhne's steam bath. You perspire profusely during the march. The whole body is filled with fresh, oxygenated blood. The gentle breeze blowing from the tall pine trees all over surcharged with natural oil of pine disinfects the lungs and a consumptive is cured of phythisis when he returns. The excessive fat is reduced. A Kailas trip is the best treatment for reduction of obesity in corpulant persons. Many kinds of stomach troubles, uric acid troubles and various sorts of skin diseases are cured. You will not get any disease for a period of 12 years as you are charged with new electrons, new atoms, new cells, new molecules and new nuclei with renovated protoplasm. This is no arthavada (glorification). You get two birds by throwing one stone. The Kailas trip brings spiritual blessings and good health. Hail! Hail to Sambo, the Lord Siva who dwells in Kailas with his Sakthi, Parvathi, who gives Mukthi to His devotees and who is known by the different names, Hara, Sadasiva, Mahadeva, Nataraja, Sankara, etc.

The goal of life is God-Realisation which only can free us from the miseries of Samsara, the wheel of birth and death. The performance of the daily obligatory rites, Nitya, Naimittika Karmas, Yatras, etc., unselfishly leads to the acquisition of virtue. This leads to the destruc-

tion of sin, which in turn results in the purification of the mind. This purification of the mind leads to the comprehension of the true nature of Samsara or relative existence, its false and worthless nature. From this results Vairagyam (renunciation) which arouses a desire for liberation ; from this desire results a vigilant search for its means. From it comes the renunciation of all actions. Thence the practice of Yoga, which leads to an habitual tendency of the mind to settle in the Atma or Brahman. This results in the knowledge of the meaning of such Sruti passages as "Tat Twam Asi," which destroys the Avidya, ignorance, thus leading to the establishment in one's own self. Thus you see that YATRA like Kailas trip is a Parampara Sadhana for God-realization as it causes Chitta Shuddhi and Nidhidhyasan—Dhyana is a direct, Sakshath Sadhana. House-holders who are shut up in the world amidst various sorts of cares and anxieties, find a great relief in a yatra. Their minds get quite refreshed by a yatra. Further, during the travel they come across Sadhus and Sannyasins. They can have good SAT SANG. They can clear their doubts. That can get various sorts of help from them in spiritual Sadhana. That is the main object of yatra.

Let me bring to your memory, once more the last word of the Vedas, Upanishads—"TAT TWAM ASI", my dear Readers ;

OM TAT SAT, OM Santi, Peace be unto all Beings.

11. BENEFITS OF PARIKRAMA

Parikrama is the devout perambulation or Pradakshina around a sacred and holy spot. This is either a mountain peak, around a sacred Tirtha, a place of pilgrimage or an entire area regarded as holy and sanctified by tradition. This practice of making a circuit is ordinarily done at any time and especially undertaken by devotees en mass at particular periods during the year.

When done on a smaller scale within a small ambit as round a Murti installed in a shrine, round the sacred tulsi plant or pippal tree the perambulation is in common parlance termed 'Pradakshina'. A Parikrama also doubtless constitutes Pradikshina but by convention it is come to refer mainly to big circuit.

More difficult forms of Parikrama are in vogue. Additional measures involving greater physical exertion and strain are combined with Parikrama. Some lay themselves fully stretched upon the ground and roll along over the entire route. Some others proceed slowly prostrating full length at every three steps or 10 steps, still others walk step by step (place one foot in close proximity to the other and cover the whole distance of Parikrama and others do the circuit themselves gyrating in a continuous Atma Pradakshina. All these difficult features are adopted by devotees at times as special penance or in accordance with some vow previously made, spontaneous expression of their zeal and fervour.

Your mental attitude and motive will bestow on you the highest maximum spiritual good.

Undaunted Yatris in the icy Himalayas do the difficult Parikrama of Mount Kailas and the even longer circuit of Lake Mansarovar. Other Yatris complete a round of entire Uttarakhand in doing the Kedar Badri Yatra by going via one route and returning via another after circling the chardam.

Far off in the South pious devotees make Pradakshina of the holy Arunachala at Tiruvannamalai while Rama Bhaktas and Krishna Premis go round Chitrakut Parvat, Ayodhya, Brij, Brindaban, Govardhan and Bhadrinath.

The deep significance of Parikrama lies in the fact that the devotee considers not the physical aspect of the place, hill or Tirtha but the spiritual power it symbolises and the Divine Presence that is manifest and felt through it. Through the Lord's revelation in the tenth chapter of Bhagavad Gita you will understand how such special places are saturated with the Divine Presence. By the fervent attitude of faith and veneration you make yourself fully receptive to the inflow of the spiritual vibrations of the holy place. These powerful spiritual currents enter and purify all the sheaths, gross and subtle, destroying bad Vasanas and Samskaras. Tamas and Rajas are reduced. The concentrated influence of Sattva awakens the dormant spiritual tendencies. By Parikrama the devotee drinks deep the Divine atmosphere pervading the place

and comes out of this spiritual bath steeped in sattvic vibrations. This is the inner working and significance of doing Parikrama.

Being a great purifier it is enjoined on all devotees as a method of penance or Tapascharya by wise tradition and convention. It is an act of great spiritual benefit and religious merit too. The devotee takes bath, wears clean clothes, smears tilak or sacred ash and wears tulsi and Rudrakshamala and start with God's name on his lips. On the Parikrama route you gain valuable satsangh by meeting Sadhus and Sannyasins living there. Your sins are destroyed by taking bath in sacred rivers (on big Parikramas) or ponds and Kunds. You are elevated and blessed by darshan of many holy shrines situated on the way. You develop patience and endurance putting up various discomfort in the sun or rain or cold. Difficult Parkiramas mean giving up many dear articles to which the mind is attached. You have your mind freed from all thoughts and you are absorbed in the one Idea of the Divine presence. A devoutedly conducted Parikrama constitutes in one single act a triple Sadhana elevating your body, mind and spirit. The spiritual vibrations of the holy places of pilgrimage and shrines purify your base Asuric Vrittis and fill you with Sattva and purity. You need not go in for Sat-sangh. Mahapurushas come to you of their own accord. They are always in search of real and sincere Sadhaks. Therefore they also remain in holy

places like Badri, Kedar, Kailas, Hardwar, Brindaban, Muttra etc.

Blessed indeed are those who take part in Parikrama because they will soon attain peace, bliss and immortality! Glory to Lord Rama the Lord of Ayodhya! Glory to Krishna the Indweller of all hearts whose special seat is Brindaban! Glory to Bhaktas! May their blessings be upon you all!

12. REAL FLOWER AND ARATI

The tower of a temple represents Brahmarandhra Balipeetam represents the navel or Manipur Chakra. Nandi represents Ajna Chakra. Dwajastambam represents Sushumna Nadi which runs from Mooladhara to Brahmarandhra.

Dik devata dwells in the ears, Vayu in the skin, sun in the eyes, Varuna in the tongue, Aswins in the nose, Vishnu in the feet, Indra in the hands, Agni in the speech, Prajapathi in the generative organ, Yama in the anus, Sutratman in the Prana, Hiranyagarbha in Antahkarana, Chandra in mind, Brahma in the intellect, Rudra in egoism, Siva in Chitta, Saraswati in the end of the tongue, Parvati in Anahata Chakra, Lakshmi in Manipura Chakra, Ganesh in Mooladhara and Satchitananda Brahman in Brahmarandhra at the crown of the head.

Satyam, Ahimsa, Tapas, mercy, love, self-restraint, contentment, forgiveness, Jnana, equal vision, peace are the real flowers of Pooja. All the Nadas are the waters for Abhiseka. The

virtuous actions are the offering of incense. Vedanta is Pitambar. Jnana and Yoga are the Kundalas. Tapas and meditation are the lights. Japa is Chamara. Anahata is the music. Kirtan is umbrella. Pranayama is the fan.

Tattwas are the attendants of the Lord. Jnana Sakti is the Devi. Agama is the commander. The eight Siddhis are the door keepers of the Lord Turiya is the Bhasma. Veda is the bull or Nandi. Kalyana Gunas represent the Trident in the hand. Panchakshara is the holy thread. Suddha Jiva is the ornament. The Vrittis are the Poojaupakaranas. The Panchabhutas and the five Tanmatras are the Rudrakshamalas of Lord Siva. Tiger skin represents Ahamkara.

Kriya Sakti and virtuous actions are Dhoop or incense for the Lord. Chit Sakti which produces knowledge is also Dhoop. Offering of the ego and the mind at the lotus feet of the Lord is real Naivedyam. Just as camphor melts and becomes one with the fire, so also the mind of a sage melts and the individual soul gets merged in the supreme soul. This is real Karpoor Arati.

CHAPTER X

THE SAIVA UPANISHADS

1. RUDRA OF THE UPANISHADS

Some ignorant persons think that Rudra is a malevolent, terrific deity who causes destruction. They believe that Rudra is a god of punishment. It is not so. Rudra is the God who bestows prosperity and destroys suffering. He is a benevolent deity who confers auspiciousness, offspring and cattle. He is the bringer or source of prosperity.

Siva or Rudra means "He who removes sin or suffering." The names Bhava, Sarva, Pasupathi, Ugra, Mahadeva, Isana and Asani are applied to Rudra. Pasupathi means "the lord or the protector of cattle."

In the Vedas you will find prayers such as "O Rudra! May we increase in offspring." "Thou Rudra art in glory the most eminent of beings, the strongest of the strong, wielder of the thunderbolt. Protect us. Carry us happily across our calamity. Drive away all evils." "Remove from us whatever sins we have done." Therefore Rudra is not a terror inspiring God but a bestower of welfare or prosperity. He is the one great Lord of the Universe.

Rudra is the ideal of mendicants, because Rudra alone of all the deities is spoken of in the scriptures as the mendicant God. He is men-

tioned as having the ascetic water-pot in the Rigveda hymns.

You will find in the Swetaswatara Upanishad chapter III "There is one Rudra only who rules all the worlds by His powers. There is no one beside Him who can make Him the second. He is present inside the hearts of all beings He creates all the worlds and maintains and finally withdraws them into Himself."

Rudra represents here Para Brahman or the supreme Self, the infinite or the absolute.

Rudra after having created all objects draws together or takes them all back into Himself at the end of time *i.e.*, during cosmic Pralaya or dissolution.

Rudra is the destructive aspect of Siva. There are eleven Rudras in the cosmic hierarchy. Esoterically the Pranas (or the ten senses) and the mind represent the eleven Rudras. Sri Hanuman is a manifestation or aspect of Siva only.

In Siva Purana Rudra is another name for Siva. Rudra is one who destroys the sins and removes the miseries of His devotees and confers on them wisdom and bliss. Rudra is the Antaryamin or indweller of all beings. He witnesses silently the actions and thoughts of men and dispenses the fruits of their actions.

"That one God, having His eyes, His face, His arms and feet in every place, when producing heaven and earth, forges them together with His arms and His wings."

May Rudra, the creator and supporter of the Gods, the great seer, the Lord of all, who created at first Hiranyagarbha endow us with good thought (pure intellect).

"O Rudra, with Thy form which is auspicious, which is not dreadful, and which manifests what is holy, with that all-blessed form, appear to us, O Dweller among the mountains."

2. RUDRAKSHA UPANISHAD

Hari Om! I praise the Effulgent State of Absolute Peace, belonging to Sri Maharudra, which is to be known through the Rudraksha Upanishad.

Bhusunda questioned Lord Kalagnirudra:- 'What is the beginning of Rudraksha beads? What is the benefit of wearing them on the body?"

Lord Kalagnirudra answered him thus:- "I closed my eyes for the sake of destroying the Tripura Asuras. From my eyes thus closed drops of water fell on the earth. These drops of tears turned into Rudrakshas.

By the mere utterance of the name of 'Rudraksha, one acquires the benefit of giving ten cows in charity. By seeing and touching it, one attains double that benefit. I am unable to praise it any more.

I closed my eyes for one thousand celestial years. Then from my eyelids, drops of water dropped down and attained the state of

immobility for blessing the devoted persons' (towards me).

This Rudraksha destroys the devotee's sins that are committed both night and day, by wearing it.

By mere vision of these Rudrakshas, the benefit will be say, a lac. But by wearing them, it will be a crore. Why, it will be equal to hundred crores.

But it will be a thousand lacs of crores and hundred lacs of crores times powerful when one does Japa with Rudraksha and wears it at all times.

Among Rudrakshas, one as big as Amalaki (myrobalan),is considered to be the best. One as big as the fruit Badari (Indian berry) is considered to be of the middle sort. But that as big as Chana (Bengal gram)' is considered to be the worst of all. This is my idea about the size of Rudraksha beads.

The four kinds of people, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras are born as merely a worthless burden on the earth. The real Brahmin is the white Rudraksha. The red is a Kshatriya. The yellow is a Vaishya. And the black is a Shudra.

Therefore a Brahmin should wear white Rudrakshas, a Kshatriya the red, a Vaishya the yellow and a Shudra the black.

One should use those Rudraksha beads which are nice, handsome, strong, big, auspicious

and thorny. One should avoid those eaten by worms, broken, without thorns and having sores.

The self-holed Rudraksha is of the best variety. But that which is holed by man's attempt is considered to be worse. Those best Rudrakshas should be stringed in white thread. A worshipper of Siva should wear Rudraksha all over the body. He should wear one bead on the crest, three hundred round the head, thirtysix round the neck, sixteen round each arm, twelve round the chest and five hundred round the waist. He should wear a Yajnopavit consisting of one hundred and eight beads of Rudhraksha. He should wear two, three, five or seven Malas of Rudraksha round the neck.

A Shiva-Bhakta should wear Rudraksha round his crown, ear-ring, chain round the ear, armlet, at all times, and specially round the stomach, irrespective of the fact whether he is sleeping, drinking, etc.

If the devotee wears three hundred beads, it is the worst, if he wears five hundred it will be medium, but one thousand will be the best of all.

The devotee, when wearing Rudrakshas on the head, should repeat the "Ishna Mantra", and when wearing them round the neck, should repeat the "Tat Purusha Mantra" and when wearing round the throat should repeat the "Aghora Mantra". The same Mantra (Aghora) should be recited when wearing round the chest also.

He should wear them round the arms with the "Aghora Bija Mantra."

Then again Bhusunda asked Lord Kalagnirudra:—"What are the different forms and effects of Rudraksha beads? Please tell me about the secret of these blessed ones including their various faces which is the means of getting rid of all evil."

Lord Kalagnirudra said—"The bead with one hole is of the form of the Supreme Truth. A disciplined one (controlling his senses) mingles himself with the one Eternal Truth, after wearing these Rudrakshas. (The following is a list of different faces of Rudrakshas and their effects).

Faces	Form	Effect on wearing.
1.	Supreme Truth.	Attainment of Eternity.
2.	Ardhanareeshwara.	Grace of Ardhanareesha.
3.	Tretagni.	Grace of Agni.
4.	Brahma.	Grace of Brahma.
5.	Panch-Brahma.	Destruction of homicide sin.
6.	Kartikeya or Ganesha.	Attainment of Chitta-Shuddhi and Jnana.
7.	Saptamala.	Attainment of good health and wealth.
8.	Ashtamatras. (Ashta Vasus or Ganga).	Grace of these Devatas and becoming truthful.

9. Nava Shaktis.	Grace of Nava Shaktis or eight Powers.
10. Yama.	Attainment of Peace.
11. Ekadasha Rudras.	Increase of all kinds of wealth.
12. Mahavishnu (12 Adityas).	Attainment of Moksha.
13. Cupid.	Attainment of fulfilling desires and grace of Cupid.
14. Rudra.	Destruction of all diseases.

One who wears Rudrakshas should not use intoxicants, meat, garlic, onions, carrots and all such prohibited things. By wearing Rudrakshas during eclipses, Vishnusankranti (the end of Meena and beginning of Mesha Masa), new moon, full moon and other such auspicious days, one is deprived of all sins,

The base of the Rudraksha bead is Brahma, its navel is Vishnu, its face is Rudra, its hole consists of all gods."

One day Sanatkumara asked Kalagnirudra, "O Lord! Tell me the rules for wearing Rudrakshas." At that time Nidagha, Jadabharata, Dattatreya, Katyayana, Bharadwaja, Kapila Vasishtha, Pippalada, etc., came to Kalagnirudra. Then Lord Kalagnirudra asked them why they all have come in a group. They all answered that they came to hear the method of wearing Rudrakshas.

Kalagnirudra said :— "Those that are born out of Rudras's Akshas (eyes) are called Rudrakshas. When these beads are even once touched by hand, one attains the glory of giving in charity two thousand cows at a time. When they are worn in ears, he gets the effect of giving out eleven thousand cows in charity. He also attains the state of the Eleven Rudras. When the beads are worn in the head, one has the benefit of giving a crore of cows in charity. Of all these places, I am unable to tell you the benefit when worn in the ears.

"Whoever studies this Rudraksha-Upanishad, be he a boy or a youth, becomes great. He becomes the Guru of all and the teacher of all Mantras. Havan and Archan should be done with these Mantras (of the Upanishad).

"That Brahmin who recites this Upanishad in the evening, destroys the sins committed during day time; who recites at noon, destroys the sins of six births; who recites in the morning, and evening, destroys the sins of many births. He attains the same benefit of doing six thousand lacs of Gayatri Japa.

He becomes purified from all sins of killing a Brahmin, drinking toddy, stealing gold, approaching Guru's wife, having intercourse with her, speaking with a corrupted person, etc.

He gets the benefits of all pilgrimages and river-baths. He attains Sivasayujya. He does not come back, (to rebirth)! "

3. BHASMA UPANISHAD

I am that Absolute Brahman only, which after being understood in its true aspect (as one with this Atma), entirely burns into ashes (Bhasma) the ignorance (illusion or Maya) of considering this universe to be existing (real) and separate from one's own Self, through the destructive fire of (Supreme) Knowledge!

Once Bhusunda, a descendant of Jabali went to the Kailas Peak and prostrated before Lord Mahadeva Siva, who is the form of Omkara and who is beyond the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra.

Bhusunda worshipped Siva with great devotion again and again through fruits, flowers and leaves. Then he questioned Lord Siva "Lord! Kindly impart to me the essential knowledge of all the Vedas, embodying the process and technique of using the sacred Ash, because it is the only means for attaining Liberation. What is the Bhasma made of? Where should it be applied? What are the mantras to be recited? Who are the persons fitted for this? What are the rules regarding it? Kindly instruct me, born from a depressed class."

The kind Lord Parameshwara said "At first the devotee, after understanding the influence of the celestials at the prescribed time, should fetch some sacred and pure cowdung early in the morning, keep it in the leaf of a Palasa tree and then dry it with the Vedic Mantra "Tryambakam" etc. (say in the sun).

Then he should burn that dry cow-dung, placed in a convenient place, with any fire that is available, according to the rules laid down in the Grihya Sutras of his sect, and then pour Ahutis of seasamum and paddy together with ghee, with the Mantra "Somaya Swaah". The number of Ahutis should be 1008 or if possible $1\frac{1}{2}$ times this. The instrument for pouring ghee should be made of leaf, in that case man does not commit any sin.

Then, at the end, the devotee should offer the oblation of Swishtakrit at the time of Purna-Ahuti, with the Mantra "Tryambakam" etc. With the same mantra, Bali (an offering) should be placed in the eight directions (of the fire).

That Bhasma should be sprinkled with water by the Gayatri Mantra. Then that sacred ash should be placed in a gold, silver, copper or earthen vessel and sprinkled again with the Rudra Mantras. It should then be kept in a clean and decent place.

Then the devotee should honour the Brahmins with a grand feast.

Then only he will become purified. Then he should take the Bhasma from the vessel with the Pancha-Brahma-Mantras, "Manastoka" etc. and "Sadyo Jatam" etc., and with the idea that "fire is Bhasma, air is Bhasma, water is Bhasma, earth is Bhasma, ether is Bhasma, gods are Bhasma, Rishis are Bhasma, all this universe and existence is Bhasma: I prostrate to this

sacred and purifying Bhasma which destroys all my sins.'

Thus the devotee should keep a little Bhasma with the decent left hand saying, "Vamadevaya" (this is to Vamadeva) sprinkling with the Mantra "Tryambakam" etc., and cleaning it with the Mantra "Shuddham shudhena" etc. Then he should filter it nicely. Then he should apply it from head to foot, with the five Brahma-Mantras. With the first finger, middle finger and ring finger, he should apply the same to the middle of the head saying "to the head" and "O Bhasman! Thou hast come from Agni!"

Place where Bhasma is to be applied.	Mantra to be used.
1. Forehead	Tryambakam etc.
2. Neck	Neelagreevaya etc.
3. Right side of neck	Tryayusham etc.
4. Cheeks	Vama etc.
5. Eyes	Kalaya etc.
6. Ears	Trilochanaya etc.
7. Face	Shrinavama etc.
8. Chest	Prabravama etc.
9. Navel	Atmane etc.
10. Below right shoulder	Nabhih etc.
11. Middle of right shoulder	Bhavaya etc.
12. Right side of chest	Rudraya etc.
13. Back of the right arm	Sharvaya etc.

14.	Below left shoulder	Pashupataye etc.
15.	Middle of the left shoulder	Ugraya etc.
16.	Middle left arm	Agrevadhaya etc.
17.	Back of left arm	Doorevadhaya etc.
18.	Armpits	Namo Hantre etc.
19.	All parts	Shankaraya etc.

The devotee should then prostrate to Shiva with the Mantra "Somaya" etc. He should wash the hands and drink that ash-water with the Mantra "Apah Punantu" etc. The water should never, never be spilt down from any cause.

Thus, this practice of Bhasmadharana should be done in the morning, noon and evening. If he does not do this, he will become fallen. This, this very thing is the prescribed dharma of all Brahmins. Without having Bhasmadharana in this fashion, he should never take any food, water or anything else. Accidentally if this practice is forgotten, that day, Gayatri sould not be repeated. No Yajna should be done on that day, no Tarpana should be offered to gods, Rishis or Pitrus. This is the eternal dharma that destroys all sins and gives the final state of moksha.

This is the daily rite of Brahmins, brahmacharins, grihasthas, vanaprasthas and sanyasins. If this is overlooked even once, he should stand in water up to the neck, repeating Gayatri 108 times, and fast the whole day. If a sanyasin does not wear Bhasma, even a single day, he should fast during the whole day and do 1000

times Pranava Japa, for being purified once again. Otherwise, the Lord will throw these sanyasins to dogs and wolves.

In case this kind of Bhasma is not available, any other Bhasma that may be at hand should be used with the prescribed Mantras. This kind of practice shall destroy any kind of sin that may be committed by man."

Then again Bhusunda asked Siva, "What are the daily rites to be performed by a Brahmin, by neglecting which he will commit a sin? Who is to be then meditated upon? Who is to be remembered? How to meditate? Where to practise this? Please tell me in detail."

The Lord answered all in a nutshell, "First of all the devotee should get up early in the morning before sunrise, and after finishing the purificatory actions, should take his bath. He should clean the body with the Rudra Suktas. Then he should wear a clean cloth. After this he should meditate on the sun-god and apply Bhasma to all the prescribed parts of the body. He should then wear white Rudraksha, as prescribed. Some prescribe the following way of applying Bhasma:—

Places	No. of times (lines).
1. Head	40.
2. Chest	1 or 3.
3. Ears	11.
4. Neck	32.

5.	Arms	16 each.
6.	Throat	12 each side.
7.	Thumbs	6 each.

Then the devotee should observe Sandhya with the Kusha grass in his hand. He should do Japa of either Shivashadakshara of Shiva-Ashtakshara. "Om Namah Sivaya" and "Om Namo Mahadevaya" are the two mantras. This is the highest truth and the greatest instruction. I myself am that Great Lord Siva, God of all gods, the Supreme Controller of all the universes. I am That Impersonal Brahman, I am Omkara. I am the Creator, Preserver, and destroyer of all. Through my terror only, all are working properly. I am this world and the five elements. I am the Highest Truth that Exists, the Brahman of the Upanishads. This is the greatest Vidya.

I am the only giver of Moksha. Hence all people come to me for final help. That is why I absorb into My Being those creatures who leave their Pranas at Benares which is standing at the top of my Trishula (trident). Therefore every one should perform penance at Benares only. Benares should not be neglected under any circumstance. Everybody should try to live at Benares as far as possible. No place is better than Benares.

Even at Benares, the most celebrated is the temple of Siva, where in the east, there is the place of Wealth, in the south the place of

Vichara, in the west the place of Vairagya and in the North the place of Jnana. There in the middle, I, the Eternal Spirit should be worshipped. That Linga at Benares is not illumined by the sun, moon or the stars. That self-luminous linga called "Vishweshwara" has its root in Patala. That is Myself. I should be worshipped by one who wears the sacred Bhasma and Rudrakshas in the prescribed manner. I shall deliver him from all sins and sorrows.

By performing my Abhisheka, he attains my Sayujya state. Nothing exists other than Myself. I initiate all with the Taraka Mantra. Those who want Mukti should live at Benares. I will take care of them. I am the Lord of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. The most corrupt man or woman will attain Moksha if he dies at Benares. Other sinners will be freed in burning pits of live coals after death. Therefore, everybody should try to live at Benares which is my Pranalinga Itself."

4. TRIPURA-TAPINI-UPANISHAT

I praise that Supreme Truth which is Knowledge Absolute, which is to be known through the Vidya of the Tripura Tapini-Upanishat.

The Lord assumed the form of destructive ferociousness and then He covered Himself all over the three worlds, Bhoor, Bhuvah and Swah. Then He had that power of the Adi Shakti, *i.e*, the Adi Shakti burst out from his heart. This is the Shakti called the Maya of Shiva and

she is understood by the fundamental syallable "Hreem". The whole universe was then covered by this Shakti. Since she covered the three worlds or Tripuras she has been styled as "Tripura".

This Tripura Shakti has the following Vidya called the Sri Vidya which can be derived from the following Vedic Mantras.

तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।
परो रजसे सावदोम् ॥

जातवेदसे सुनवाम सोममरातीयतो निदहानि वेदः ।
सनः पर्षदति दुर्गाणि विश्वा नावेव सिन्धुं दुरितात्यग्निः ॥

त्र्यंबकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टि वर्धनम्
उर्वा रुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ॥

This Vidya consisting of one hundred letters is the Supreme Vidya in its entirety. This is Parameshwari, Tripura herself.

Out of the above Mantras, the first four stanzas deal with the exposition of the glory of the Para Brahman. The second set of stanzas deals with the Mahima of Shakti. The third set deals with the glory of Shiva himself.

In this Vidya all the worlds, all the Vedas, all the Shastras, all the puranas and all the Dharmas have been dealt with and this is the Effulgence that has come out of the combination of Siva and Sakti.

Now we shall comment on the most important and the hidden meanings of these verses.

itself, the Eternity. This is the symbol used for that Lord who is beyond all definitions and arguments. This Lord is the embodiment of Supreme Knowledge itself. That is, He wishes to be in the form of Knowledge Absolute. He alone is the great Lord Siva who is always desired by sages, Yogins etc., in Yajnas. Therefore there is the creation of desire.

Thus, this Lord who is beyond the reach of all desires, still desires and is being desired. He creates the alphabetical list of language. Therefore the Lord is called "Kama" or desire. The letter representing Kama is called 'Ka'. Therefore the word 'Tat' represents the letter 'Ka'. Therefore this is the meaning of the word 'Tat'.

'Savitur Varenyam' comes from the Sanskrit root-word "Shoonh Praniprasave". Therefore, Savitar means the generator or producer of all beings. He is the great Power. Power means Shakti. This great Shakti or Devi called Tripura is embodied in the Mahakundali (Yantra). Thus the fire-globe (of the sun) should be known by the intelligent. This Shakti or power of Trikona (triangular figure) bears out the letter called 'E'. Therefore we should learn the word 'E' from the word "Savitar".

"Varenyam" means that which is fit to be adored and worshipped, which is the imperishable and the praiseworthy. Therefore, it should be understood that the letter 'E' should be taken from the word "Varenyam'. "Bhargo" and Dheemahi" will be now commented upon. The

letter 'Dha' means dharana or concentration. The Lord is always concentrated upon by the "Dhee" or the intellect or Buddhi. Bhârga is Lord himself who can be understood only by reaching the fourth stage of Avastha and this is the Being that pervades all and all. The letter representing this fourth stage is called "I" and this is the real meaning of the above-mentioned words of the Mantra.

We shall now talk of the word "Mahi". Mahi means greatness, idleness, stubbornness, strength, and this applies to that element which possesses all these qualities. That is the earth which is represented by the letter 'La'. This is the Supreme state. Thus, this Lakara shows the quality of the earth in its being the embodiment of all oceans, forests, mountains and the seven islands. Therefore the form of Devi called the earth is termed 'Mahi'.

Now about "Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat". Para or the Supreme is the Imperishable Shiva himself, the Eternal Soul. The underlying meaning here is this: We should meditate on the immobile form of Lakara or Jyotirlinga of Lord Siva which is the most supreme thing that ever exists anywhere. Here there is no desire for any Dhyana whatsoever. It is beyond all Dhyanas. Therefore, we are requesting the Lord to direct our minds to be established in that Nirvikalpa State where there is no thinking at all. This request should not be made through the mouth. It should be simply thought of in the mind.

Then "Paro Rajase Savadom". After meditating on the form of the Supreme Truth, there will come out a big effulgence, pure and blissful, full of knowledge which is residing inside the heart. This is the essence of all speech and knowledge. This is the True Shakti. And this is called the Panchakshara, since it is the creator of the Pancha Bhootas or the five elements. This should be understood correctly by the intelligent.

This is the Vidya giving all desires to the devoted. Thus, after understanding in its true aspect this Vidya of thirty-two letters, the devotee should think of the letter called 'Ha' which is the form of Siva who is the Imperishable, pure State. The letter derived out of the combination of the sun and the moon, that is, the combination of Siva and Sakti is Ha and it is also named as 'Hamsa'. This is the seed of Kama. Through this Vidya we can know the Supreme Lord Siva.

This combination is also understood as being the merging of the Hivatman in the Supreme Paramatman. Thus 'Ha' means the Eternal Stage or the Final Emancipation.

This is the derivation of the Sri Vidya. One who knows this attains the form of Rudra. He bursts open the Residence of Vishnu and reaches the Para Brahmam.

Then about the second Mantra. This Mantra glorifies the Mahima of Tripura Devi.

By the word "Jata" Lord Siva is meant. He

who gave birth to the first letters of the 'Varna-Matrika' of the form of the 'Binduroopa' of Omkara in the very beginning is called 'Jata'. Or else it may also be said that because he desired at the very beginning the fulfilment of his Kama, when he was just born, he is called Jata. The Knowledge of Devi Tripura should be thus carefully analysed in the same manner by disecting the Mantra into its different words (according to Mantrashastra). Then all kinds of 'Raksha' or defence can be had from this Mantra. The first thing that is to be understood here is that 'Jata' is the One Lord, the Effulgent Being. This should be taken as the foundation of all Vidyas pertaining to Tripura. Here it should also be understood that the letter 'Sa' refers to the power of Shakti and the letter 'Somam' refers to the State of Siva Whosoever knows this becomes famous and important.

Thus, this Vidya where Devi Tripura resides at all times should be raken to be the basis of all Vidyas and the devotee should always be studying this Vidya and reciting it. This Vidya is the embodiment of the Powers of Siva and Sakti. This Vidya is called the limb of Sri Tripuramba hereself. The same Vidya when used for meditating purposes is called "Sarvato-dheera'.

The Sree Vidya Chakra of Tripura is the King of all chakras. This gives one anything that he wants and this can be worshipped by anybody, without restriction. This Chakra is

the gateway to Moksha and Yogis after bursting the Brahman through this Vidya attain that permanent Bliss. This chakra is the house of Tripuradevi.

Then about the Mrityunjaya Anushtub Mantra. 'Tryambakam, means the Lord of the three' worlds, *i. e.*, 'Trayanam Ambakam'. 'Trayanam' means 'of the three' worlds. Ambakam is the Lord of it. 'Yajamahe' means 'Sevamahe' or do service. Besides this, the word 'mahe' means 'Mrityunjaya' or the destroyer of death. Therefore the word 'Yajamahe' is very important here.

Then the word 'Sugandhim' means 'to derive fame from all quarters'. And the word 'Pushtivardhanam' means 'one who creates all the worlds, preserves all the worlds, pervades all the worlds and gives salvation to all the worlds'.

'Urvarukam' means 'cucumber'. 'Urvarukamiva Bandhanan Mrityor Muksheeya Mamritat'. A cucumber is tied with a rope. Similarly the human being and other creatures are tied by the bonds of samsara. Here it means to deliver the earthly beings from the Mayaic bond to the Eternal Bliss, just as a cucumber is delivered free from the creeper.

A person who wants to conquer death should repeat the mantra 'Mrityunjayam' etc. One who wished to become Rudra should make use of the Mantra 'Om Namah.' Then he will certainly derive the best benefit out of it.

Then there is another Mantra. 'Tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam' etc. Vishnu is one who pervades all the universes. His supreme state which is just like the sky is called 'Paramam Padam'. 'Soorayah' means scholars or those intelligent who have understood the Reality, *i.e.* Brahma etc. That Supreme State of Vishnu is lying or residing in each and every being. By 'residing' we mean 'Vasati'. Therefore he is called 'Vasudeva'. The powerful twelve letters of Sri Vasudeva called 'Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya' are everything. They are sufficient to absolve one from all sins. The knower of this mantra reaches that Brahma-Purusha who is in the form of the embodiment of the three letters A. U. and M.

Then we have got another powerful Mantra 'Ham Shuchishat' etc. This is the great mantra of the Sun god. And the other mantra which is to be known is 'Gananam Twa' etc. This is the Mantra of Ganapati. One who knows and repeats these Mantras belong to Siva, Vishnu, Surya and Ganapati will get the direct revelation of Devi Tripura.

In the Gayatri, there are four forms. In the morning she is called Gayatri. In the noon she is called 'Savitri'. In the evening she is called 'Saraswati'. She is always called 'Ajapa' when she is having the fourth pada with her. This Devi is having the form of fifty alphabets from the letter 'A' to the letter 'Ksha'. All the Shastras and the world are covered by the

Devi in this form. Prostrations to her again and again.

So, any devotee who worships Devi Tripura with these Mantras becomes the true seer of the Reality. He then attains Moksha. This should be known correctly by everybody.

Now we shall expound the Karmakanda of Tripura-worship. This Shakti or the Adimaya directs the Supreme Brahman. That Brahman is Knowledge Absolute and is termed 'Paramatman'. This Supreme Being is the Hearer, Knower, Seer, Commander, Perceiver, and the Supreme Purusha who resides in the Atman of all beings, This is to be known. There is no world, no non-world, no god, no non-god, no being, no brahmin and no non-brahmin at all. Thus shines the Nirvana called Para Brahman.

The mind that is thinking of something is called 'Baddha'. That which does not think of anything is called 'Mukta'. Then only this Brahman can be understood. Therefore everybody should keep his mind free from thoughts of objects.

Until the mind is devoid of all thoughts one should try to control the pranas. This is the eternal knowledge. All other things are merely unnecessary scriptural descriptions. There is no difference between thinking and non-thinking in the Para Brahman. All are same there. There is nothing to be thought of and there is nobody to think.

Thus finally, the devotee should understand gradually that Brahman is his own Self and then he will attain the Blissful Emancipation.

Now the Supreme Truth is revealed. There is no one who longs for liberation, there is no one who is liberated, there is no Vairagya, there is no sadhana, there is no destruction.

There are two Brahmans, namely 'Shabda Brahma' and 'Para Brahma'. One who has mastered the Shabda Brahma attains to the Para Brahma. After acquiring all the knowledge through books, the intelligent man should throw away those books just like the husk thrown away by one who wants only the internal kernel of the grain.

Thus the Supreme Brahma-State is described. One who knows this Great Vidya should be worshipped by others. There is no doubt about it. This is the great Upanishat.

5. RUDRA UPANISHAT

Now, at this moment, I take refuge in that Pure State of the Supreme Absolute which can be known by the Vidya, called the "Rudra Hridaya" Upanishat.

After prostrating before the celebrated form of Sri Mahadeva-Rudra in his heart, adoring the sacred Bhasma and Rudraksha and mentally reciting the great Mahavakya-Mantra, Tarasara, Sri Shuka asked his father Sri Vyasa-Maharshi thus :—

Who is the real God of gods ? In whom are

all these existences established ? By worshipping whom can I please the Devas in whole ?

Hearing these words, Sri Veda Vyasa replied thus .—

Rudra is the embodiment of all Devas. All Devas are merely different manifestations of Sri Rudra Himself. On the right side of Rudra there is the sun, then the four headed Brahma and then the three Agnis (fires). On the left side, there exists Sri Umadevi, and also Vishnu and Soma (Moon).

Uma herself is the form of Vishnu. Vishnu himself is the form of the Moon. Therefore, those who worship Lord Vishnu, worship Shiva Himself. And those who worship Shiva, worship Lord Vishnu in reality. Those who envy and hate Sri Rudra, are actuallv hating Sri Vishnu. Those who decry Lord Shiva, decry Vishnu Himself.

Rudra is the generator of the seed. Vishnu is the embryo of the seed. Shiva himself is Brahma and Brahma himself is Agni. Rudra is full of Brahma and Vishnu. The whole world is full of Agni and Soma. The masculine gender is Lord Shiva. The feminine gender is Sri Bhavani Devi. All the mobile and immoble creation of this universe is filled up with Uma and Rudra. The Vyakta is Sri Uma, and the Avyakta is Lord Shiva. The combination of Uma and Shankar is Vishnu.

Hence everybody should prostrate to Sri

Maha Vishnu with great devotion. He is the Atma. He is the Paramatma. He is the Antaratma. Brahma is the Antaratma. Shiva is Paramatma. Vishnu is the Eternal Atma of all this universe. This whole creation of Swarga, Martya and Patala is a big tree. Vishnu is the top portion (branches) of this tree. Brahma is the stem. The root is Lord Shiva.

The effect is Vishnu. The action is Brahma. The cause is Shiva. For the benefit of the worlds, Rudra has taken these three forms.

Rudra is Dharma. Vishnu is the world. Brahma is Knowledge. Therefore, do kirthan of His name, "Rudra, Rudra." By singing like this, the hallowed name of this great Lord, all your sins will be destroyed.

Rudra is man. Uma is woman. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Brahma. Uma is Saraswati. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Vishnu. Uma is Lakshmi. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Sun. Uma is Shadow. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is moon. Uma is star. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Day. Uma is night. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Yajna. Uma is Vedi. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Agni. Uma is Swaha. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Veda. Uma is Shastra. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Tree. Uma is creeper. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is scent. Uma is flower. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is meaning. Uma is word. Prostrations to Him and Her.

Rudra is Linga. Uma is Peetha. Prostrations to Him and Her.

The devotee should worship Sri Rudra and Uma with these Mantras referred to above. Oh my son, Shuka! With these hymns, you should meditate on the Eternal Para Brahman, which is beyond the reach of the senses, which is pure Existence, Knowledge and Bliss and which cannot be understood either by the speech or mind. After knowing this, there is nothing more to be known, because everything is the form of That, and there is nothing separate from That.

There are two Vidyas to be known. They are Para and Apara. Apara Vidya is the embodiment of the four Vedas and their six Angas. They do not deal with the Nature of the Atman. But the Para Vidya is called the Moksha-Shastra It deals with that Supreme Philosophy of the Absolute Truth, understandable, Impersonal, Nirguna, Nirakara, without ears, without eyes,

without hands, without feet, Eternal, Omnipresent, Imperishable and knowable by the intelligent daring sages.

From That Lord Siva who performs a terrible penance in the form of Supreme Jnana-Marga, this whole world is created which is the food of the mortals. This world is Maya. It seems to appear just like a dream. It is superimposed on the Lord just like a rope on a serpent. This is the Eternal Truth. There is no creation in reality. All is Absolute. All is Truth. Knowing this, one is liberated at once.

Only through Jnana you can get rid of this samsar. Only through Jnana you can understand this existence and never through Karma. Understand this through the guidance of a Brahmanishtha-Shrotriya Guru. The Guru will give the disciple all the necessary knowledge of the Brahman-Absolute. By cutting off the bondage of Ajnana or Avidya, one should take refuge in Lord Sadashiva. This is the Real Wisdom to be understood by an aspirant seeking after Truth.

The Pranava is the bow. The Atma is the arrow. The Para-Brahman is the target. Just like the arrow, the Atma will become one with Brahman.

But all these three, the bow, the arrow and the target are not different from that Sadashiva. There do not shine the bodies of the sun, Moon or the stars. There does not blow the wind, there do not exist many devatas. He, the One

Lord only exists. He only the purity of purities, shines for ever and ever !

There are two birds in this body, the Jiva and the Paramatma. The Jiva eats the fruit of his Karmas, but the Paramatma is untouched by anything. The Paramatma is only the Sakshi. He does not do anything. He only assumes the form of the Jiva through His Maya. Just as the Akasha inside a pot seems to be different from the Atman. In reality all is Siwam, Adwaitam, and the One Absolute. There is no difference of whatever kind.

When all is understood to be One Aumkara, the Absolute, there is no sorrow, there is no Maya. Then the attainment of the Adwaita-Paramananda is very easy. Think that you are the Basis of all this Universe, you are the One Kevala Sat, Chit and Ghana. All people cannot understand this Truth. Those devoid of Maya can know this secret. After knowing this, the Atma does not move towards any place at any time. It becomes one with the Absolute just like Ghatakasha with Paramakasha. Just as Akasha does not move anywhere, similarly this Atman does not have any movement. It becomes one with OM.

One who knows this Great Secret Truth is the real Muni. He becomes the Para Brahma Itself. He becomes Satchidananda. He attains permanent peace.

CHAPTER XI

THE SAIVA ACHARYAS

1. APPAR OR TIRUNAVUKARASAR

Appar is one of the four Tamil Samaya Acharyas. He was a contemporary of Sambandhar. He was a Vellala of Thiru Amur in the district of Cuddalore, South India. He was born of Pugalenar and Mathiniar. The parents gave the name Marulneekiar (dispeller of darkness or ignorance) to Appar. Appar means 'Father'. Sambandhar gave Marulneekiar this name. The name Appar was first used by Sambandhar in addressing him in one of the several meetings between them. Appar's soul-stirring and sublime odes earned the little Tirunavukarasar or the 'Lord of speech'. He was a God-inspired soul. He sang devotional odes or padigams during his pilgrimage to various shrines. He flourished in the middle of the seventh century, A. D. He was a mystic and poet.

Tilakavadhiar was the elder sister of Appar. She was betrothed to Kalippahaiyar, a military commander under the Pallava king. Kalippahaiyar had to fight against some invader from the North. He died in the battle field. Her parents also died. The news of the death of Kalippahaiyar reached the ears of Tilakavadhiar. She made up her mind to enter the funeral pyre.

Marulneekiar came to know of the intention of his sister. He ran to her sister, prostrated before her and said 'I am keeping my life on account of your support only after the death of the parents. If you want to give up your life, I will give up my life before you do so." The heart of Tilakavadhiar melted. She changed her determination and resolved to lead the ascetic life and bring up her helpless younger brother.

Appar became a convert to Jainism. He studied all the Jain scriptures. He went to Pataliputra itself and became one of the spiritual heads there as he was an erudite scholar in the Jain scriptures.

Appar's sister was very much afflicted at heart when she came to know that her brother became a convert to Jainism. She left her native village and went to Thiru Athikai, a neighbouring town. She spent her time in meditation and prayer at the Shiva's temple. She prayed to the Lord for his retun.

Appar fell a victim to a severe colic which could not be cured. He threw off the garb of a Jain, his bowl and went to his sister. She smeared the holy ashes on the forehead of Appar and took him to the temple of Shiva and asked him to prostrate before the Lord and worship Him. Appar acted accordingly. The severe colic vanished at once. He praised Lord Shiva.

The spiritual head of the Jains at Pataliputra reported to Kadava, the Jain King about the

absconding of Appar. The district of Cuddalore was under the sway of the Pallava king Kadava. The spiritual head induced the king to persecute Appar.

Appar proceeded to the Pallava capital and appeared before the king. Appar was persecuted in various ways. He was thrown into a burning lime-kiln. He was compelled to drink poisoned milk. An elephant was sent to kill him. A heavy stone was tied to him and he was thrown. into the sea. Lord saved him. He floated alive and reached the shore at Thiruppathirupuliyur.

The Pallava king recognised the greatness of Appar and prostrated at his feet. He gave up Jainism and embraced Saivism. He built a magnificent temple of Shiva called Gunathara Vicharam at Thirunadhikai.

Thereupon Appar proceeded on a pilgrimage to various sacred places. He visited Chidambaram, Shiyali and other places and sang Thevaram or odes in praise of Lord Shiva.

Appar met the saint Appudi Adigal at Thingalur. Appar brought Appudi's son who was bitten by a cobra to life.

Thereupon Appar visited holy places such as Thiruvanainallur, Thiruvamathur, Tirukoilur and Tirupennakatam and worshipped Lord Shiva. He finally reached Tiruthoonganaimadam and prayed to Lord Shiva, "O Shiva Sankara! O Ardhanareeshwara! O source and end of all beings! I do not wish to keep the body which

was in touch with the Jains. Let me have the stamp of your trident and Nandi on my body." He sang a padigam. At once a Sivagana approached Appar through the grace of Lord Shiva and put the stamp of trident and Nandi on the shoulder of Appar.

Then Appar proceeded to Shyali to meet Sambandhar. He fell at the feet of Sambandhar. Sambandhar addressed the Vellala saint, "O my beloved Appar."

Once Sambandhar went in a palanquin to Thiruppunthiruthi in the district of Tanjore to meet Appar. Appar went in advance and carried the palanquin. Sambandhar asked, "Where is Appar?" Appar replied, "Here am I, carrying the palanquin." Sambandhar at once got down from the palanquin, embraced Appar and shed tears of love.

Appar went to Thiruchattimutram. He sang a Padigam and said, "O Lord: Place Thy lotus feet on my head before I leave this physical body." He heard an Akasavani or voice in the sky, "Come to Thirunallur: Appar acted accordingly. He went to Thirunallur. Lord Siva placed His feet on the head of Appar. Appar prostrated on the ground. His heart was filled with indescribable delight.

Then Appar went to Thiruvambhar, Thirukadavur and Milalai. There was great famine in Milalai. Appar and Sambandhar were very much grieved at heart as the devotees of Lord Siva were starving. Lord Siva appeared in the

dream of both and said, "Do not be afflicted. I shall give you gold pieces." They found gold pieces daily in the temple and fed the people sumptuously.

Appar and Sambandhar visited the temple at Vedaranyam in the district of Tanjore. Here an old temple of Lord Siva had long remained with doors shut. The Vedas themselves had come and worshipped Siva in the temple and they now did not offer their worship because people neglected the study of Vedas on account of the influence of Jainism. Sambandhar said to Appar, "Come, and sing that these doors may be opened." Appar sang and the doors opened. Sambandhar sang. The doors shut.

On one occasion Appar was very hungry during his pilgrimage tour. Lord Siva created a tank and garden on the way and gave him food also.

Appar started on a journey to visit Mount Kailas. He had a tiresome journey. He had severe bruises on his feet. He heard a voice in the sky, It was the voice of Lord Siva. The voice said, "O Appar Wake up. Take a dip in this tank. You will see Me and Mt. Kailasa in Tiruvayar." Appar took a dip in the tank and appeared in a temple in Tiruvayar on the banks of Kaveri. He came outside the tank and saw Siva and Sakti everywhere. He entered the temple and saw Mt. Kailasa and Lord Siva of Mount Kailasa. Appar rejoiced heartily at the marvellous sight and sang Padigams.

Finally Appar stayed at Pumpukalar near Tiruvalur and spent here the last years of his life. He was tested here by the Lord in order to show his greatness to the people. When he was serving in the temple gold and diamonds appeared under his feet. Appar regarded them as stones and threw them away. On another occasion celestial damsels appeared before him and tempted him in a variety of ways but Appar remained undisturbed in his meditation He merged himself in the light of Lights, Lord Siva when he was much advanced in age.

II

Appar laid the foundation of Saiva Siddhanta school of philosopy by means of his poems. Appar's poems are full of imagination, spiritual insight, religious emotion and high spiritual realisation.

Appar was more learned than Sambandhar. He had a very powerful personality, He led an exemplary life as a Siva Bhakta. He put an end to the influence of Jainism. He always praises the five letters or Panchakshara. He says, "The rare jewel of the Brahmins is the Veda with its six angas. The rare jewel for the Saivites is the Panchakshara. His exemplary life, mellifluous poetry, vast erudition and profound religious fervour attracted countless people. He had countless admirers and disciples. He had great influence. Appar's works consist of three hundred poems which form three books out of twelve in the Tamil collection of Saivite

poetry known as Thirumurai.

Appar says " Everything is the manifestation of Lord Siva. Siva is Narayana, Brahma, the four Vedas, the Holiest, the oldest. the perfect. Though Siva is all these, He is none of these. He is without name, without birth, death or disease. He is at once the transcendent and immanent."

"Love of Lord Siva must be felt and manifested. Sing. Pray. Worship. Weep. Dance. Lord Siva is the music or melody in the song, the sweetness in the fruit, the thought in the mind, the lustre in the eyes. He is neither male nor female. He is without dimensions,"

"Subdue the senses. Practise regular meditation. Practise Sariyai, Kriyai, Yogam and Jnanam. Practise regular meditation. Develop dispassion (Vairagya). Transcend the three bodies. Unite the individual soul with the supreme soul or Lord Siva. You will attain eternal bliss and immortality. You can behold Lord Siva if you look for Him with the light of wisdom issuing forth from the wick of life, fed with the ghee of meditation in the lamp of the mind within the house of your body."

"Plough with truth. Plant the seed of desire for knowledge. Weed out falsehood. Irrigate the mind with the water of patience. Supervise your work by looking within or introspection and self-analysis. Build the fence of Yama, Niyama or right conduct or right rules. You will soon attain Sivanandam or eternal bliss of Siva."

" Regard your body as the temple of Lord Siva, your mind as the worshipper, Truth as purity which is necessary for worship, the jewel of the mind as the Linga, love as the ghee milk etc. Perform Pooja to Lord Siva thus. Lord Siva cannot be obtained without making the mind one-pointed and meditation on the Panchakshara."

May you all follow the precepts and teachings of Appar and attain the Siva Pada, the immortal abode of eternal bliss !

2. TIRU GYANA SAMBANDHAR

Sambandhar took his birth in a Brahmin family in Shiyali in the district of Tanjore which is also known by the name Brahmapuri. He was born of Bhagavati and Sivapadahridayar.

Bhagavathi and Sivapadahridayar went to the tank to take their bath. The child also accompanied his parents. They left the child on the bank and took their bath. The child caried aloud "O Mother ! O father ! as he did not see his parents. The parents did not hear the cry of the child but Lord Shiva and Parvathi heard his cry. They both appeared before the child. Parvathi gave the child milk. The child drank the milk of divine knowledge along with the milk. From that moment he began to sing the praises of Lord Shiva in various temples. He sang soul-stirring, sublime Thevarams or odes. This incident occurred when the child was three years old.

The parents finished their bath and came near the child. Milk was flowing from his mouth and there were tears in his eyes. The parents asked, "My beloved child! who gave you milk? The child sang a hymn and narrated everything to his parents. The parents rejoiced heartily and gave to the child the name Tiru Gyana Sambandhar as he attained divine wisdom through the grace of Lord Shiva and Parvathi. He was also known by the name Pillayar.

Thereupon Sambandhar proceeded to Tirukkolakka. He sang a hymn or ode in the temple. Lord Shiva presented him with a gold cymbal.

There was a devotee of Lord Shiva in Thiruyerukkattampuliyur. He could play well on the musical instrument Yal. His name was Thiruneelakanta Yalpanar. He went to Shiyali to pay his respects to Sambandhar. Sambandhar took him to the temple of Lord Shiva and heard his music. Yalpanar prayed to Sambandhar and said, "Let me always live with you playing Thy hymns on Yal. Grant me my prayer." Sambandhar agreed. Thereupon Sambandhar and his parents and Yalpanar proceeded to Chidambaram and worshipped Nataraja. One day Sambandhar saw the three thousand Brahmins of Chidambaram as the three thousand Shiva Ganas.

Sambandhar wanted to worship the Lord at Aratturai. He walked by foot. He got tired and so he rested on the way in Maranpadi during the night. As he was a small boy his tender feet were much affected by the long walk.

The Lord of Aratturai appeared in the dream of the priests and told them, "Sambandhar is coming to me. Take the pearl umbrella and the pearl palanquin which are now in the temple and hand them over to him." The priests woke up and went to the temple. They saw the articles which they saw in their dream there. They took them, went to Maranpadi and gave them to Sambandhar. They informed Sambandhar about the command of the Lord. Sambandhar also knew this already as the Lord informed him also about this in his dream.

Thereupon the thread ceremony of Sambandhar was performed by the priests. Sambandhar did not study the Vedas and the Vedanga but he repeated them and explained them to the priests. The priests were struck with wonder.

Appar heard all about the glory of Sambandhar. He came from Chidambaram to Shiyali to pay his respects to Sambandhar. Sambandhar came forward to receive Appar. They both spoke words of affection and love. Appar remained in the house of Sambandhar for some days.

The daughter of the king of the Malava country was suffering from an incurable disease. He tried all sorts of medicines. Finally he took her to the temple at Tiruppaccil acciramam and left her there before the Lord. Sambandhar visited the temple and saw the princess in an unconscious state. His heart melted. He sang a padigam and worshipped Lord Shiva. The

last line in every stanza ends "Is it right for the Lord to cause suffering to this girl?" At once the princess became alright. She got up and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sambandhar.

Then Sambandhar proceeded to Tiruppattisvaram temple. It was a very hot day. Lord Shiva of Tiruppattisvaram temple sent a pearl palanquin through the Shiva Ganas to ward off the heat of the sun.

Sambandhar sang a padigam and received one thousand gold coins from the Lord of Avadutturai. In the padigam he asks in every stanza "Is this the way of your looking after my interests? If you do not give me anything, is that your grace? He gave the gold coins to his father.

Sambandhar proceeded to Tirumarugal. There a traveller was bitten by a snake. His wife was bemoaning the death of her husband. Sambandhar sang a Padigam. The traveller was brought back to life.

There was severe famine at Tiruvilimilalai. Sambandhar received one measure of gold every day from the Lord at Tiruvilimilalai. He purchased provisions for this money and fed all Śiva Bhaktas.

Kulaccirai, minister of the Pandian king invited Sambandhar to his place. He was a devotee of Lord Siva. Mangayarkkarsi the queen was also a devotee of Lord Siva. Sambandhar visited Madura and worshipped the Lord there.

The Jains set fire to the camp of Sambandhar. Sambandhar sang a Padigam. The fire was extinguished but the Pandyan king got severe fever. The doctors and the Jains were not able to cure him. The king requested Sambandhar to cure him. Sambandhar sang a Padigam in praise of the holy ashes and applied the ash to his body. At once the king became alright.

Thereupon it was decided that both Sambandhar and the Jains were to put their writings into the fire and that if Samhandhar's religion was the better one, the palm leaves which he put into the fire should not be burnt. Sambandhar came out successful in the fire test.

Afterwards there was another test. The jains said that the palm leaf whieh contained the writings of a true religion should go against the current of the Vaigai river. The minister said "What is the punishment for those who are defeated in the test ? The jains replied, "Those who are defeated will be hanged." The jains put a palm leaf in the river. It went along the current of the river. Sambandhar wrote one of his poems and threw it into the Vaigai. It went against the current and reached the place known as Tiruvedangam. Sambandhar sang a padigam to stop the palm leaf. It stopped. The minister ran, took the leaf and showed it to the king.

Then some of the jains were hanged. The rest embraced Saivism. Sambandhar went with the king and queen to the temple at Madura

and praised the Lord there.

Sambandhar wanted to go to Tirukkollampudur to have darshan of the Lord there but there was flood in the river. The boatmen gave up the idea of crossing it. He tied the boat somewhere and left the bank. Sambandhar took the boat, sang a Padigam and went over to the other side along with his party.

The devotees of Sambandhar were blowing the trumpet of victory when they were travelling. The Buddhists became very jealous of this. They informed their spiritual head Buddhanandi. Buddhanandi called Sambandhar for discussion.

Sambandhararanalayar, a disciple of Sambandhar who was recording all the songs of his master, sang a padigam sung by Sambandhar and said, "A thunder will fall on the head of this Buddhanandi." At once a thunder fell on the head of Buddanandi. He died immediately. Some Buddhists ran away. Some others embraced Saivism and applied the holy ashes on their forehead.

Thereupon Sambandhar visited Tiruvottur. One man came to Sambandhar and said, "O Swami! all the palmyra seeds have become male palmyras. People are mocking at me. Kindly bless me." Sambandhar sang a padigam. The male palmyras were converted into female palmyras.

In Mylapore there lived a devotee of Siva named Sivanesa Chettiar. A daughter was born to him after doing penance. He gave her

the name Poompavai. Sivanesar heard about the glory of Sambandhar and surrendered all his wealth and daughter to the saint. One day Poompavai was bitten by a cobra while she was gathering flowers in the garden. She died immediately. He cremated her, kept the bones in a pot and kept the pot in the Kannikaimatam. He decorated the pot with silk cloth. Sivanesar invited Sambandhar to the place. Sambandhar came to Mylapore and had darshan of Kapaleesvarar. The devotees informed Sambandhar about the death of Sivanesar's daughter. Sambandhar asked Sivanesar to bring the pot which contained the bones of his daughter. Sivanesar brought the pot at once. Sambandhar sang a padigam. Poompavai came out of the pot just as Lakshmi emerged from the lotus. Sivanesar's heart was filled with intense delight. There was a rain of flowers from the celestial regions. Then Sambandhar went to Shiyali.

The Brahmins approached Sambandhar and said, "O Swami! you will have to marry a girl now in order to perform the sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas." Sambandhar agreed. The Brahmins and the father of Sambandhar selected the daughter of Nambandar Nambi as the bride. The marriage ceremony was arranged at Nallur Perumanam. Sambandhar went along with his chosen bride into the temple. When he approached the Lord he, his bride and his followers got merged in the Jyotis or the effulgence of the Lord.

Sambandhar says in one of his padigams,

"O foolish man! do not allow days to pass. Serve Lord Siva who has a blue neck. Hear His praise. Meditate on His form. Repeat always the Panchakshara. Live in the company of devotees of Siva. Serve them. His name will remove all evils and dangers likely to fall on you and your children. Worship Lord Siva. He will confer on you eternal bliss and immortality!"

3. SUNDARAMURTHI

There was a Brahmin by Name Sadayanar in Navalur in South India. He was very pious and devoted to Lord Shiva. He had a pious son named Nambiyarurar, or Alala Sundarar. He attained manhood. He was known by the name Sundaramurthi Nayanar also.

Sundaramurthi Nayanar was a great devotee of Lord Shiva. He is one of the four Saiva Acharyas. Lord Shiva of Tiruvennainallur appeared before Sundaramurthi in the form of an aged Brahmin on the eve of his marriage. The Lord said that Sundarar was his bond slave and so ought to work for Him in His house. The name of the Lord is Taduttatkonda Ishwar or the Lord who obstructed and saved Sundarar from Samsara.

Sundaramurthi visited several temples. He went to Adigai Virattanam. Lord Shiva appeared before Sundaramurthi and placed His sacred feet on his head. Sundara then went to

Tiruvarur. Lord Shiva made Sundaram His friend.

Kamalini was the maid servant of Umadevi at Kailas. She entertained a desire to marry Alala Sundarar. So she was forced to take birth in the world at Tiruvarur. She was named as Paravai. She came of age. Lord Shiva of Tiruvarur appeared in the dream of the devotees and told them, " Arrange for the marriage of Paravai and Sundaramurthi." Lord Shiva informed Paravai and Sundarar also. Sundarar married Paravai and both lived happily.

There was famine in Tiruvarur. Lord Shiva appeared before Sundaramurthi and gave him heaps of grain. It was impossible to remove this large quantitiy of grain. Sundaramurthi asked Lord Shiva to help him. The grain was removed to the house of Paravai by the Ganas, the agents of Lord Shiva.

When Sundarar was at Tiruppugalur he asked for gold for his wife. He kept his head on bricks and slept. He woke up and found the bricks converted into gold. He got again gold on his way to Vriddhachalam. He threw the gold in the river Manimukta according to the Lord's command. He took it again in the tank at Tiruvarur. Lord Shiva showed him the way to Tirukkudalaiyarrur.

Lord Shiva gave Sundarar food when he was going to Tirukkurukavur. On another occasion Lord Shiva begged food for Sundarar.

Sundaramurthi went to Tiruvottiyur. He married Sangili, a great devotee of Lord Shiva through the grace of Lord Shiva. Aninditai maid servant of Umadevi who lived in Kailasa took her birth as Sangila.

Sundaramurthi requested Lord Shiva to stay under the Magila tree when he was to swear to Sangili that he would not leave her. Sundarar wanted Sangili to go inside the temple, but Lord Shiva already informed Sangila that He was under the tree and not inside the temple. Thereupon Sangili asked Sundaramurthi to come to the tree and not inside the temple. Therefore Sangili asked Sundaramurthi to come to the tree to take the oath. Sundaramurthi had to give consent to Sangili's request. Later on he broke the oath by going to Tiruvarur to see the Utsava leaving Sangili and became blind.

Suudaramurthi said to the Lord, "If it is just that you should make me blind. Kindly give me a stick." Lord Shiva gave a stick at Tiruvenpakkam. His left eye became alright when he came to Conjeevaram. When he praised Lord Shiva at Tiruvarur his right eye also became alright.

When Sundaramurthi was passing through a street in Thiruppukoliyur he saw that some people were crying in a house and some people were rejoicing at the opposite house. He asked the people, "what was the matter in both the houses?" They said, " Two boys aged five took

bath in a tank. One boy was devoured by a crocodile and the other boy escaped. The parents of the boy who was killed by the crocodile are bitterly weeping. The parents of the boy who escaped are celebrating his thread ceremony and so they are rejoicing."

Sundarar was greatly moved. He sanga padigam in praise of Lord Shiva-Avinasi. The crocodile brought the child to the shore through the order of Lord Yama. The parents of the boy greatly rejoiced and prostrated before Sundarar.

During the pilgrimage tour Sundarar came to the bank of Cauveri. There was flood in the river. He wanted to have Darshan of Lord Shiva at Tiruvayur. He sang a padigam. The river gave way to Sundarar. He reached Tiruvayur and worshipped the Lord.

There was a great devotee of Lord Shiva in Tiruperumangalam named Kalikamar. He was a Pillai by birth. He heard the news that Sundarar sent Lord Shiva as a messenger to Paravai, and said, "A devotee has ordered the Lord to do some work. He has made the Lord his servant. That too for the sake of a woman. Is this man who has behaved like this a devotee? I am a great sinner. My life has not yet departed from me as I have heard such news. I have not destroyed my ears with an iron rod which heard such news of a so-called devotee."

Sundarar came to know of the condition of Kalikamar Nayanar. He knew already that

what he did was a grave error. He prayed to the Lord to pardon him. Lord Shiva wanted to unite these two devotees. He caused the disease gastritis in Kalikamar, appeared in his dream and said, "This disease can be cured only by Sundarar." Kalikamar reflected "It is better to bear the pains of this disease than to be cured by Sundarar." The Lord commanded Sundarar, "Go and cure the disease of Kalikamar."

Sundarar sent a message to Kalikamar about his coming to him. Kalikamar thought "Let me give up my life before Sundarar comes to cure me." He cut open his bowels and gave up his life. The wife of Kalikamar received Sundarar with great honour.

Sundarar said to the wife of Kalikamar, "I wish to cure the disease of your husband and live with him for some time. She kept quiet and asked those who were around her to tell Sundarar that her husband was not suffering from any disease and he was sleeping. Sundarar informed the people that he had a strong desire to see Kalikamar. Then they showed Kalikamar. Sundarar saw the dead body of Kalikamar. He also drew the sword and wanted to kill himself. Kalikamar came back to life through the grace of Lord Shiva. He at once caught hold of the hands of Sundarar. Sundarar fell at the feet of Kalikamar. Kalikamar also prostrated at the lotus feet of Sundarar. They both embraced each other. They both went to the

temple of Lord Shiva and worshipped him. Thereupon they proceeded to Tiruvarur.

Paravai was very much annoyed towards Sundarar for having left her and married Sangili. Sundarar requested Lord Shiva to pacify Paravai. Lord Shiva went twice to the house of Paravai, pacified her and united them both. The Lord acted the part of a messenger for His devotee. The Lord becomes a perfect slave of his sincere devotees.

Sundaramurthi became quite disgusted with this worldly existence. He requested Lord Shiva to take him back to Kailas. Then Lord Shiva sent him a white elephant.

Sundaramurthi sang the glories of Shiva in different sacred places. These hymns are called Thevaram. They are collected in a book form. All devotees sing Thevaram even today. The hymns sung by Sundaramurthi, Appar or Tirunavukarasar and Tirujnana Sambandhar are called Tevaram. The hymns sung by Manickavasagar are called Tiruvasagam.

Sundaramurthi had the Sakhya Bhav with Lord Shiva. Therefore he was quite friendly with the Lord, took any kind of liberty with Him and asked for gold, pearl garland, musk, a garland of precious stones, spectacles, cloths, fragrance, jewels, horses which can go with the swiftness of the wind, golden flowers, palanquins, one-third of the riches of Tiruvarur. He did not ask for these things on account of desire for

enjoyment. He had no selfish desires. He did not keep them. He utilised them for those who depended on him.

Sundaramurthi showed to the world the path of Sakha Marga or Sakhya Bhav in Bhakti.

4. MANICKAVASAGAR

Manickavasagar was a Brahmin by birth. He took his birth in Tiruvadavur seven miles from Madura on the banks of Vaigai river. He must have lived between 650 and 692. Some say that he flourished in the tenth or eleventh century. He secured the friendship of the king of Madura Arimardana Pandya and became his chief Minister. He was also known by the name Vadavurar.

The Pandya king sent Manickvasagar with a lot of wealth to purchase horses for the state. Manickavasagar started on his journey. On his way he heard the Kirtan of Shiva in a garden in Tiruperundurai. Lord Shiva assumed the form of a Shiva Yogi and seated himself under. neath a tree with His Shiva Ganas as disciples. He came here to initiate Manickavasagar in Shiva Gyana.

Manickavasagar fell at the feet of the Lord and surrendered himself. Lord Shiva initiated Manickavasagar into the mysteries of Shiva Gyana. Manickavasagar spent away all the money he had brought in the construction of temples and feeding Shiva devotees. He renounced everything, wore a kowpeen and became

a sannyasi. The matter was reported to the king.

The Raja sent a letter to Manickavasagar and ordered him to see him at once. Manickavasagar did not pay any attention. Lord Shiva said to Manickavasagar, "I will bring the horses on Avani Moolam. You go in advance. Give this diamond to the Raja." Manickavasagar proceeded to Madura, gave the diamond to the Raja and said, "The horses will come here on Avani Moolam." The Raja became impatient. He did not get any information about the horses two days before Avani Moolam. He thought that Manickavasagar had cheated him. Therefore he put Manickvasagar in jail and tormented him severely.

The horses came in the morning of Avani Moolam. Lord Shiva assumed the form of a groom. How merciful is the Lord towards His devotees! The Raja was highly pleased. He released Manickavasagar from jail and made an apology to him. Through the Lila of the Lord jackals came in the form of horses. All the horses were turned jackals. The Raja became terribly angry. He again tortured Manickavasagar. He made him stand in the hot sand bed of Vaigai river at 12 noon. At once the Lord caused flood in the river to cool His devotee. The whole town was inundated.

The ministers told the Raja that this clamity had happened on account of his ill-treatment

towards the great Mahatma. The Raja at once released Manickavasagar. He prostrated before him and requested him to stop the flood. As soon as Manickavasagar marched on the bank the flood subsided. The Pandyan king ordered all the subjects to put one basketful of mud on the bank of the river. All the breaches were made alright except that portion of the breach given to an old woman Vandi. She was in distress. Lord Shiva Himself out of compassion appeared as a cooly before that old woman, offered His services to her in return for a handful of rice flour. He was simply playing. He kept the mud in his hands. The Raja came to know that the cooly of Vandhi did not do any work. He became very angry and beat the cooly with a stick. The blow was felt by the Raja and everyone in the town. The cooly vanished. The Raja came to know that this was the Lila of the Lord Shiva. He recognised the glory of Manickavasagar also.

Thereupon Manickavasagar met Lord Shiva. The Lord ordered him to visit all places of pilgrimage and then go to Chidambaram. Manickavasagar visited Tiruvannamalai, Conjeevaram and other places, sang his Tiruvasagam and lastly went to Chidambaram. Tirukcovai was written by him here.

Then Manickavasagar entered into discussion with a Buddhistic teacher and defeated him. Saraswati made the Buddhistic teacher and his disciples dumb. Then the Buddhistic King

approached Manickavasagar and said, "You made my teacher and all his disciples dumb. If you can make my dumb daugher speak I and my subjects will embrace Saivism." Manickavasagar then put some questions to the dumb daughter of the king. She began to speak. Then the Buddhistic king and all his subjects became Saivites. Manickvasagar then made the Buddhistic teacher and his disciples speak.

Then Lord Shiva approached Manickavasagar in the form of a Brahmin. Manickavasagar repeated the whole Tiruvasagam to the Brahmin. Then the Brahmin wrote down everything in the palmyra leaves and wrote in the end "Manickavasagar repeated this, Thiruchittambala udayar wrote this." Then the Brahmin kept this in the step of Panchakshara of the Chitsabhai. Then the Brahmins of Chidambaram showed this to Manickavasagar and requested him to tell the meaning of the verses. Manickavasagar said, "This Tillai Nataraja is the purport of these stanzas." He at once merged himself in the feet of Nataraja at the age of thirtytwo.

The poems of Manickavasagar are fiftytwo in number. They are all collected together under the title of Triruvasagam. They are most beautiful, sublime and inspiring. They contain ornamental poetry. South Indians sing Tiruvasagam daily. The hearts of those who hear these hymns melt at once.

Dear readers ! you can understand from the life of Manickavasagar that Lord Shiva becomes the slave of his devotees.

5. TIRUMULAR

Tirumula Nayanar was the author of Tirumandiram, one of the most authoritative works embodying the Saiva doctrine.

He was a great Shiva Yogi who had obtained the grace of Nandi, the door keeper of Lord Shiva. He came to South India from Kailas. He had a desire to see Agastya Rishi on Podiya hills in South India. He went to Kedarnath, Nepal, Avimuktam, the Vindhyas, Kasi, Kalahasti, Tiruvalangadu, Conjeevaram, Tiruvadigai, Chidambaram and Perumbarrappuliyur. Then he came to Avaduturai and worshipped the Lord there. He left this place and was moving on the banks of Kaveri. Here some cows were crying on account of the death of cow-herd Mula who lived in Sattanur.

The Shiva Yogi became very compassionate when he saw the condition of the cows. He entered into the body of the cow-herd and drove the cows homeward. When he reached the cow-herd's house, the wife of Mula approached him but he would not permit her to touch him. He did not even talk to her. She was much afflicted at heart and spent a sleepless night. Then those who saw him said that he was a great yogi. The Shiva yogi who entered the body of Mula

sat in meditation and entered into samadhi. He came down from his samadhi and proceeded to enter into his old body. He did not find the body in the place. Through his yogic vision he found out that Lord Shiva wanted that he should write a book on Saiva philosophy which would be useful to the people of South India and He hid his body for this purpose.

Then he went to Avaduturai, meditated upon the Lord and wrote out the doctrine of Saiva philosophy in three thousand stanzas at the rate of one stanza in one year. He rendered into Tamil the Saiva doctrine of the Sanskrit Saiva Agamas. His work became the foundation upon which the later structure of Shiva Siddhanta philosophy was built. After finishing this great work he went back to Kailasa or the world of Lord Shiva.

Tirumular gives a description of the fruits that can be obtained by the practice of the eight limbs of Raja yoga. The yogi obtains the blessing of Uma and attains Amarapati by the practice of Yama (self-restraint). He attains Shivapadam by the practice of Niyama (religious canons). He hears Nadam by the practice of Asana (pose). He attains a stage by the practice of Pranayama (restraint of breath) in which all the Gods eulogise him. He attains the form of Shiva by the practice of Pratyahara (abstraction of senses) and the Gods become confused as they cannot differentiate him from Shiva. He can go anywhere including the

worlds of Brahma and Vishnu by the practice of Dharana (concentration). He can walk into any place just as one can walk on earth. He attains the abode of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Indra by the practice of Dhyana (meditation). He frees himself from all the Upadhis or fetters and unites with Lord Shiva (Tat param) by the practice of Samadhi (superconscious state.)

6. BASAVANNA

Basavanna was the great Veera Saiva socio-religious teacher. He was also known by the names Basavaraja, Basaveshwara. He was a deep thinker. He brought about vital changes in social adjustment and thought.

He was the Saivite reformer of the Carnatic country. He gave the present form to the cult known as Shivachara.

He flourished in the twelfth century. He was born in a Brahmin family. He left the practices of his own community as they were too ritualistic and formal. He joined the Veera Saiva cult which was very prevalent at that time.

He was the Chief Minister in the court of King Bijjala in Kalyan. He was a very popular minister. He was very kind, noble, modest, very loveable and courageous. He had intense reliance on God. People deified him and worshipped him. He would freely mix with common people. He redressed their grievances. He was in close intimacy with them. He worked very

hard for the dissemination of his faith. He created many enemies on account of this active propaganda. There was civil disturbance in the country. Bijjala met his end in this disturbance. Basavanna's life too ended in this period of agitation although it is difficult to find out how he exactly met his end.

He was a reformer. He became the leader of the Veerasaiva movement. He established a cult that is accepted today by three million people. It developed a school of poor priests. It abolished the old priestly class. It adopted the vernacular as the medium for inculcating the supreme truth to the people. It gave to women an important place in religious and social life. It prescribed one ideal of realisation for every individual high and low.

Basavanna made great sacrifice for truth. People accepted him as a teacher. His sayings have come straight from his heart. They go straight to the heart. They are simple, direct, powerful. His rules of conduct are lofty and admirable. He was a sincere seeker after truth and could make great sacrifices for attaining the truth. He was all love and kindness. Love for all life or universal love was the central teaching of Basavanna.

CHAPTER XII

SHIVA BHAKTAS

1. SAINTS AND SAGES

Who is a saint ? He who lives in God or the Eternal, who is free from egoism, likes and dislikes, selfishness, vanity, mine-ness, lust, greed and anger, who is endowed with equal vision, balanced mind, mercy, tolerance, righteousness, cosmic love and who has divine knowledge, is a saint.

Saints and sages are blessings to the world at large. They are the costodians of superior divine wisdom, spiritual powers and inexhaustible spiritual wealth. Even kings bow their heads at their lotus feet. King Janaka said to Yajnavalkya, "O Venerable sage! I am grateful to your exalted Holiness for obtaining the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads through your lofty and sublime instructions. I offer my whole kingdom at thy feet. Further I am Thy servant. I will wait on thee like a servant."

Such is the magnanimous nature of saints and sages. Their very existence inspires others and goads them to become like them and attain the same state of bliss achieved by them. Had it not been for their existence there would not have been spiritual uplift and salvation for you all. Their glory is indescribable. Their wisdom is unfathomable. They are deep like the ocean,

steady like the Himalayas, pure like the Himalayan snow, effulgent like the sun. One crosses this terrible ocean of Samsara or births and deaths through their grace and sat-sang or association with them. To be in their company is highest education. To love them is highest happiness. To be near them is real education.

They wander from village to village and disseminate divine knowledge. They move from door to door and impart wisdom. They take a little for their bare maintenance and give the highest education, culture and enlightenment to the people. Their very life is exemplary. Whether they deliver lectures or not, whether they hold discourses or not, it matters little.

Saints and sages only can become real advisers of Kings because they are selfless and possess highest wisdom They only can improve the morality of the masses. They only can show the way to attain eternal bliss and immortality. Shivaji had Swami Ramdas as his adviser. King Dasaratha had Maharshi Vasishtha as his adviser.

Study the lives of saints, you are inspired at once. Remember their sayings, you are elevated immediately. Walk in their footsteps, you are freed from pain and sorrow. Therefore the book, "Lives of Saints" must be your constant companion. It must be in your pocket. It must be underneath your pillow.

Do not superimpose defects on them on account of your dosha-drishti or evil-eye. You

cannot judge their merits. Be humble and sit at their feet. Serve them with your heart and soul, keep them in your garden, clear your doubts. Get instructions and practise them in right earnest. You will certainly be blessed.

Every school, every college, every boarding house, every jail, every institution, every house, should have a saint for their guidance. Saints are in abundance. You do not want them. You do not wish to approach them. You do not wish to serve them. You do not aspire for higher things. You are perfectly satisfied with some broken shells and glass-pieces. There is no thirst or spiritual hunger in you for achieving higher divine knowledge and inner Peace.

There is no caste among saints and sages. Do not look to their caste. You will not be benefited. You cannot imbibe their virtues. In higher religion, there is neither caste nor creed. Cobblers, weavers, and untouchables had become the best saints. Wisdom and self-realisation are not the monopoly of Brahmins alone. South Indian Brahmins pay respects and give food only to the Brahmins Dandi Sannyasins. This is a serious mistake and grave blunder. What a sad state ! That is the reason why saints do not visit South India. Punjab, Sind and Gujrat have devotion to all saints. Hence they move in these parts and people derive much spiritual benefit from them.

May this world be filled with good saints and sages. May you all attain the supreme goal

through their sat-sang and advice! May the blessings of saints and sages be upon you all!

2. MARKANDEYA

Markandeya was a great devotee of Lord Shiva. His father Mrikandu performed rigorous austerities to get a son. Lord Shiva appeared before him and said "O Rishi! Do you want a good son who will die in his sixteenth year or a bad and foolish son who will live for a long time." Mrikandu replied "O my venerable Lord! Let me have a good son."

The boy came to know about his fate and began to worship Lord Shiva whole-heartedly with intense faith and devotion. The boy entered into deep meditation and samadhi on the day decreed as the day of his death. The messengers of Lord Yama were not able to approach him. Hence Yama himself went to take away his life. The boy prayed to Lord Shiva for protection and embraced the linga. Then Yama threw his noose round the linga and the boy. Lord Shiva came out of the linga immediately and killed Yama to protect the boy. Lord Shiva was called Mrityunjaya and Kala-kala from that day.

Then the Devas approached Lord Shiva and said "O adorable Lord! Salutations unto thee. Pardon Yama for his mistake. O ocean of mercy! Bring him back to life." Then Lord Shiva brought Yama back to his life at the request of the Gods. He also conferred a boon to the boy Markandeya that he should live for ever as a

boy of sixteen years of age. He is a chiranjeevi. In South India, even now men and women bless a boy when he does prostration to them "Live as a chiranjeevi like Markandeya."

Through tapas and meditation you can achieve anything in the three worlds.

3. THE STORY OF RISHABHA YOGI

This story is related in seven chapters in the Brahmottara Khanda of Skanda Purana.

Mandara, a Brahmin of Avanti was a man of great erudition. But he lived with a prostitute named Pingala. Rishabha, a great Shiva Yogi, was the guest of Mandara one day. Both Mandara and Pingala served the Yogi with intense faith and devotion and obtained his grace.

Both died. Mandara was born as the son of Vajrabahu, the king of Dasarna. When he was in the womb of his mother Sumati, the other wives of the king gave poison to Sumati on account of jealousy. Both the child and Sumati became very sick. They could not be cured of their illness. They were abandoned in the forest by the order of the king.

They were taken by a rich Vaisya through the grace of the Lord and were protected by him nicely. The child grew worse day by day and died. The mother was wailing bitterly over the death of the son. Now Rishabha appeared on the scene, consoled the mother and imparted her philosophical instructions. But she could not

be consoled. Then the Yogi touched the dead child with the Bhasma of Shiva. The child came back to life. He made the mother and son quite healthy and beautiful through his yogic powers He gave the name Bhadrayu to the boy and taught him the Shiva Kavacha. He gave him a sword, a conch and the strength of ten thousand elephants. He gave him also the Bhasma of Shiva. Then the Yogi left the place.

Bhadrayu and Sunaya, the son of the Vaisya, lived together happily. Bhadrayu heard that his father had been deposed and imprisoned by Hemaratha, the king of Magadha. He went with Sunaya, defeated the enemies and freed his father, all the ministers and the queens who had been imprisoned by the king of Magadha. He left the king of Magadha and his retinue as prisoners in the possession of his father and returned home. He did not reveal his identity to his father. The father admired the valour of the boy and expressed his keen sense of indebtedness to the boy. Thus Rishabha the great Shiva Yogi showed his grace to Bhadrayu who as Mandara had once served him with faith and devotion despite his loose living.

Chitravarma, the king of Aryavarta had a daughter by name Seemantini. Chandrangada, the son of Indrasena, the son of Nala and Damayanti of Nishada married Seemantini. Chandrangada was drowned in Jumna soon after the marriage, while he was sporting in a boat.

The Naga girls took Chandrangada to Takshaka their chief in Nagaloka.

Seemantini learnt from an astrologer of the court that she would become a widow in her fourteenth year. Therefore she got initiation in the worship of Lord Shiva on Mondays and at Pradosha from Maitreyi, wife of the sage Yagnavalkya. She continued the worship even after she became a widow.

Takshaka sent Chandrangada back to the banks of Jumna as he wished that he should live with his wife. One evening on a Monday when Seemantini went to the river for taking a bath she met her husband.

Chandrangada defeated the enemy king who had deposed his father in his absence and replaced his father on the throne. Seemantini and Chandrangada were reunited by the grace of Lord Shiva.

Seemantini used to adore and give presents to Brahmins and their wives every Monday in honour of Lord Shiva and Parvathi. Two Brahmin boys approached the king of Vidarbha for getting money for their marriage. The king asked the boys to be dressed as man and wife and go to Seemantini. He did this in order to test the devotion of Seemantini. The boys acted accordingly. Seemantini laughed and adored them as Lord Shiva and Parvati. The boy became a woman. The father of the boy who had become a woman by the power of Seemantini requested the king to help him out of the trouble.

The king prayed to Parvati. Parvati refused to interfere with the act of Her devotee but promised a son to the father of the boy. The two boys had to marry and live as husband and wife.

Seemantini had a daughter by name Kirtimalini. This Kirtimalini was really the prostitute Pingala who had obtained the grace of Rishabha, the Shiva Yogi by serving him with great devotion. Rishabha went to Chandrangada and asked him to marry Kirtimalini to Bhadrayu. The Shiva Yogi related the whole story of Bhadrayu to Chandrangada. Chandrangada gave his daughter Kirtimalini to Bhadrayu in marriage. He invited the father of Bhadrayu to the marriage. When Vajrabahu saw the son-in-law of Chandrangada he found him to be the very boy who had defeated the king of Magada and given him his kingdom. The story of the mother and the son, Sumati and Bhadrayu was related to Vajrabahu. Vajrabahu took his queen and son with the daughter-in-law to his kingdom.

The great Shiva Yogi Rishabha reunited his devoted worshippers Mandara and Pingala. Though they led a loose life they were saved and made happy through the grace of the Shiva Yogi, Rishabha. One day Bhadrayu went to the forest. He heard the cry of a Brahmin's wife, who was being carried away by a tiger. The King tried his level best to save the woman but could not kill the tiger. The Brahmin

abused the king and said "O timid king! you have not the valour to kill the tiger. What sort of king you are!" Bhadrayu promised to give anything including his wife to the Brahmin. The Brahmin demanded the queen. Bhadrayu gave his queen to the Brahmin and prepared himself to enter the fire and lose his life which was not worth living thereafter.

Then Lord Shiva and Parvathi appeared before the king who was a great Shiva Bhakta and said, "We have done this to test your strength and Dharma." Thereupon Lord Shiva gave Shiva Sayujya to Bhadrayu, Kirtimalini, their parents, the Vaisya and his son according to the request of Bhadrayu and his wife. The Brahmin's wife was once again brought to life and they both received the blessings of Lord Shiva.

This story clearly reveals the glory of Shiva Bhakti, the greatness of Shiva Bhaktas, the importance of Shiva Pooja on all days, particularly on Mondays and in Pradosh the hour just at sunset.

4. PUSHPADANTA

Pushpadanta was a devotee of Lord Shiva. He was the chief of the Gandharwas. His teeth were like the petals of the jasmine flower. Hence he was called by the name Pushpadanta, "flowery toothed."

Pushpadanta had the power of moving in the air. He used to collect flowers from the

garden of King Vahu at Benares in order to worship Lord Shiva. As he had the power of moving in the air the gardeners were not able to detect him. The gardeners suspected that some mysterious being with some supernatural powers was stealthily plucking the flowers of the garden. They made a device to catch him.

They scattered some flowers which had been offered to Lord Shiva in different places in the garden. They thought that the mysterious being would tread on the flowers.

As usual Pushpadanta visited the garden to pluck flowers. He walked on the flowers which were scattered on the ground. He unconsciously insulted Lord Shiva and lost his power of moving in the air. He was caught by the gardeners and brought before the king.

Pushpadanta recited a hymn to Lord Shiva to propitiate Him and free himself from the fear of the king whom he had offended by the theft of the flowers.

He again obtained the power to move in the air through the grace of Lord Shiva.

This celebrated hymn is known by the name "Mahimnastava". It is full of sublime, soul-elevating thoughts. It is sung daily in the Shiva temples of Northern India during evening prayers and Arathi. This hymn touches the heart of all. It is sonorous rhythmical and musical and full of profound devotion. You

should get this by heart and repeat it daily. You will attain to supreme immortal blissful abode of Lord Shiva.

5. KANNAPPA NAYANAR

Tinnanar, known as Kannappar, was born of Nagan, the King of the Vedas (hunters), in Uduppur, in South India. King Nagan was a great Bhakta of Lord Subramanya. From his boyhood Tinnanar was well trained in the skill of a hunter and archery and in his prime age he has to assume the reins of government which his old father bestowed on him. One day Tinnanar went out for a hunt with some of his followers. While wandering in the forest they came across a hog, escaping from a net. They at once chased the hog for a long time up and down the hills. After a long time Tinnanar killed the hog and as they were much tired due to the long chasing they at once arranged to cook the flesh of the animal and it was removed to another place in the Kalahasti Hills which was nearby. While walking towards the hill one of the followers of Tinnanar suggested to him to pay a visit to Kudumi Thevar, the presiding deity of the hills, and they proceeded to have darshan of the Lord on the Hill.

While climbing up the hill Tinnanar felt as if some great burden which was on him uptill now, was gradually diminishing and he decided now to go to the temple nearby, have darshan of the Lord there and then to take their meals.

As soon as he came near the temple, to his great joy he saw a Shiva Linga. At the very sight of Ishwar he was transformed to an embodiment of Love and Devotion and extreme joy. Like a mother who met her child that was missing for long, Tinnanar was merged in deep feeling of Divine ecstacy and Prem. Ha! What a boundless and inexpressible and illimitable joy and exhiliration he had at the very sight of Lord Shiva. He began to cry, weep and shed tears of joy and love towards Lord. He forgot everything about his meals and his followers and even his own body.

He felt very much for the loneliness of the Lord on the hills without being protected against the animals and others that may do harm for Him, and he decided to keep watch over the temple throughout the night against any dangers from animals or evil doers. On seeing that the Lord is hungry he at once ran out to prepare meals for the Lord out of the meat he had got by killing the hog. He carefully took the flesh tasted it and thus selected the pieces which are palatable and roasted them. The remaining portion he threw them away as bad. Then he proceeded towards the river to fetch water for the abhisheka and he got the water in his mouth. On the way he plucked some flowers and kept them in the locks of his hair. With these preparations he entered the temple, removed the old flowers that were lying on the Lord by his Chappal, did abhishekam with the water in his mouth and decorated Him with the flowers he

had on the locks of hair. Then he offered the Prashad of meat to the Lord. Finishing all these with bow and arrow in his hand he kept a keen watch over the temple by standing in front of the temple throughout the night. Early in the morning he went out for hunt to bring prashad for the Lord.

When Tinnanar was doing like this, the temple priest, Sivakasariar, an earnest and sincere devotee of Lord Shankar, came to the temple and to his great surprise and disappointment saw bones and flesh all round the Lord and the decorations have been spoiled. But he could not identify the man who has done such an act, and meddled with the sanctity of the place. So uttering the necessary Mantras he cleaned the place and performed his usual Pooja for the Lord and recited the prayers. After the Pooja he closed the temple and went out.

Tinnanar now returned with the Prashad of meat and flesh and as before he removed the old decorations done by the priest, decorated in his own way as usual, and offered Prashad. At night he kept vigil and keen watch over the temple. Early in the morning he went out to bring Prashad. Thus he was with the Lord serving Him for five days and in spite of the entreaties of his parents to come home he persisted in remaining with the Lord and Lord alone.

Sivakasariar, who was vexed with the incident being repeated day by day complained to

Lord and requested Him to put an end to these mishappenings. Lord Shiva appeared in the priest's dream and narrated to him what was happening in the temple during the absence of the priest and told him also that what all actions Tinnanar was doing was only out of pure, unsophisticated love that he bore towards the Lord. Further the Lord said "I welcome, and rather I am immensely pleased with the mouthful of water by which he is doing my abhishekam. This has greater value to me than by the Tirthas of Ganges. Whatever action that is performed out of pure and deep Love and Faith, I merit it with greater value than those rituals and austerities done by the Vedic injunctions." Then Lord Gangadhar asked the priest to come to the temple next day and hide himself behind the Moorthy and witness what Tinnanar will do.

Tinnanar after bringing the Prashad arranged in his own usual way for the abhishekam and decoration of the Lord. Now Lord Shiva willed that the priest, Sivakasariar should see and feel the degree of devotion and faith that Tinnanar was having for Him. So, while Tinnanar was doing the Pooja and offering the Prashad of meat, to his great astonishment he saw the Lord shedding tears of blood, in the right eye. He got perplexed and was at a loss to know what to do. He ran hither and thither to bring some leaves for stopping the bleeding but found they were of no use. He wept bitterly, cursed himself for being unable to stop the bleeding from

the eye. At last a plan came to him. He at once plucked out his right eye with his arrow and fixed it on the right eye of the Lord. To his great joy, and ecstacy he saw the bleeding stopped. While he was dancing in divine ecstacy for having cured the bleeding, all on a sudden, he perceived the left eye also was bleeding. Though he was overtaken by surprise and sorrow, the previous plan came to him and decided to pierce his left eye with his arrow with the intention of plucking it out and fixing it on the left eye of the Lord. But when his both eyes were gone how could he see the bleeding on the left eye of the Lord so as to stop it by fixing his own eye. Hence in order to identify the left eye of the Lord he first fixed it up with the chappals on his feet and began to pierce his own left eye with the arrow in his hand. But Ishwara will not be so cruel as to see his Bhaktas and devotees suffer so much. On the spot the Lord appeared and addressed Tinnanar 'KANNAPPA' and stopped him from plucking out the left eye. He was much pleased with the filial devotion and staunch faith that Kannappar had for Him and kept Him by his right side.

The above story of Kannappar is illustrative of the highest degree of devotion and faith that was evinced by the Bhakta towards Lord Shiva even though he was a Vaduva by caste and never cared for the rituals and austerities by which the Lord should be worshipped. It was only mere Love and intense devotion to the Lord that

bestowed on him the greatest boon from the Lord i. e. Self-Realization. It is only a matter of six days that he performed the pooja ceremonies to the Lord in his own way but the amount of devotion and Love he had to the Lord was boundless.

May the blessings of Kannappar be upon you all! May you all attain the highest goal of human life by following the example of Kannappa Nayanar, the great South Indian Bhakta of Lord Shiva!

Om shanti shanti shanti.

6. SIRUTHONDA NAYANAR

Paranjothiar of Thiruchettangudi was a general under the Chola King. He was skilful in all the methods of warfare and had won many a war for the Chola King. In spite of the fact of his being a general his devotion to Lord Shiva and Shiva Bhakthas was increasing. As a Bhakta of Lord Shiva he was noted for his humility and he was aptly named Siruthonda Nayanar. He left his post of general and spent his life-time in worshipping Lord Shiva and serving and feeding the Shiva Bhakthas. Never a day was known when he took food without feeding Shiva Bhakthas. Such was the intensity of his devotion. In this way he was happily living with his wife and a son Seeralan, by name.

Once it happened that Lord Shiva in the guise of Vairavar came to his doors for Bhiksha.

Just at that moment Siruthonda had gone out to get some Shiva Bhakthas for feeding. Vairavar waited for a while and there came Siruthonda returning from his quest of Sadhus quite disappointed as he found none to feed with. To his great joy Vairavar was waiting at his doors. Now Vairavar expressing his wish to dine in his house informed him that he would do so provided Siruthondar complied with his wishes. On getting his consent Vairavar told him that he required the cooked flesh of a son of 5 years old with robust health and without any deformities of mind and body. Though at first the Bhaktha was bewildered in getting the thing required, at last happily decided to offer their own son Seeralan for the feast of Vairavar.

Both the wife and husband hurried up in preparing the required meals the mother keeping her son on the lap and the father cutting the throat, and every limb was cooked except the head. Even this part was nicely prepared after getting the consent of Vairavar. When everything was prepared Siruthondar and Vairavar began to take their meals. But at the moment Vairavar stopped and refused to take food unless Siruthondar got his son by his side for eating. Though Siruthondar told Vairavar that his son would not serve the purpose at that hour still Vairavar insisted. Siruthondar got up and with increased devotion and staunch faith in Him went outside of his house and called out the name of his son Seeralan as if his son were

coming from school. But to his astonishment his son responded to his call and was coming down the other end of the street as if from school. With his son he entered the house. But now, neither the cooked flesh nor Vairavar were to be seen. What a dismay ? Instead, Lord Mahadev appeared on the scene with his consort Parvathi and Lord Subramania by his side, blessed both the husband and wife for their intense love towards Him and took Siruthondar and his family along with Him. Such was the reward for the Bhaktha who offered his son's flesh for the feeding of the Sadhu.

May you all develop intense love and faith to the Lord. May the blessings of Siruthondar be upon us all !

7. LORD SHIVA'S MOTHER

In ancient days there lived a rich merchant named Dhanadatta in Karikal in South India. He had no child. He worshipped Lord Shiva. He had a daughter through the grace of the Lord. The child was called by the name Punitavati. Punitavati came to be later on called by the name Karikal Ammaiar also. She is counted as one amongst Nayanars (the famous Shiva Bhaktas of South India).

Punitavati was very intelligent, beautiful, pious. She chanted the names and praise of Lord Shiva. She applied holy ash to her forehead.

She married Paramadatta the son of a rich

merchant at Negapatam. Paramadatta also was beautiful and intelligent. He possessed good character. He lived in his father-in-law's place with the permission of his father.

Punitavati used to feed with intense devotion and joy the Bhaktas day and night and hear them singing the names of Lord Shiva. She always remembered the utterance of the Vedas "Let the guest be a God unto you. Atithi Devo Bhava". She and her husband took the food that remained after serving the devotees as if it were nectar.

One day a wandering mendicant came and gave two ripe mangoes to Paramadatta. Paramadatta gave them to his wife and attended to his business. A devotee came and asked Punitavati to give him something to eat as he was very hungry. The food was not ready. So she gave him one of the mangoes and some milk.

Paramadatta returned home and took his food. Punitavati served him with mango fruit that remained. Paramadatta found it very delicious. He asked her to bring the other fruit also. She prayed to Lord Shiva. Immediately a mango fell into her hands. It looked exactly like the one served before. She gave it to her husband. He found it a thousand times more palatable than the first. He asked Punitavati, "My beloved Punitavati! where did you get it from" ? She narrated everything. Paramadatta said, "Get me another." Punitavati got another mango in the twinkling of an eye.

Paramadatta was struck with awe and wonder. He thought that his wife was a beloved devotee of Lord Shiva. He reflected within himself, "I am a great sinner I have treated a great devotee of Lord Shiva as my servant. I cannot consider her as my wife any longer. It will be a great sin to leave her alone. But what to do now."

He was in a dialemma. Finally he resolved to part from her. He told his wife that he was going out on professional business. He obtained her permission and proceeded te Madura. He settled there and married another wife. The second wife gave birth to a daughter. Paramadatta named her Punitavati.

Punitavati was anxiously awaiting the return of her husband at the promised time. She had no news of him. She became very miserable and unhappy. After some time she came to know about the whereabouts of her husband. She proceeded to Madura and met her husband.

Paramadatta welcomed her with intense joy and prostrated at her feet. He said to his wife, "I am a worldly man. I am passionate and greedy. You are a goddess. I cannot take you now as my wife. Pray, pardon me."

Punitavati replied, "My Lord! I have preserved my youth and beauty for your sake only. As you do not want me, I shall seek my Lord Shiva now."

She distributed all the jewels to those assem

bled around. She worshipped the pious Brahmins and she shook off all the flesh by the power of Yoga and looked as a mere skeleton. She marched northward.

She came to Mount Kailas. She thought it a sin to walk with one's feet in the holy Himalayas. She moved on her head through the power of her austerities.

Parvathi asked Lord Shiva, "who is that person, O Lord! who is coming towards us? Lord Shiva replied, "That pious woman is My Mother who nourished my devotees."

Lord Shiva got up, moved a few steps forward welcomed Punitavati and said, "My dear Mother, are you keeping fit?"

Punitavati fed the devotees like a mother. The Lord makes no distinction between Himself and His devotees. He has said, "The devotees form my heart and I theirs. They do not think of anyone other than me and I other than them."

The supreme Lord abides in the hearts of all beings. Therefore the guests deserve worship while he enjoys. The Srutis declare "Athithi Devo Bhava. Let the guest be your God."

8. THE SIXTY-THREE NAYANAR SAINTS

They were the sincere and ardent devotees of Lord Shiva. Some were the contemporaries of Appar and Sambandhar. Only a few had made a study of the Agamas. The rest were pure and simple Bhaktas only. They served the devotees

of Lord Shiva and made absolute self-surrender to the Lord. They were quite ignorant of philosophy. They practised Cariya. They cleaned the temple premises, made garlands of flowers for the Lord, lighted the temple lamps, planted flower gardens and fed the devotees of Lord Shiva and served them. Worship of Shiva Bhaktas was regarded even superior to the worship of Lord Shiva himself.

What is wanted is true devotion. Kannappa the hunter was totally ignorant of Saiva doctrine, philosophy or worship but attained within six days the highest place possible for devotees of Shiva through the intensity of his devotion. The nature of Kannappa's devotion was quite different from that of the ordinary worshippers of Shiva.

The names of the Nayanars are :—Nedumara Nayanar, Kannappa Nayanar, Siruthondar, Appudi Adigal, Muruga Nayanar, Tirunilanakka Nayanar, Kunguliakkalaya Nayanar, Gananata Nayanar, Seraman Perumal Nayanar, Somasi Mara Nayanar etc.

Tirunilakantha Nayanar was a potter of Chidambaram. Enadi Nayanar was a Sanar (toddy-drawer). Tirukkuripputhondar was a washerman. Adipatta Nayanar was a fisherman by caste. Nesa Nayanar was a weaver by caste. Shiva Bhaktas of the higher castes ate with the Bhaktas of other castes. They had no caste distinctions. They regarded that a life of devotion to Lord Shiva was much more important

than the little distinctions of caste etc.

Tirunilanakka Nayanar was one day performing the Puja. A spider fell upon the Shiva image. His wife at once blew it away and spat on the place where it fell. The saint was very much annoyed. He thought that the image had become impure. He wanted to abandon his wife. But Lord Shiva appeared before him in his dream and showed the saint how his whole body except where it had been spat upon, was blistered owing to the fall of the spider. This opened the eyes of the saint. He now realised that Bhakti was more important than a knowledge of the Shastras.

Siruthondar killed his child even with his own hands and prepared meat to please the devotee of Shiva. He was prepared to go against the rules of the scriptures even in order to practise what he considered as Shiva virtue. He was not a man of great erudition. He was not a philosopher and a Yogi but he had intense devotion to the devotees of Shiva. What a great sacrifice he did in order to serve the devotee. Lord appeared before him with Paravathi and Lord Subramania and blessed Siruthondar. The devotee and the dish of meat disappeared. Siruthondar went out and called his son. The son came running towards nim. The Lord does anything and everything for His Bhakta.

Kungilik-Kalaiya Nayanar was supplying incense to the Lord in the temple of Tirukkadevur. He lost all his wealth. There was nothing left

in the house. Then his wife gave him a plate and asked him to buy some rice in exchange for it. The Nayanar bought incense and took it to the temple. The Lord blessed his wife that night with abundant wealth and asked the Nayanar to go to his house and take his meal. The Nayanar came to know that the king was not able to make erect the Shiva lingam in the temple of Tiruppanandal. He tied the rope which was attached to the Lingam round his own neck and pulled the lingam to make it erect. The Lingam stood upright. Everybody had now proof of the intensity of Nayanar's devotion. Nayanar had no knowledge of the Vedas or the Agamas but he was a true devotee of the Lord. What is wanted is sincere Bhakti. Study of scriptures makes one proud of his learning and keeps him away from God.

Kannappa Nayanar plucked his own eye and replaced Shiva's bleeding eye with his own. He resolved to give his second eye also. But Lord Shiva stopped him from doing it. Kannappa regained his eye-sight and became from that moment a God himself and took his seat by the side of Lord Shiva. He did not chant Rudri and Chamakam. He was not a Brahmin. He was a hunter. He did his worship in his own way by bathing the image with the water carried in his mouth, threw the flowers down from his own tuft and offered the best part of the cooked pig after examining with his teeth. Pundits and Shastris do thousand and one Rudris and yet they are far from God because

there is not an iota of real devotion They have a stony barren, sin-hardened heart.

Iyarpagai Nayanar was observing the vow of giving everything that the devotees of Siva wanted. Lord Siva wanted to test him. He came in the garb of a Brahmin Siva devotee, in the garb of a libertine. The devotee asked the Nayanar "Give me your wife." Nayanar willingly gave him his wife. His relatives objected and fought with him. The Nayanar escorted the pseudo-Yogi into the forest. The pseudo-Yogi vanished to reappear in his real form of Siva on the sacred bull.

Eripatta Nayanar killed the elephant and five men as it destroyed the flowers which were in the possession of Sivakam Andar for the worship of the Lord. Lord Siva appeared and saved the king and the Nayanar and the elephant with the five people who were lying dead.

Arivattaya Nayanar began to cut his throat as he was not able to give the usual food of red rice to Lord Siva. Lord Siva stopped him from cutting his throat and took him to His abode.

Murti Nayanar used to offer sandalwood paste to Lord Siva at Madura. When sandalwood was not available he began to rub his elbow very hard upon the sandstone, Lord Siva was moved. The Nayanar was made the king. He reached the abode of Siva.

Nanda, the untouchable saint entered the fire and came out of it in the form of a holy ascetic with sacred thread on his shoulders through the

grace of Lord Siva.

Thirukkuripputhondar was a washerman by caste. He washed the clothes of the devotees of Siva. Lord Siva wanted to test him. He appeared as a poor man with a very dirty rag. The saint washed the rag. As there was a very heavy rain he could not dry the rag. He was very much afflicted at heart. He began to dash his head against the stone on which he washed the clothes. Lord Siva appeared before him and gave him salvation.

Nami Nandi Adigal lighted the lamps with water through the grace of Lord Siva. A devotee can do anything through the grace of the Lord.

Kali kamba Nayanar used to welcome the devotees of Siva to his house and feed them after washing their feet. His wife helped him to do that. On one occasion one who had been some time back their servant came into the house as a Saiva devotee. The Nayanar as usual began to wash his feet but his wife refused to help him. Nayanar cut off his wife's hands and did the service himself. He also attained the abode of Lord Siva.

Kalianayanar used to light the temple lamps with oil supplied by himself. He lost all his property. He thought of selling his wife but no one would purchase her. Then he resolved to offer his own blood in the place of oil. When he was trying to do this Lord Siva blessed him.

Kanampulla Nayanar was lighting the lamp in Siva temples. He lost all his property. He

began to cut grass and purchase oil out of the money realised by selling grass. He could not sell the grass one day and so he burnt the grass itself. He could not get grass one day. He resolved to burn his hair. Lord Siva showered His grace upon the Nayanar now and took him to His abode.

Saint Seruttunai Nayanar cut ofl the nose of the queen for smelling a flower which had been gathered for the sake of Siva and which had accidently fallen on the floor. The king came to know of this and gave an additional punishment to the queen by cutting off her also. There was a rain of flowers. Kalarunga Nayanar the king attained the grace of the Lord.

The Nayanars were not much concerned with Saiva doctrines or Saiva Philosophy. They attached the greatest importance to Siva worship even though it was against the ordinary rules of right and wrong. They had the utmost regard for the externals of Siva worship. They were prepared to do anything to preserve these outward forms even at the cost of their lives. Even bigotry was not considered as a vice.

You can clearly understand from the life history of these Nayanars that any one, whatever his caste might be and whatever his service, could attain the grace of Lord Siva.

Saivas of those times were staunch devotees of Saivism. Ordinary rules of ethics and morality could not be applied to the Nayanars.

CHAPTER XIII

FESTIVALS

1. LIGHTING FESTIVAL AT ARUNACHALA

Lord Shiva assumed the form of a hill at Tiruvannamalai in South India. Here He quelled the pride of Brahma and Vishnu who were quarelling as to their relative greatness. One day when Lord Shiva was in meditation, Parvathi left Him and went to the hill of Arunachala. There she performed penances. She was the guest of the sage Gautama. It was during her penance here that Mahishasura was killed by Durga bidden by Parvathi. Parvathi saw Lord Shiva as Arunachaleswara. She was taken back by Lord Shiva to His side and made again Ardhanari, as Apeetaku Chamba.

Arunachaleswar is Tejas Linga. Arunachal represents the Agni Tattva of the Pancha Bhuta Kshetras.

Arunachalam is another name for Thiruvannamalai. In days of yore many Siddha Purushas lived in this hill. Idyakadar, Arunagirinathar lived here. This place is famous for its festival of Lighting (Kartigai Deepam) every year during the month of Karthigai (November) on the day when the full moon falls in the kritigai nakshatram. The lighting takes place at about 5 or 5.30 in the evening. A big hollow in a rock is filled with ghee, oil and camphor.

A big wick is put in the ghee and lighted. The lighting is seen even at a distance of sixteen miles. It is regarded that he who beholds this light does not take any future birth. The light burns continuously for three months.

A veil is put around the light at the top of the Arunachala Hill. The people bring the Ishwara Vigraha outside the temple at 5-30 p.m. as soon as Kritigai Nakshatra dawns. Then a Bhana (fire work) is sent towards the light in the hill through the sky. The man who is in charge of the lighting at the hill removes the veil at once. Then the people see the big light and worship the light with folded hands. They repeat loudly 'Harahara, Harohara."

The esoteric significance is that he who sees the Light of lights that is burning eternally in the chambers of one's heart through constant meditation attains immortality. The lighting in the Arunachala brings the message to you that the Atman or Lord Shiva is self-effulgent, is Jyoti Swaroopa, is light of lights, sun of suns.

The big light at the hill represents Lord Shiva or Paramatma (supreme soul). The Bhanam is Jiva or the individual soul. The veil represents Avidya that covers the individual soul. The Bhanam burns the veil and merges itself in the big light. Even so if you destroy Avidya by the fire of meditation and vichara you can merge yourself in the supreme soul or light of lights.

Conjeevaram, Jambukeswaram, Tiruvanna-

malai, Kalahasti and Chidambaram are the five Pancha Bhuta Linga Kshetras. Prithivi Lingam is at Conjeevaram. Apas Lingam is at Jambukeswaram. Tejas Lingam is at Tiruvannamalai. Vayulingam is at Kalahasthi. Akasalingam is at Chidambaram.

These five places represent the apex of five angles of a five triangled figure which represents the five Bhutas of which the entire world is made up. The Tejas Tattva is in the middle of the five Bhutas. It forms the way through which the supreme soul or Lord Shiva can be known or seen or realised by the Jiva. The fire of Meditation burns his Avidya (of the Jiva) and helps him to merge himself in the supreme light.

The Vedantin holds that "Vak" is Brahman. He proves that Vak is Agni or fire and deduces his doctrine of unity. Agni is the presiding deity of speech. Vak is Agni. Vak is Brahman.

The Panchamurtis or Pancha Tattvas meet at a time which is neither night nor day, when the sun and the moon shine together. The light at the hill is seen at a distance of sixteen miles. This represents the 'Purnakala' or Brahman.

The Yogi beholds that during meditation at the crown of the head which represents the top of the Arnachala hill and merges himself in this light during Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Annihilate the three impurities, Anavam, Karma, Maya. Burn the mind, senses and the

Vasanas in the fire of knowledge of self or Siva-jnanam. Attain full illumination and behold the light of lights which illumines the mind, intellect, sun, stars, lighting and the fire. This is real Kartigai deepam.

May the light of lights illumine you all! May Lord Shiva bless you with more light! May you merge in this supreme light and attain the eternal bliss of Immortality!!

2. VIJAYA DASAMI

The Mother aspect of God-head is the source of power, prosperity and learning and is worshipped during the Navaratri or Dussera as Durga Lakshmi, Saraswati. Each aspect is worshipped for three nights.

Vijaya Dasami is the tenth day of the bright half of the lunar month of Asvina. It is a great soul-stirring festival which is observed with great eclat throughout the length and breadth of Hindu India.

It was on the Vijaya Dasami day that Arjuna the Pandava hero, worshipped the Goddess before starting the fight against the evil-minded Kauravas. It was on that day that Ravana was killed in battle by Sri Rama.

It is the day of victory. Boys are put in the school on this day. "Hari Om Narayanaya Siddham", "Om Sri Ganeshaya Namah", "Om Sri Hayagreevaya Namah" are tauaght to them. Aspirants are initiated on this day.

On this memorable day the carpenter, the

tailor, the mason, the artist, the songster, the typist and all technical workers do Pooja for their instruments and implements. This is Ayudha Pooja. They behold and recognise the Sakti or power behind these instruments and worship the Devi for their success, prosperity and peace.

Sri Rama built an united India. Sri Rama gained victory over Ravana who had his capital in Lanka but whose dominions had been extended over a large part of India.

Vijaya Dasami is the day of anniversary of the birth of one United India. It is observed in commemoration of the great victory (Vijaya) of Sri Rama over the Rakshasa King Ravana. It is the day of triumph of Aryanism over the whole of non-Aryan India.

Angada, Hanuman and others celebrated the the victory of Sri Rama over Ravana with great religious ardour under the leadership of pious Vibhishana, embraced one another in friendship and showed their intense devotion and reverence to Sri Rama. From that day onward this great victory (Vijaya) has been commemorated year after year by all Hindus.

Sri Rama's victory over Ravana has year after year been commemorated as the victory of spirit over matter, the victory of Sattva over Rajas and Tamas, the victory of soul over minds, sense and body, the victory of Idealism over materialism, the victory of goodness over evil, the victory of love and truth over hatred and falsehood, the victory of self-sacrifice and renunciation over

selfishness and possession, the victory of the oppressed over the oppressor, the victory of the labour over the capitalists and the imperialists. The memory of this day brings hope and joy to the hearts of the poorest and the most depressed. It humbles the pride of the rich, the strong and the learned and inspires them to embrace the poor, the weak and the illiterate in love and brotherliness. It awakens a sense of unity among all classes of people.

The Vijaya Dasami has thus become a festival for awakening of universal unity, fraternity, peace and bliss.

The Sakta Puranas interpret this in another way. Rama tried to attain victory through His own valour and prowess but failed. Afterwards he surrendered His egoism to the Maha Sakti or Devi and placed himself as an instrument in Her hands. Thereupon Devi really fought with Ravana and brought the victory for Sri Rama.

There is an eternal fight going on between Devas and Asuras, between Sattva and Rajas-Tamas, between evil tendencies and virtuous tendencies in man. Gods represent Sattvic forces. The demons or Asuras represent the evil forces. That day on which one kills these evil tendencies viz., lust, anger, greed, egoism, hatred and attains knowledge of Self or illumination through the grace of the Divine Mother is the real Vijaya Dasami day or the the day of real victory of Self over the non-self.

May the Devi Mother Durga teach mankind the way of Dharma and righteousness and bestow peace, bliss and contentment and the final beautitude !

3. DUSSERA

Dussera is the greatest Hindu festival of adoring God as mother. Hinduism is the only religion in the world which has emphasised much on the motherhood of God. Mother is the dearest and sweetest of all human relations. Hence it is proper to look upon God as Mother.

Dussera, Durga Pooja and Navaratri are one and the same. Durga is the Sakti of Lord Shiva. She is the representation of the power of the Supreme Lord. There is no difference between the Lord and His power. She looks after the affairs of the world. The Divine Mother in Her aspect of Durga is represented as having ten different weapons in Her ten hands. She is sitting on a lion. This indicates that she has control over all forces, even over the brutal force which the lion stands for.

You will find in Devi Sukta of the Rig Veda Samhita that Vak, the daughter of the sage Anbhirna realised her identity with the Divine Mother, the power of the supreme Lord which manifests throughout the entire universe among the Gods, among men and beasts, among the creatures of the deep ocean.

In the Kena Upanishad you will find that the Divine Mother shed wisdom to Indra and

the Gods and said that the Gods were able to defeat the Asuras with the help of the power of the Supreme Lord.

Mahishasura, a great demon was severely oppressing the Gods. The Gods invoked the aid of the divine Mother Durga. She assumed a form with ten hands bearing ten weapons and killed the Asura. Devi fought with Bhandasura and his forces for nine days and nine nights and completed the destruction of all Asuras on the evening of the tenth day, known as the Vijaya Dasami or the day of victory. All the ten days are sacred to Devi.

The Hindus of Bengal worship Goddess Durga on the three days preceding the Vijaya Dasami and perform the immersion ceremony on the Vijaya Dasami day. Durga is also worshipped in March during the Vasanta Pooja.

The Mother of Durga, wife of the king of Himalayas longs to see her daughter Durga. Durga is permitted by Lord Shiva to visit her beloved Mother only for three days in the year. The festival of Durga Pooja is to celebrate this brief visit and it ends with the Vijaya Dasami day when the Goddess Durga leaves for Kailas.

Sri Rama worshipped Durga at the time of the fight with Revana to invoke Her aid in the war during the days preceding the Vijaya Dasami Day. He fought and won through Her grace.

In Bengal Durga Pooja is a great festival. All who live away return home during the Pooja days. Mothers meet their distant sons and

daughters, wives their husbands.

The potter shows his skill in making the images, the painter in drawing pictures, the songster in playing on his instrument and the priest in reciting the sacred books. The Bengalees save money all the year round only to spend it all during the Pooja days. Cloth is distributed.

The Hindu woman of Bengal welcomes the Goddess with a mother's love and sends away the image on the last day with every ceremony associated with a daughter's departure for her husband's home and with motherly tears in her eyes.

May you all worship Goddess Durga with intense faith and devotion and attain eternal bliss and immortality through Her Grace! Glory to the Divine Mother Durga and Her consort Lord Shiva, the joint parents of the universe.

4 VASANTA NAVARATRI

Devi is worshipped during the Vasanta Navaratri. This occurs during the spring. The worship of Devi is ordained by Her own command. You will find this in the following episode from the Devi Bhagavata.

In days long gone by Dhruvasindhu, a noble and virtuous king of solar dynasty, ruled over the Kosala country. He had two wives, Manorama and Lilavathi. Manorama was the senior queen. Both of them gave birth to beautiful sons.

Manorama's son was named Sudarsana and Lilavathi's as Satrujit.

King Dhruvasindhu was killed by a lion when he went out for hunting. Preparations were made to crown the crowning prince Sudarsana. But king Yudhajit of Ujjain, the father of queen Lilavati and king Virasena of Kalinga, the father of queen Manorama were each desirous of securing the Kosala throne to their respective grandsons. They fought with each other. King Virasena was killed in the battle. Manorama fled to the forest with Prince Sudarsana and a eunuch. They took refuge in the Ashrama of Rishi Bharadwaja.

King Yudhajit crowned his grandson, Satrujit at Ayodhya, the capital of Kosala. He went out to search Monorama and her son in order to put them out of the way but could not find them. After some time he came to know that they were in the Ashrama of Rishi Bharadwaja.

He at once started with a big army to the Ashram. Yudhajit arrogantly demanded of Rishi Bharadwaja the surrender of Monorama and her son. The Rishi said that he would not give up those who had sought protection under him. Yudhajit became very furious. He wanted to attack the Rishi. But his minister told him about the truth of the Rishi's statement. Yudhajit returned to his capital.

Fortune began to smile on Prince Sudarsana. The son of a hermit called the eunuch by his Sanskrit name 'Kleeba'. The prince caught

the first syllable Kli and began to pronounce it as 'Kleem'. This syllable is a powerful, sacred mantra. It is the Beeja Akshara of Parasakti. The prince obtained peace of mind and the grace of the Divine Mother by the repeated utterings of this syllable. Devi appeared to him, blessed him and gave him divine weapons, and an inexhaustible arrow-case.

The emissaries of the king of Benares passed through the Ashram of the Rishi and saw the noble prince Sudarshana and recommended him to Princess Sasikala, the daughter of the king of Benares.

A Svayamvara was arranged. Sasikala chose Sudarshana. Yudhajit also was there. Sasikala was wedded to Sudarshana. Yudhajit began to fight with the king of Benares. Devi helped Sudarshana and his fatherin-law. Yudha jit mocked at the Devi. Devi reduced Yudhajit and his army to ashes.

Sudarshana and his wife and his father-in-law praised the Devi. She was highly pleased and ordered them to perform Her worship with Homa and other means in all the four Navaratris of the months-Ashada, Aswapuja, Magha and Chaitra, beginning with the Sukla Pratbama. Then she disappeared.

Thereupon Prince Sudarshana and Sasikala came back to the Ashram of Rishi Bharadwaja. The great Rishi blessed them and crowned Sudarshana as the king of Kosala. Sudarshana and Sasikala and the king of Benares implicitly

carried out the commands of the divine Mother and performed worship in a splendid manner during each of these Navaratri.

Sudarshana's descendants, Sri Rama and Lakshmana also performed worship of Devi during the Vasanta navaratri and were blessed with Her assistance in the recovery of Sita.

It is your duty also to perform the worship of Devi for your material and spiritual welfare during the Vasanta Navaratri and follow the noble example set by Sudarshana and Sri Rama. You cannot achieve anything without Mother's blesssing. Sing the praise of the Divine Musher. Repeat Her Mantra and Name. Meditate on Her form. Do Pooja. Pray and obtain Her eternal grace and blessings.

5. GOURI POOJA

Goddess Gouri or Parvathi is the consort of Lord Siva. She is the Sakti of Siva. She is recognised as the highest ideal of Indian womanhood. She is a perfect model of feminine virtues. Maidens worship Gouri and invoke Her grace and blessings for securing a suitable bridegroom. She is adored by married women also for securing long life for their husbands.

Certain days are held very sacred to Her memory. Hindu ladies observe fast on these days and worship Goddess Gouri in and through the crescent moon before breaking the fast.

CHAPTER XIV

SIVA YOGA MALA

1. BOOKS ON SAIVISM

The twenty-eight Saiva Agamas, the hymns (Thevaram and Tiruvasagam) of the Saiva Saints form the chief sources of Southern Saivism. The Saiva hymns compiled by Nambi Andar Nambi (A. D. 1000) are collectively called Tirumurai. Thevaram contains the hymns of Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar. The hymns of Manickavasagar are called Tiruvasagam.

The Agamanta called Saiva Siddhanta is the essence of the 28 Sanskrit Agamas. Agamanta is the inner meaning of the Veda.

Sekkiar's Periyapuranam (eleventh century) gives a description of the sixty-three Saiva Saints.

Tiruvasagam is a collection of fifty-one poems of unsurpassed spiritual experiences and grandeur. Dr. G. V. Pope has translated this into English.

In the beginning of the thirteenth century the great Saiva Siddhanta philosophical movement was inaugurated by Saint Meykander who is the eminent author of Sivagnana Bodham, the central work of the system. Sivagnana Bodham is regarded as an expansion of twelve verses of the Raurava Agama. This book is the

standard exposition of the Saiva Sidhanta views. It contains in a nut-shell a systematic expression of the system. It opened the eyes of Tamilians to the supreme excellence of this philosophy. Saint Meykandar taught his philosophy to forty-nine disciples, propagated and popularised the system.

Arulnandi Sivachariar, the first of the forty-nine disciples of Meykandar is the author of the important work Siva Jnana Siddhiyar. He is also the author of Irupa-Irupahthu.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there arose fourteen philosophical works, known as standard Saiva Siddhanta Sastras. They are Tiruvundiar. Tirukalitrupadiar, Sivagnana Bodham, Sivagnana siddhiar. Irupa-Irupahthu, Unmai vilakkam, Sivaprakasam, Tiru arul payan, Vina-vemba, Partripatirodai, Kodikkavi, Nenju vidu thoothu, Unmai neri vilakkam and Sangarpaniraharanam.

Sivaprakasam and Tiru arulpayan are two well-known books written by Umapati Sivachariar (fourteenth century). He is the author of other six sastras of the group. Tiruvundiar was composed by Saint Uyyavanda-deva-nayanar of Tiruviyalur about the middle of the twelfth. Tirukkadavur Uyyavanda-deva-nayanar was the author of the Tiru Kali Trupadiar.

Unmai vilakkam is one of the fourteen sastras writen by Manavasagam Kadanthar another disciple of Meykandar.

Tirumandiram is one of the most authorita-

tive works embodying the Saiva doctrine. The author is Tirumala Navanar. This work is the foundation upon which the later structure of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy was built. The Saiva doctrine of the Sanskrit agamas are translated in this book. It is a work of three thousand stanzas composed in the course of three thousand years. It deals with the practical and theoretical aspects of the Saiva religion and philosophy.

Gnanamritam is the earliest treatise which treats of the siddhanta concepts in the modern scientific manner.

The Saiva Siddhanta rests on the twofold tradition of the Vedas and the Agamas. Nila Kantha who flourished in the fourteenth century undertook the systematic reconciliation of the two. He wrote a commentary on the Brahma Sutras. He interpreted it in the light of the Saiva system.

Appaya Dikshita's commentary called Sivarka Mani Dipika is a valuable book.

Siva Purana, Linga Purana, Siva Parakrama, Tiruvilayadal Puranam, Periyapuranam, treat of the glory of Lord Siva. These books are translated into Tamil. Bhakta Vilasam is a Sanskrit work. It is a minor Purana based upon the Skanda Purana.

The twenty-eight Agamas were written in Sanskrit in the valley of Kashmir. This Agananta arose in North India long before Jainism came into prominence. It was known there by

the name Pratyabhijna Darsanam. Then it spread westwards and southwards. In Western India it was known by Vira Mahesvara Darsanam, and in south India it was called Suddha Saiva Darsanam. Linga Purana is held in great respect by the Vira Maheswaras.

2. CHIDAMBARA RAHASYA

Lord Shiva is worshipped in Chidambaram as a formless presence, Akasa lingam. Chidambaram is an ancient centre of religion and culture. Shiva is worshipped at Chidambaram in the danicng aspect as Nataraja. Arudra darsana, one of the most important festivals of South India is celebrated every year at Chidambaram in the month of Margasirsha.

Within the temple is the 'Nritya Sabha' or 'the hall of the dance.' In front of the central shrine is a structure of wood surmounted with a tall golden roof known as the 'Kanaka Sabha' or the "Hall of golden dome". The central temple is dedicated to Nataraja. It is a plain wooden building standing on a stone pavement but behind it is an apartment of polished black stone, the roof of which is formed of gold plates. Opposite to the Shivaganga tank is the Raja Sabha or the hall of one thousand columns, with granite pillars. King Varua Chola purified himself by bathing in the tank and attained a golden hue.

The five prakaras of a Shiva temple represent the five koshas of the body. The three prakaras

of certain temples represent the three bodies of a man. Garbhagraha, Arthamandap, Mahamandap Snana mandap, Alamkara mandap, Sabha mandap represent the six chakras or the six adharas of the body.

The Darsanopanishad says "Chidambaram is in the centre of the heart. Chidambaram is the heart of Virat purusha." The mandap with thousand pillars represents the Sahasrara or the thousand petalled lotus on the crown of the head, Sivaganga, that pool of nectar, Amrita vapi in Sahasrara. The place where there are Jyotirling and Sri Gurumoorthi represents Vishuddha chakra. In Thiruchittambalam or Maha Sabha there are five peetams for Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshwara and Sadasiva. The five letters of Panchakshara form the five steps, the veil represents Avidya or avarana (veil). The ninety-six tatvas form the 96 windows. The four golden pillars which are in the centre represent the four Vedas. The twenty-eight wooden pillars which surround them represent the twenty-eight Agamas. The space that is within the pillars represents Suddha Vidya. Lord Nataraja has his seat in the Pranavapeetam.

There is 'Thiruchittambalam' behind. This is chidakasa or the famous 'Chidambara Rahasya'. Shivakami Sundari or Parasakthi has her seat in Garbhagraha. Rahasya is Nishkal. Ananda Nataraja Murthi is Sakala.

In the East is Brahma. In the South is Vishnu. In the North is Bhairava or Sam-

hara Rudra. There are nine kalasas in the tower. These represent the nine saktis. The sixty-four wooden supports in the tower represent the sixty-four Vidyas or kalas. The twenty-one thousand six hundred copper plates coated with gold represent the daily twentyone thousand six hundred breaths of a man. The seventy-two thousand nails represent the seventy-two thousands nerves or the astral tubes in the body.

The eighteen pillars of Kanaga Sabai represent eighteen puranas. Kanaga Sabai represents the Manipura chakra. The five Sabais viz. Raja Sabai, Deva Sabai, Nritya Sabai etc. represent the five kosas.

If one rightly understands the secrets of Chidambara temple and worships the Lord Nataraja with intense faith, devotion, purity and one-pointedness of mind, he will attain knowledge and eternal bliss. He will be freed from bondage.

Birth in Tiruvalur gives Mukti. Death in Benares gives mukti. Darshan of Nataraja in Chidambaram gives Mukti.

Adjacent to the Kanaka Sabha is a temple dedicated to Govinda Raja or Vishnu. This teaches a lesson that Shiva and Vishnu are essentially one and that a Veerasaivite or a Veera Vaishnavite should abandon his bigotry and should have a large heart and equal devotion to Lord Shiva and Lord Hari and should see his Ishtam in all Murtis.

May Lord Nataraja and Sivakami bless you all and give an understanding heart to comprehend the Chidambara Rahasya !

3. SHIVA AND VISHNU ARE ONE

A Saivite is a devotee of Lord Shiva. A Vaishnavite is a devotee of Lord Vishnu. Upasana means worship or sitting near God. Upasaka is one who does Upasana. Upasana or Aradhana leads to realisation of God. A bigoted Veera-saivite entertains hatred towards Lord Vishnu, Vaishnavites and Puranas which treat of Vishnu. He never enters a Vishnu temple. He never drinks water from a Vaishnavite. He never takes food with a Vaishnavite. He never repeats the name of Hari. He speaks ill of Lord Hari, Vishnavites and Vishnu Purana. He thinks that Lord Siva is superior to Lord Vishnu. He never reads Vishnu Purana. Is this not the height of folly ? Is this not extreme ignorance ? He has not understood the true nature of Lord Siva. He has no idea of true religion. He is a fanatic, a bigot, a man of little understanding, a narrow sectarian with a very small, constricted heart. He is like a frog in the well which has no idea of the vast ocean.

A bigoted Veera Vaishnavite entertains hatred towards Lord Siva, Saivites and Siva Puranas which treat of Lord Siva. He never enters a Siva temple. He never makes friendship with a Saivite. He never drinks water from the hands of a Saivite. He also behaves exactly

like the Veera Saivite. The lot of this man is also highly deplorable.

There is a temple in Sankaranayanar Koil in the Tinnevelly district, where the idol has one half of it depicted as Siva and the other half as Vishnu. The inner significance of this is that Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu are one. Sri Shankaracharya also has said in very clear terms that Shiva and Vishnu are the one all-pervading soul.

On one occasion a Veerasaivite entered the temple in Sankaranayanar Koil to worship the Lord. He found that one half of the idol is Vishnu. He offered incense. He plugged the nostrils of Vishnu with the cotton as the fumes were entering His nose also. A Veera Vaishnavite entered the temple and He also offered incense. He plugged the nostrils of Siva as the fumeswere entering His nose also. Such is the bigotry and narrow-mindedness of sectarians. A devotee should have a large broad heart. He must see his tutelary deity in all aspects of the Lord and in all forms. He can have intense love for his Ishtam in the beginning to intensify his devotion for that particular deity (prem nishta) but he should have equal devotion to the other forms of the Lord also.

Shiva and Vishnu are one and the same entity. They are essentially one and the same. They are the names given to the different aspects of the all-pervading Supreme soul or the Absolute. "Sivasya Hridyayam Vishnu Vishnoscha

hridayam Siva—Vishnu is the heart of Shiva and likewise Siva is the heart of Vishnu."

The sectarian worship is of recent origin. The Saiva Siddhanta of Kantacharya is only five hundred years old. The Vaishnava cults of Madhava and Sri Ramanuja are only six hundred and seven hundred years old respectively. There was no sectarian worship before seven hundred years.

Brahma represents the creative aspect, Vishnu the preservative aspect, Shiva the destructive aspect of Param Atma. This is just like your wearing differsnt garbs on different occasions. When you do the function of a judge you put on one kind of dress. At home you wear another kind of dress. When you do worship in the temple you wear another kind of dress. You exhibit different kinds of temperament on different occasions. Even so the Lord does the function of creation when He is associated with Rajas and He is called Brahma. He preserves the world when He is associated with Sattva Guna and He is called Vishnu. He destroys the world when He is associated with Tamo Guna and He is called Shiva or Rudra.

Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva have been correlated to the three Avasthas or states of consciousness. During the waking state, Sattva predominates. During the dream state Rajas predominates and during the deep-sleep state Tamas predominates. Hence Vishnu, Brahmam and Shiva are the Murtis of Jagrat, Svap

na and Sushupta states of consciousness respectively. The Turiya or the fourth state is Para Brahman. The Sushupti state is immediately next to the deep sleep state. Worship of Shiva will lead quickly to the attainment of the fourth state.

Vishnu Purana glorifies Vishnu and in some places gives a lower position to Shiva. Shiva Purana glorifies Shiva and gives a lower status to Vishnu. Devi Bhagavat glorifies Devi and gives a lower status to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. This is only to instil and intensify devotion for the respective deity in the heart of the devotee. In reality no deity is superior to another. You must understand the heart of the writer.

May you all realise the oneness of Shiva and Vishnu! May you all be endowed with pure subtle intellect and proper understanding!

4 SIVARATRI MAHIMA

Silent adorations to Lord Siva, consort of Parvati, the destructive aspect of Brahman, who is known by the names Sambhu, Sankara, Mahadeva, Sadashiva, Viswanatha, Hara, Tripurati, Gangadhara, Soolapani, Nilakanta, Dakshinamurti, Chandrashekhara, Nilalohita, who is the bestower of auspiciousness, immortality and divine Knowledge on his devotees, and who does Tandava Nritya or the Dance of Death at the end of Time or Cosmic Pralaya, and who is the real Regenerator but not the Destroyer.

Maha Sivaratri means the great night consecrated to Lord Siva. Maha Sivaratri falls on Trayodasi or the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of Kumbha month.

In the Santi Parva of the Mahabharata Bhisma refers to the observance of the Maha Sivaratri by King Chitrabhanu when he was giving the discourse on Dharma, resting on his bed of arrows.

Once upon a time King Chitrabhanu of the Ikshvaku dynasty, who was ruling over the whole of Jambudwipa, and his wife were observing a fast on the day of Maha Sivarati. The Sage Ashtavakra came on a visit to the court of the King.

The Sage asked! "O King! why are you observing fast today?" King Chitrabhanu explained the reason for observing a fast on that day. He had the gift of remembering the incidents of his previous birth.

He said to the sage Ashtavakra: "I was a hunter by name Suswar in my previous birth. I eked out my livelihood by killing and selling birds and animals. One day, I was roaming in a forest in search of animals. I was overtaken by the darkness of night. I was not able to return home and so I climbed up Bilwa tree for shelter. I shot a deer that day but I had no time to take it home. As I was tormented by hunger and thirst, I kept awake throughout the night. I shed profuse tears when I thought of my poor wife and children who were starving

and anxiously awaiting my return. I engaged myself in plucking and dropping down the Bilwa leaves. There was a Siva Linga at the foot of the Bilwa tree. The tears and the leaves fell upon the Siva Linga.

"The day dawned. I returned home and sold the deer. I got food for myself and for my family. I was about to break my fast. A stranger came to me and begged for food. I served him with food first and then I took my food. At the hour of death I saw two messengers of Lord Siva. They were sent down for the sake of conducting my soul to the abode of Siva. I learnt there for the first time of the great merit I had earned by the observance of the fast on the day of Maha Sivaratri, though I did it unconsciously by an accident. I lived in the abode of Siva and enjoyed divine bliss for long ages. I am now reborn on this earth as Chitra Bhanu."

II

"Sivaratri" means "night of the Lord Siva." The important features of this religious function are rigid fasting for twenty-four hours and sleepless vigil during the night. Every true devotee of Lord Siva spends the night of Sivaratri in deep meditation, keeps vigil and observes fast.

The worship of Lord Siva consists in offering flowers, Bilwa leaves, and other gifts on the Lingam which is a symbol of Lord Siva, and bathing it with milk, honey, butter, ghee, rose water, etc.

When creation had been completed, Siva and Parvati had been living on the top of Kailasa, Parvati asked : "O venerable Lord ! Which of the many rituals observed in Thy honour doth please Thee most ?" Lord Siva replied : "The fourteenth night of the new moon, Krishna Paksha in the month of Phalgun (February-March) is known as Sivaratri, my most favourable Tithi. My devotee gives me greater happiness by mere fasting than by ceremonial baths, and offerings of flowers, sweets, incense, etc,

"The devotee observes strict spiritual discipline in the day and worships me in four different forms in the four successive Praharas each made up of three hours of the night. The offering of a few Bilwa leaves is more precious to me than the precious jewels and flowers. He should bathe me in milk at the first Prahara, in curd at the second, in clarified butter at the third, and in honey at the fourth and last. Next morning, he should feed the Brahmins first and break the fast after the performance of the prescribed ceremonies. There is no ritual, O Parvati, which can compare with this simple routine in sanctity.

"Just hear, my beloved, of an episode which will give you an idea of the glory and power of this ritual.

"Once upon a time, there lived in the town of Varanasi (modern Benares) a hunter. He was returning from the forest one evening with the game birds he had killed. He felt tired and sat

at the foot of a tree to take some rest. He was overpowered by sleep. When he woke up, it was all thick darkness of night. It was the night of Sivaratri but he did not know it. He climbed up the tree, tied his bundle of dead birds to a branch and sat up waiting for the dawn. The tree happened to be my favourite, the Bilwa.

"There was a Linga under that tree. He plucked a few leaves and dropped them down. The night-dew trickled down from his body. I was highly pleased with involuntary little gifts of the hunter. The day dawned and the hunter returned to his house.

"In course of time, the hunter fell ill and gave up his last breath. The messengers of Yama arrived at his bedside to carry his soul to Yama. My messengers also went to the spot to take him to my abode. There was a severe fight between Yama's messengers and my messengers. The former were totally defeated. They reported the matter to their Lord. He presented himself in person at the portals of my abode. Nandi gave him an idea of the sanctity of Sivaratri and the love which I had for the hunter. Yama surrendered the hunter to me and returned to his abode quietly.

"The hunter was able to enter my abode and ward off Death by simple fasting and offering of a few Bilwa leaves, however involuntary it might be, because it was the night of Sivaratri. Such is the solemnity and sacredness associated with the night."

"Parvati was deeply impressed by the speech of Lord Siva on the sanctity and glory of the ritual.

She repeated it to Her friends who in their turn passed it on to the ruling princess on earth. Thus was the sanctity of Sivaratri broadcast all over the world.

5. THE TWELVE JYOTIR LINGAS

॥ द्वादश ज्योतिर्लिंगानि ॥

सौराष्ट्रे सोमनाथं च श्रीशैले मल्लिकार्जुनम् ।
उज्जयिन्यां महाकालमोंकारममलेश्वरम् ॥१॥
परल्यां वैजनाथं च डाकिन्यां भीमशंकरम् ।
सेतुबंधे तु रामेशं नागेशं दारुका वने ॥२॥
वाराणास्यां तु विश्वेशं त्र्यंबकं गौतमीतटे ।
हिमालये तु केदारं घुसृणेशं शिवालये ॥३॥
एतानि ज्योतिर्लिंगानि सायं प्रातः पठेन्नरः ।
सप्तजन्मकृतं पापं स्मरणेन विनश्यति ॥
॥ इति द्वादश ज्योतिर्लिंगानि ॥

DWADASA JYOTIR LINGANI

Sourashtre somanatham cha sreesaile Mallikarjunam
Ujjayinyam mahakalamomkaramamaleshwaram
Paralyam vaijanatham cha daakinyam bheemasankaram,
Sethubandhe tu Ramesham Nagesham darukavane

Vaaranasyam tu viswesam tryambakam goutameetate,
Himalaye tu kedaram ghusrunesham sivalaye
Etani jyotirlingani sayam pratah patennarah
Saptajanmakritam papam smaranena vinasyati

He who remembers the twelve jyotirlingas morning and evening becomes absolved from sins committed in seven previous births. They are:—

Somanatha in Sourashtra,
Mallikarjuna in Sreesaila
Mahakala in Ujjain
Omkareshwara in Amaleshwara
Baijanatha in Parali
Bheemasankara in Dakini
Rameshwar in Sethubandha
Nagesha in Darukavana
Vishwesa in Benares
Triyambaka in the banks of Godaveri
Kedarnath in Himalayas
Ghusrunesa in Sivalaya

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE TWELVE JYOTI LINGAS OF LORD SIVA.

1. Somnath is Gujrat.
2. Mallikarjuna in Sri Saliya Parvath near Tirupathi.
3. Mahakalam in Ujjain in Gwalior state.
4. Omkara Ishwar on the banks of Narbadha in Amaleshwaram.
5. Bhaijnath near Gaya (Paralya).

6. Nanganath in Southern India.
7. Khedarnath in Himalayas in the district of Garhwal.
8. Trayambhak, near the source of Godavari in the Nasik district, Bombay Presidency.
9. Rameshwaram, in Ramnad district.
10. Bhima Shankar near Poona.
11. Vishwanath in Benares.
12. Grishneswaram (Gokarna) in Karwar district Carnatic.

Even if people remember these 12 places both morning and evening, the sins of seven births will be destroyed.

In Southern India, in the Madras Presidency there are five famous Sivalinghas which represent the five elements.

1. In Conjeevaram, Chingleput district, there is Prithivi Lingham.
2. In Tiruvana Koil, Trichinopoly district, there is Appu Lingham.
   The Lingham is always in water. Tiruvana Koil is otherwise known as Jambukeshwaram.
3. In Kalahasti (Chittoor) district, there is a Vayu Lingham.
4. In Tiruvannamalai, Via Villupuram Junction, North Arcot district, there is a Tejas Lingam (Arunachaleshwaram).

5. In Chidambaram, (South Arcot district), there is the Akasha-Lingham.

6. SIVA NAMA KIRTAN.

1. Sivayanama Om Sivaya Namaha Sivayanama Om Namasivaya
   Siva Siva Siva Siva Sivaya Nama OM Hara Hara Hara Hara Namasivaya
   Siva Siva Siva Siva Sivaya Nama OM Bhum Bhum Bhum Bhum Namasivaya.
   Sambasadasiva Sambasadasiva Sambasadasiva Sambasiva
   Om Namasivaya Om Namasivaya Om Namasivaya.
   .....Sivaya Namah Om Sivaya Namaha....
2. Om Siva Om Siva Omkara Siva Umamaheswara Tavacharanam
   Om Siva Om Siva Omkara Siva Paratpara Siva Tavacharanam
   Namami Sankara Bhavani Sankara Girija Sankara Tavacharanam
   Namami Sankara Bhavani Sankara Girija Mridani Sankara Tavacharanam
3. Hara Hara Siva Siva Sambo (2)
   Hara Hara Siva Siva Hara Hara Sambo-Hara Hara Siva Siva Sambo
   Hara Hara Siva Siva Sambo.
4. Namaste Namaste Vibho Viswamoorte, Namaste Namaste Chidanandamurte
   Namaste Namaste Tapoyogagamya, Namaste Namaste Srutigyanagamya.

5. Sankarane Sankarane Sambo Gangadharane, Sankarane—Sankarane, Samboganga-dharane
6. Kasiviswanath Sadasiva bum bolo Kailasa pati, bum bolo Kailasapati
7. Hara Hara Mahadeva Sambo Kasiviswanatha Gange,
   Viswanatha Gange Kasi Viswanatha Gange.
8. Om Siva Hara Hara Gange Hara, Om Siva Hara Hara Gange Hara Hara
   Om Siva Hara Hara, Om Siva Hara Hara, Bum Bum Hara Hara Om Siva Hara Hara
9. Mahadeva Siva Sankarana Sambo Uma kanta Hara Tripurare
   Mrityunjaya Vrishaba Dwaja Soolin Ganga-dhara Mrida Madanare
   Jeya Sambo Jeya Sambo Jeya Gouri Sankara Jeya Sambo
   Jeya Sambo Jeya Sambo Jeya Gouri Sankara Jeya Sambo
   Rudram Pasupatim Isanam Kalayane Kasi purinatham
   Hara Siva Sankara Gourisam Vandegangadharamism.
10. Jeya Siva Sankara Hara Tripurari Pahi Pasupathi Pinakadhari.
11. Chandrasekhara Chandrasekhara Chandrasekhara Pahimam
    Chandrasekhara Chandrasekhara Chandrasekhara Rakshamam.

12. Agad bum agad bum bhaja damaru, Nache Sadasiva Jagadaguru
Nache Brahma nache Vishnu nache Mahadeva,
Kapar leke kali Nache nache Adidev.
(Agadbum.....)

13. Nataraja Nataraja Nartana Sundara Nataraja
Sivaraja, Sivaraja, Sivakami priya Sivaraja.

14. Bol Sankar bol Sankar Sankar Sankar bol,
Hara Hara Hara Hara Mahadeva Sambo Sankar bol.
.....Siva, Siva Siva Siva Sadasiva Sambho Sankar bol.

15. Jaya Jega Janani Sankata Harani,
Thribhuvana Tharini Maheswari.

16. Jeya Gange Jeya Gange Rani
Jeya Gange Jeya Hara Gange.

17. Devi Bhajo Durga-Bhavani
Devi Bhajo Durga
Jegada Janani Mahishasura Mardani
Devi Bhajo Durga.

18. Radhe Govinda Bhajo Radhe Gopal
Radhe Govinda Bhajo Radhe Gopal

19. Broohi Mukundethi Rasane (broohi)
Kesava Madhava Govindethi
Krishnananda Sadanandethi (broohi)
Radha Ramana Hare Ramethi
Rageevaksha Ghana Shyamethi (broohi)

20. Gouree Ramana Karuna Bharana
Pahi Kripa Poorna Sarana
Neela Kandha Dhara Goura Sareera
Natha Jana Subhakara Mandara (Gouree)
Bala Chandra Dhara Punnya Sareera
Uma Sara Mada Hara Sakara (Gouree)

21. Piba Re Rama Rasam Rasane
Piba Re Rama Rasam—
Dooreekrita Pataka Samsargam
Poorita Nana Vidha Phul Vargam
Janana Marana Bhaya Shoka Viddoram
Sakala Shastra Nigamagama Saram
Pari Palita Sarasija Garbhandam
Parama Pavitrikrita Pashandam
Suddha Paramahamsashrama geetam
Shukha Shounaka Kaoshika Mukha Geetam (Pibare)

21. Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham Soham
Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham Soham
Sachitananda Swaroopham

22. Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham
Chidanandarup Sivoham Sivoham

शिवार्चनम्

ॐ शिवाय	नमः	ॐ उग्राय	नमः
" महेश्वराय	"	" कपर्दिने	"
" शंभवे	"	" कामारये	"
" पिनाकिने	"	" अन्धकासुरसूदनाय	"
" शशिशेखराय	"	" गंगाधराय	"
" वामदेवाय	"	" ललाटाक्षाय	"
" विरूपाक्षाय	"	" कालकालाय	"
" कपर्द्दिने	"	" कृपानिधये	"
" नीललोहिताय	"	" भीमाय	"
" शंकराय	"	" परशुहस्ताय	"
" शूलपाणये	"	" मृगपाणये	"
" खट्वांगिने	"	" जटाधराय	"
" विष्णुवल्लभाय	"	" कैलासवासिने	"
" शिपिविष्टाय	"	" कवचिने	"
" अम्बिकानाथाय	"	" कठोराय	"
" श्रीकण्ठाय	"	" त्रिपुरान्तकाय	"
" भक्तवत्सलाय	"	" वृषांकाय	"
" भवाय	"	" वृषभारूढाय	"
" शर्वाय	"	" भस्मोद्धूलितविग्रहाय	"
" त्रिलोकेशाय	"	" सामप्रियाय	"
" शितिकण्ठाय	"	" स्वरमयाय	"

ॐ त्रयीमूर्तये	नमः	ॐ प्रमथाधिपाय	
" सर्वज्ञाय	"	" मृत्युंजयाय	
" परमात्मने	"	" सूक्ष्मतनवे	
" सोमसूर्याग्निलोचनाय	"	" जगद्व्यापिने	
" हविषे	"	" जगद्गुरवे	
" यज्ञमयाय	"	" व्योमकेशाय	
" सोमाय	"	" महासेनजनकाय	
" पञ्चवक्त्राय	"	" चारुविक्रमाय	
" सदाशिवाय	"	" रुद्राय	
" विश्वेश्वराय	"	" भूतपतये	
" वीरभद्राय	"	" स्थाणवे	
" गणनाथाय	"	" अहेबुदन्याय	
" प्रजापतये	"	" दिगंबराय	
" हिरण्यरेतसे	"	" अष्टमूर्तये	
" दुर्धर्षाय	"	" अनेकात्मने	
		" सात्विकाय	
" गिरीशाय	"	" शुद्धविग्रहाय	
" गिरिशाय	"	" शाश्वताय	
" अनंगाय	"	" खण्डपरशवे	
" भुजंगभूषणाय	"	" अजाय	
" भर्गाय	"	" पाशविमोचकाय	
" गिरिधन्वने	"	" मृडाय	
" गिरिप्रियाय	"	" पशुपतये	
" कृत्तिवाससे	"	" देवाय	
" पुरारातये	"	" महादेवाय	
" भगवते	"	" अव्ययाय	

ॐ	हराय	नमः	ॐ	सहस्राक्षाय
"	पूषदंतविदे	"	"	सहस्रपतये
"	अव्ययाय	"	"	अपवर्गप्रदाय
"	दक्षाध्वरहराय	"	"	अनन्ताय
"	हराय	"	"	तारकाय
"	भगनेत्रविदे	"	"	परमेश्वराय
"	अव्यक्ताय	"		

देवि अर्चनंम्

ॐ	आदिशक्त्यै	नमः	ॐ	माहेश्वर्यै
"	महादेव्यै	"	"	लोकरक्षिण्यै
"	अंबिकायै	"	"	दुर्गायै
"	परमेश्वर्यै	"	"	दुर्गापारायै
"	ईश्वर्यै	"	"	भक्तचिन्तामण्यै
"	अनैश्वर्यै	"	"	मृत्यै
"	योगिन्यै	"	"	सिद्धयै
"	सर्वभूतेश्वर्यै	"	"	मूर्त्यै
"	जयायै	"	"	सर्वसिद्धिप्रदायै
"	विजयायै	"	"	मंत्रमूर्त्यै
"	जयंत्यै	"	"	महाकाल्यै
"	शांभवयै	"	"	सर्वमूर्तिस्वरूपिण्यै
"	शान्त्यै	"	"	वेदमूर्त्यै
"	ब्राह्म्यै	"	"	वेदभूत्यै
"	ब्रह्मदण्डधारिण्यै	"	"	वेदान्तायै
"	महारूपायै	"	"	व्यवहारिण्यै
"	महामायायै	"	"	अनाद्यायै

ॐ	भगात्मयै	नमः	ॐ	चंडमुंडचारिण्यै
"	रौद्रायै	"	"	दैत्यदानवघातिन्यै
"	रुद्ररूपिण्यै	"	"	भेषज्योतिषायै
"	नारायण्यै	"	"	परंज्योतिषायै
"	नारसिंह्यै	"	"	आत्मज्योतिषायै
"	नागयज्ञोपवीतिन्यै	नमः	"	सर्व ज्योतिस्वरूपिण्यै
"	शंखचक्रगदाधारिण्यै	नमः	"	सहस्रमूर्त्यै
"	जटामुकुटशोभिन्यै	नमः	"	शर्वाण्यै
"	अप्रमाणायै	नमः	"	सूर्यमूर्तिस्वरूपिण्यै
"	प्रमाणायै	"	"	आयुर्जनन्यै
"	आदिमध्यावसानायै	नमः	"	सर्वलक्ष्मीप्रदायै
"	पुण्यदायै	नमः	"	विचक्षणायै
"	पुण्योपचारिण्यै	"	"	क्षीरार्णवनिवासिन्यै
"	पुण्यकीर्त्यै	"	"	वागीश्वर्यै
"	स्तुतायै	"	"	वाक्सिद्ध्यै
"	विशाखाक्ष्यै	"	"	अज्ञानगोचरायै
"	गंभीरायै	"	"	वरदायै
"	रूपान्वितायै	"	"	परमकल्याण्यै
"	कालरात्र्यै	"	"	भानुमंडलनिवासिन्यै
"	अनङ्गसिद्ध्यै	"	"	अव्यक्तायै
"	कमलायै	"	"	व्यक्तरूपायै
"	पद्मनिवासिन्यै	"	"	अनन्तायै
"	महासरस्वत्यै	"	"	चंद्रायै
"	मनःसिद्ध्यै	"	"	चन्द्रमंडलनिवासिन्यै
"	मनोयोगिन्यै	"	"	चन्द्रमंडलमंडितायै
"	मातृगिन्यै	"	"	भैरव्यै

ॐ	परमानन्दायै	नमः	ॐ	महालक्ष्म्यै
”	शिवायै	”	”	घोषवत्यै
”	अपराजितायै	”	”	दरिद्रहारिण्यै
”	ज्ञानप्रदायै	”	”	शिवतेजोमुख्यै
”	ज्ञानवत्यै	”	”	विष्णुवल्लभायै
”	ज्ञानमूर्त्यै	”	”	केशविभूषितायै
”	कलावत्यै”	”	”	कूर्मायै
”	श्मशानवासिन्यै	”	”	महिषासुरघातिन्यै
”	मात्रे	”	”	उमायै
”	परमकल्पिन्यै	”	”	शांकर्यै
”	सर्वरक्षायै	”	”	महामायायै
”	महाकाल्यै	”		

स्तोत्र रत्नमाला

अथ शिवनीराजनम्

हरिः ॐ नमोऽस्त्वनन्ताय सहस्रमूर्तये सहस्रपादाक्षि-शिरोरुबाहवे। सहस्रनाम्ने पुरुषाय शाश्वते सहस्र कोटि युग धारिणे नमः ॥१॥

ॐ जयगङ्गाधर हर शिव जय गिरिजाधीश, शिवजय गौरीनाथ। त्वं मां पालय नित्यं, त्वं मां पालय शम्भो कृपया जगदीश ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥२॥

कैलासे गिरि शिखरे कल्पद्र मविपिने शिवकल्प०, गुञ्जति मधुकर-पुञ्जे २ कुञ्जवने गहने। कोकिल कूजति खेलति हंसावलि ललिता २ रचयति कलाकलापं नृत्यति मुदसहिता ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥३॥

तस्मिँश्चन्द्रलसितसुदेशे शाला मणिरचिता, शिव शाला० तन्मध्ये हर निकटे २ गौरी मुदसहिता। क्रीडां रचयति भूषांरञ्जितनिजमीशं, शिव रञ्जित०, इन्द्रादिकसुरसेवितः, ब्रह्मादिकसुरसेवित, प्रणमति ते शीर्षम्। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥४॥

विबुधवधूर्बहु नृत्यति हृदये मुदसहिता, शिव हृदये०, किन्नरगानं कुरुते ससस्वरसहितं। धिनकत थै थै धिनकत मृदंगं वादयते, शिव मृदंगं, क्वणक्वणलालि वेणुं २ मधुरं नादयते। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥५॥

करत कण-चरणे रचयति नूपुरमुज्ज्वलितं, शिवनूपुर०, चक्राकारं भ्रमयति २ कुरुते तांधिकताम्। तां तां लुप-चुप तालं नादयते, शिव तालं० अङ्गुष्ठाङ् गुलिनादं लास्यकतां कुरुते। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥६॥

कर्पूरद्यु-तिगौरं पञ्चाननसहितं, शिवपञ्चानन०, त्रिनयन शशिधर-मौलेः २ विषधरकण्ठयुतम् सुन्दरजटाकलापं पावकयुतभालं, शिव पावक-

शशिभालं, वरमरुत्रिशूलपिनाकं २ करधृतहरिणकपालम्। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥७॥

शङ्खनिनादं कृत्वा झल्लरिं नादयते, शिवझल्लरिं०, नीराजयते ब्रह्मा नीराजयते विष्णुर्वेद-ऋचं पठते। इति मृदुवरणसरोजं हृदि कमले कृत्वा, शिव हृदि०, अवलोकयति महेशं अवलोकयति सुरेशं, ईशं अभि नत्वा। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥८॥

कण्ठे रचयति मालां पन्नगमुपवीतं शिव पन्नग०, वामविभागे गिरिजा वामविभागे गौरी रूपं अतिलक्षितम्। सुन्दरसकलशरीरे कृतभस्माभरणं शिव कृत०, इति वृषभध्वजरूपं हर-शिव-शङ्कर-रूपं तापत्रयहरणम्। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥९॥

ध्यानं आरति समये हृदये इति कृत्वा, शिव हृदये० रामं त्रिजटा नाथं २ ईशं अभिनत्वा। संगीत मेवं प्रति-दिन पठनं यः कुरुते शिव पठनं०

शिवसायुज्यं गच्छति हरसायुज्यं गच्छति भवत्या यः शृणुते। ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥१०॥

जय गङ्गाधर हर शिव जय गिरिजाधीश शिव जय गौरीनाथ त्वं मां पालय नित्यं त्वं मां पालय शम्भो कृपया जगदीश ॐ हर हर हर महादेव ॥११॥

इति श्रीशिवानीराजनं सम्पूर्णम्।

अथ शिवध्यानावलिः

ॐ वन्दे देवमुमापतिं सुरगुरुं वन्दे जगत्कारणं
वन्दे पन्नगभूषणं मृगधरं वन्दे पशूनां पतिम्।
वन्दे सूर्यशशाङ्कवह्नि-नयनं वन्दे मुकुन्दप्रियं
वन्दे भक्तजनाश्रयं च वरदं वन्दे शिवं शङ्करम् ॥१॥
शान्तं पद्मासनस्थं शशधरमुकुटं पञ्चवक्त्रं त्रिनेत्रं
शूलं वज्रं च खड्गं परशुमभयदं दक्षिणाङ्गे वहन्तम्।

नागं पाशं च घण्टां डमरुकसहितां चाङ्कुशं वामभागे ।
नानालङ्कारदीप्तं स्फटिकमणिनिभं पार्वतीशं नमामि ॥२॥
कर्पूरगौरं करुणावतारं संसारसारं भुजगेन्द्रहारम् ।
सदा वसन्तं हृदयारविन्दे भवं भवानीसहितं नमामि ॥३॥
असितगिरिसमं स्यात् कज्जलं सिन्धुपात्रे
सुरतरुवरशाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी ।
लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा शारदा सर्वकालं
तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥४॥
त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव त्वमेव बन्धुश्च सखा त्वमेव ।
त्वमेव विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव सर्वं मम देवदेव ॥५॥
करचरणकृतं वाक्कायजं कर्मजं वा
श्रवणनयनजं वा मानसं वाऽपराधम् ।
विहितमविहितं वा सर्वमेतत् क्षमस्व
जय जय करुणाब्धे श्रीमहादेव शम्भो ॥६॥
चन्द्रोद्भासितशेखरे स्मरहरे गङ्गाधरे शङ्करे
सर्पैर्भूषितकण्ठकर्णविवरे नेत्रोत्थवैश्वानरे ।
दन्तित्वक्कृतसुन्दरांबरधरे त्रैलोक्यसारे हरे
मोक्षार्थं कुरु चित्तवृत्तिमचलामन्यैस्तु किं कर्मभिः ॥७॥

इति शिवध्यानावलिः सम्पूर्णा

अथ शिव-पुष्पाञ्जलिः

हरिः ॐ यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन् । ते ह नाकंमहिमानः सचन्त यत्र पूर्वे साध्याः सन्ति देवाः ।

ॐ राजाधिराजाय प्रसह्य साहिने । नमो वयं वैश्रवणाय कुर्महे । स मे कामान् कामकामाय मह्यं कामेश्वरो वैश्रवणो ददातु । कुबेराय वैश्रवणाय महाराजाय नमः ।

ॐ विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतो—मुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात्। सम्बाहुभ्यान्धमतिसम्पतत्रैर्द्यावाभूमी जनयन्देव एकः। ॐ तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे महादेवाय धीमहि तन्नो रुद्रः प्रचोदयात्।

नाना-सुगन्ध-पुष्पाणि यथा-कालोद्भवानि च।
मयाहृतानि दिव्यानि गृहाण परमेश्वर।

इति शिव-पुष्पाञ्जलिः सम्पूर्ण ॥

शिवमहिम्नः स्तोत्रम्

ॐ श्रीगणेशायनमः

हरि ॐ गजाननं भूतगणाधिसेवितं
कपित्थजम्बूफलचारु भक्षणम्।
उमासुतं शोकविनाशकारकं
नमामि विघ्नेश्वरपादपङ्कजम्।

महिम्नः पारं ते परमविदुषो यद्यसदृशी
स्तुतिर्ब्रह्मादीनामपि तदवसन्नास्त्वयि गिरः।
अथाऽवाच्यः सर्वः स्वमतिपरिणामावधि गृणन्
ममाप्येषः स्तोत्रे हरनिरपवादः परिकरः ॥१॥
अतीतः पन्थानं तव च महिमा वाङ् मनसयो-
रतद्व्यावृत्त्यायं चकितमभिधत्ते श्रुतिरपि।
स कस्य स्तोतव्यः कतिविधगुणः कस्य विषयः
पदे त्वर्वाचीने पतति न मनः कस्य न वचः ॥२॥
मधुस्फीता वाचः परममृतं निर्मितवत—
स्तव ब्रह्मन् किं वागपि सुरगुरोर्विस्मयपदम्।
मम त्वेतां वाणीं गुणकथनपुण्येन भवतः
पुनामीत्यर्थेऽस्मिन्पुरमथन बुद्धिर्व्यवसिता ॥३॥
तवैश्वर्यं यत्तज्जगदुदयरक्षाप्रलय कृत्

त्रयीवस्तु व्यस्तं तिसृषु गुणभिन्नासु तनुषु ।
अभव्यानामस्मिन् वरद रमणीयामरमणीं ।
विहन्तुं व्याक्रोशीं विदधत इहैके जडधियः ॥४॥

किमीहः किंकायः स खलु किमुपायस्त्रिभुवनं
किमाधारो धाता सृजति किमुपादान इति च ।
अतर्क्यैश्वर्ये त्वय्यनवसरदुःस्थो हतधियः
कुतर्कोयं कांश्चिन्मुखरयति मोहाय जगतः ॥५॥

अजन्मानो लोकाः किमवयववन्तोपि जगता-
मधिष्ठातारं किं भवविधिरनादृत्य भवति ।
अनीशो वा कुर्याद्भुवनजनने कः परिकरो
यतो मन्दास्त्वां प्रत्यमरवर संशेरत इमे ॥६॥

त्रयी सांख्यं योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति
प्रभिन्ने प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।
रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥७॥

महोक्षः खट्वाङ्गं परशुरजिनं भस्म फणिनः
कपालं चेतीयत्तव वरद तन्त्रोपकरणम् ।
सुरास्तां तामृद्धिं विदधति भवद्भ्रू प्रणिहितां
नहि स्वात्मारामं विषयमृगतृष्णा भ्रमयति ॥८॥

ध्रुवं कश्चित्सर्वं सकलमपरस्त्वध्रुवमिदं
परो ध्रौव्याध्रौव्ये जगति गदति व्यस्तविषये ।
समस्तेऽप्येतस्मिन् पुरमथन तैर्विस्मित इव
स्तुवञ्जिह्रेमि त्वां न खलु ननु धृष्टा मुखरता ॥९॥

तवैश्वर्यं यत्नाद्यदुपरि विरिञ्चो हरिरधः
परिच्छेत्तुं यातावनलमनलस्कन्धवपुषः

ततो भक्तिश्रद्धाभरगुरुगृणद्भ्यां गिरिश यत्
स्वयं तस्थे ताभ्यां तव किमनुवृत्तिर्न फलति ॥१०॥
अयत्नादापाद्य त्रिभुवनमवैरव्यतिकरं
दशास्यो यद्बाहूनभृतरणकण्डूपरवशान् ।
शिरःपद्मश्रेणीरचितचरणाम्भोरुहबलेः
स्थिरायास्त्वद्भक्तेस्त्रिपुरहर विस्फूर्जितमिदम् ॥११॥
अमुष्य त्वत्सेवासमधिगतसारं भुजवनं
बलात्कैलासेऽपि त्वदधिवसतौ विक्रमयतः ।
अलभ्या पातालेऽप्यलस चलितांगुष्ठ शिरसि
प्रतिष्ठा त्वय्यासीद्ध्रुव मुपचितो मुह्यति खलः ॥१२॥
यदृद्धिं सुत्राम्णो वरद परमोच्चैरपि सती-
मधश्चक्रे बाणः परिजनविधेयत्रिभुवना: ।
न तच्चित्रं तस्मिन्वरिवसितरि त्वच्चरणयो-
र्न कस्याप्युन्नत्यै भवति शिरसस्त्वय्यवनतिः ॥१३॥
अकाण्डब्रह्माण्डक्षयचकितदेवासुरकृपा-
विधेयस्यासीद्यस्त्रिनयन विषं संहृतवतः ।
स कल्माषः कण्ठे तव न कुरुते न श्रियमहो
विकारोऽपि श्लाघ्यो भुवनभयभङ्गव्यसनिनः ॥१४॥
असिद्धार्था नैव क्वचिदपि सदेवासुरनरे
निवर्तन्ते नित्यं जगति जयिनो यस्य विशिखाः ।
स पश्यन्नीश त्वामितरसुरसाधारणमभूत्
स्मरः स्मर्तव्यात्मा नहि वशिषु पथ्यः परिभवः ॥१५॥
मही पादाघाताद्व्रजति सहसा संशयपदं
पदं विष्णोर्भ्राम्यद् भुजपरिघरुग्णग्रहगणम् ।
मुहुर्द्यौर्दौस्थ्यं यात्यनिभृतजटाताडित तटा
जगद्रक्षायै त्वं नटसि ननु वामैव विभुता ॥१६॥

वियद्व्यापी तारागणगुणित फेनोद्गमरुचिः
प्रवाहो वारां यः पृषतलघुदृष्टः शिरसि ते ।
जगद्द्वीपाकारं जलधिवलयं तेन कृतमि-
त्यनेनैवोन्नेयं धृतमहिम दिव्यं तव वपुः ॥१७॥

रथः क्षोणी यन्ता शतधृतिरगेन्द्रो धनुरथो
रथांग चन्द्रार्कौ रथचरणपाणिः शर इति ।
दिधक्षोस्ते कोऽयं त्रिपुरतृणमाडम्बरविधि-
विधेयैः क्रीडन्त्यो न खलु परतन्त्राः प्रभुधियः ॥१८॥

हरिस्ते साहस्रं कमलबलिमाधाय पदयो-
र्यदेकोने तस्मिन्निजमुदहरन्नेत्रकमलम् ।
गतो भक्त्युद्रेकः परिणतिमसौ चक्रवपुषा
त्रयाणां रक्षायै त्रिपुरहर जागर्ति जगताम् ॥१९॥

क्रतौ सुप्ते जाग्रत्त्वमसि फलयोगे क्रतुमतां
क्व कर्म प्रध्वस्तं फलति पुरुषाराधनमृते ।
अतस्त्वां संप्रेक्ष्य क्रतुषु फलदानप्रतिभुवं
श्रुतौ श्रद्धां बद्ध्वा दृढपरिकरः कर्मसु जनः ॥२०॥

क्रियादक्षो दक्षः क्रतुपतिरधीशस्तनुभृता-
मृषीणामार्त्विज्यं शरणद सदस्याः सुरगणाः ।
क्रतुभ्रंशस्त्वत्तः क्रतुफलविधानव्यसनिनो
ध्रुवं कर्तुः श्रद्धाविधुरमभिचाराय हि मखाः ॥२१॥

प्रजानाथं नाथ प्रसभमभिकं स्वां दुहितरं
गतं रोहिद्भूतां रिरमयिषुमृष्यस्य वपुषा ।
धनुष्पाणेर्यातं दिवमपि सपत्राकृतममुं
त्रसन्तं तेऽद्यापि त्यजति न मृगव्याधरभसः ॥२२॥

स्वलावण्याशंसा धृतधनुषमह्नाय तृणवत्
पुरः प्लुष्टं दृष्ट्वा पुरमथन पुष्पायुधमपि ।

यदि स्त्रैणं देवी यमनिरतदेहार्धघटना
दवैति त्वामद्धा वत वरद मुग्धा युवतयः ॥२३॥
श्मशानेष्वाक्रीड़ा स्मरहर पिशाचाः सहचरा-
स्चिताभस्मालेपः स्रगपि नृकरोटीपरिकरः ।
अमङ्गल्यं शीलं तव भवतु नामैवमखिलं
तथापि स्मर्तृणां वरद परमं मङ्गलमसि ॥२४॥
मनः प्रत्यक् चित्ते सविधमवधायात्तमरुतः
प्रहृष्यद्रोमाणः प्रमदसलिलोत्संगितदृशः ।
यदालोक्याह्लादं हृद इव निमज्यामृतमये
दधत्यन्तस्तत्त्वं किमपि यमिनस्तस्किल भवान् ॥२५॥
त्वमर्कस्त्वं सोमस्त्वमसि पवनस्त्वं हुतवह-
स्त्वमापस्त्वं व्योम त्वमु धरणिरात्मा त्वमिति च ।
परिच्छिन्नामेवं त्वयि परिणता विभ्रतु गिरं
न विद्मस्तत्तत्त्वं वयमिह तु यत्त्वं न भवसि ॥२६॥
त्रयीं तिस्रो वृत्तीस्त्रिभुवनमथो त्रीनपि सुरा-
नकारार्द्यैर्वर्णैस्त्रिभिरभिदधत्तीर्णविकृति ।
तुरीयं ते धाम ध्वनिभिरवरुन्धानमणुभि:
समस्तं व्यस्तं त्वां शरणद गृणात्योमिति पदम् ॥२७॥
भवः शर्वो रुद्रः पशुपतिरथोग्रः सह महां-
स्तथा भीमेशानाविति यदभिधानाष्टकमिदम् ।
अमुष्मिन्प्रत्येकं प्रविचरति देव श्रुतिरपि
प्रियायास्मै धाम्ने प्रणिहितनमस्यो स्मि भवते ॥२८॥
नमो नेदिष्ठाय प्रियदव दविष्ठाय च नमो
नमः क्षोदिष्ठाय स्मरहर महिष्ठाय च नमः ।
नमो वर्षिष्ठाय त्रिनयन यविष्ठाय च नमो
नमः सर्वस्मै ते तदिदमिति सर्वाय च नमः ॥२९॥

महदजरजसे विश्वोत्पत्तौ भवाय नमो नमः
प्रबलतमसे तत्संहारे हराय नमो नमः ।
जनसुखकृते सत्वोद्रिक्तौ मृडाय नमो नमः
प्रमहसि पदे निस्त्रैगुण्ये शिवाय नमो नमः ॥३०॥

कृशपरिणति चेतः क्लेशवश्यं क्व चेदं
क्व च तव गुणसीमोल्लङ्घिनी शश्वदृद्धिः ।
इति चकितममन्दीकृत्य मां भक्तिराधा-
द्वरद चरणयोस्ते वाक्यपुष्पोपहारम् ॥३१॥

असितगिरिसमं स्यात्कज्जलं सिन्धुपात्रे
सुरतरुवरशाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी ।
लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा शारदा सर्वकालं
तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥३२॥

असुरसुरमुनीन्द्रैरर्चितस्येन्दुमौले-
र्ग्रथितगुणमहिम्नो निर्गुणस्येश्वरस्य ।
सकलगुणवरिष्टः पुष्पदन्ताभिधानो
रुचिरमलघुवृत्तैः स्तोत्रमेतच्चकार ॥३३॥

अहरहरनवद्यं धूर्जटेः स्तोत्रमेतत्
पठति परम भक्त्या शुद्धचित्तः पुमान्यः ।
स भवति शिवलोके रुद्रतुल्यस्तथाऽत्र
प्रचुरतरधनायुः पुत्रवान् कीर्तिमांश्च ॥३४॥

दीक्षा दानं तपस्तीर्थं (ज्ञानं) होमयागादिकाः क्रियाः ।
महिम्नस्तव पाठस्य कलां नार्हन्ति षोडशीम् ॥३५॥

आसमाप्तमिदं स्तोत्रं पुण्यं गन्धर्वभाषितम् ।
अनौपम्यं मनोहारि शिवमीश्वरवर्णनम् ॥३६॥

महेशान्नापरो देवो महिम्नो नापरा स्तुतिः ।
अघोरान्नापरो मन्त्रो नास्ति तत्त्वं गुरोः परम् ॥३७॥

कुसुमदशननामा सर्वगन्धर्वराजः
शशिधरवरमौलेर्देवदेवस्य दासः ।
स खलु निजमहिम्नो भ्रष्ट एवास्य रोषात्
स्तवनमिदमकार्षीद्दिव्यदिव्यं महिम्नः ॥३८॥
सुरवरमुनिपूज्यं स्वर्गमोक्षैकहेतुं
पठति यदि मनुष्यः प्राञ्जलिर्नान्यचेताः ।
व्रजति शिवसमीपं किन्नरैः स्तूयमानः
स्तवनमिदममोघं पुष्पदन्तप्रणीतम् ॥३९॥
श्रीपुष्पदन्तमुखपङ्कजनिर्गतेन
स्तोत्रेण किल्बिषहरेण हरप्रियेण ।
कण्ठस्थितेन पठितेन समाहितेन
सुप्रीणितो भवति भूतपतिर्महेशः ॥४०॥
इत्येषा वाङ्मयी पूजा श्रीमच्छङ्करपादयोः ।
अर्पिता तेन देवेशः प्रीयतां मे सदाशिवः ॥४१॥
यदक्षरपदभ्रष्टं मात्राहीनञ्च यद्भवेत् ।
तत्सर्वं क्षम्यतां देव प्रसीद परमेश्वर ॥४२॥
इति श्रीपुष्पदन्ताचार्य्यविरचितं शिवमहिम्नः स्तोत्रं

सम्पूर्णम् ।

अथ शिव-पञ्चाक्षर-स्तोत्रं

ॐ नागेन्द्रहाराय त्रिलोचनाय भस्माङ्गरागाय महेश्वराय ।
दिव्याय देवाय दिगम्बराय तस्मै नकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥१॥
मन्दाकिनीसलिलचन्दनचर्चिताय नन्दीश्वरप्रमथनाथमहेश्वराय ।
मन्दारपुष्पबहुपुष्पसुपूजिताय तस्मै मकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥२॥
शिवाय गौरीवदनाब्जवृन्दसूर्य्याय दक्षाध्वरनाशकाय ।
श्रीनीलकण्ठाय वृषध्वजाय तस्मै शिकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥३॥

वशिष्ठकुम्भोद्भवगौतमाय मुनीन्द्रवन्द्याय गिरीश्वराय ।
श्रीनीलकण्ठाय वृषध्वजाय तस्मै वकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥४॥
यज्ञस्वरूपाय जटाधराय पिनाकहस्ताय सनातनाय ।
दिव्याय शुद्धाय निरञ्जनाय तस्मै यकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥५॥
पञ्चाक्षरमिदं स्तोत्रं यः पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ ।
शिवलोकमवाप्नोति शिवेन सह मोदते ।

इति शिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णम्

अथ शिवनामावलिः

ॐ महादेव शिव शङ्कर शम्भो उमाकान्त हर त्रिपुरारे
मृत्युञ्जय वृषभध्वज शूलिन् गङ्गाधर मृड मदनारे ॥
हर शिव शङ्कर गौरीशं वन्दे गङ्गाधरमीशं
रुद्र पशुपतिमीशानं कलये काशीपुरिनाथम् ॥१॥
जय शम्भो जय शम्भो शिव गौरीशङ्कर जय शम्भो ॥
जय शम्भो जय शम्भो शिव गौरीशङ्कर जय शम्भो ॥२॥
ॐ नमः पार्वतीपते हर ।

वेदसार-शिवस्तवः

पशूनां पतिं पापनाशं परेशं
गजेन्द्रस्यकृत्तिं वसानं वरेण्यम् ।
जटाजूट मध्ये स्फुरन्दाङ्गवारिं
महादेवमेकं स्मरामिस्मरारिम् ॥१॥
महेशं सुरेशं सुरारातिनाश
विभुं विश्वनाथं विभूत्यङ्गभूशम् ।
विरूपाक्ष-मिन्दुर्कवह्नि-त्रिनेत्रं
सदानन्दमीडे प्रभुं पञ्चवक्त्रम् ॥२॥
गिरीशं गणेशं गले नीलवर्णं

गवेन्द्राधिरूढं गुणातीतरूपम् ।
भवं भास्वरं भस्मना भूषिताङ्गं
भवानीकलत्रं भजे पञ्चवक्त्रम् ॥३॥
शिवाकान्त शम्भो शशाङ्कार्धमौले
महेशान शूलिन् जटाजूटधारिन् ।
त्वमेको जगद्व्यापको विश्वरूप
प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो पूर्णरूप ॥४॥
परात्मानमेकं जगद्बीजमाद्यं
निरीहं निराकारमोंकारवेद्यम् ।
यतोजायते पाल्यते येन विश्वं
तमीशं भजेलीयते यत्र विश्वम् ॥५॥
न भूमिर्न चापो न वह्निर्न वायुर्न—
चाकाश-मास्ते न तन्द्रा न निद्रा ।
न ग्रीष्मो न शीतं न देशो न वेषो
न यस्यास्ति मूर्तिस्त्रिमूर्तिं तमीडे ॥६॥
अजं शाश्वतं कारणं कारणानां
शिवं केवलं भासकं भासकानाम् ।
तुरीयं तमः पारमाद्यन्तहीनं
प्रपद्ये परं पावनं द्वैतहीनम् ॥७॥
नमस्ते नमस्ते विभो विश्वमूर्ते
नमस्ते नमस्ते चिदानन्दमूर्ते ।
नमस्ते नमस्ते तपोयोगगम्य
नमस्ते नमस्ते श्रुतिज्ञानगम्य ॥८॥
प्रभो शूलपाणे विभो विश्वनाथ
महादेव शम्भो महेश त्रिनेत्र ।
शिवाकान्त शान्तस्मरारे पुरारे
त्वदन्यो वरेण्यो न मान्यो न गण्यः ॥९॥

शम्भो महेश करुणामय शूलपाणे
गौरीपते पशुपते पशुपाशनाशिन् ।
काशीपते करुणया जगदेतदेकः
त्वं हंसि पासि विदधासि महेश्वरोऽसि ॥१०॥

त्वत्तो जगद्भवति देव भव स्मरारे
त्वय्येव तिष्ठति जगन्मृड विश्वनाथ ।
त्वय्येव गच्छति लयं जगदेतदीश
लिंगात्मकं हर चराचर विश्वरूपिन् ॥११॥

इति श्रीमच्छंकराचार्य विरचितं
वेद-सार शिवस्तोत्रं संपूर्णम् ।

आरती—जै जगदीश हरे

ॐ जै जगदीश हरे स्वामी जै जगदीश हरे ।
भक्त जनों के संकट छिन में दूर करे ॥ ॐ जै ॥१॥
जो ध्यावे फल पावे दुख विनशे मन का ।
सुख सम्पति घर आवे कष्ट मिटे तन का ॥ ॐ जै ॥२॥
मात पिता तुम मेरे शरण पड़ूं किस की ।
तुम बिन और न दूजा आश करूं किस की ॥ ॐ जै ॥३॥
तुम पूर्ण परमात्मा तुम अन्तरयामी ।
परब्रह्म परमेश्वर तुम सब के स्वामी ॥ ॐ जै ॥४॥
तुम करुणा के सागर तुम पालन करता ।
मैं मूरख खल कामी कृपा करो भरता ॥ ॐ जै ॥५॥
तुम हो एक अगोचर सब के प्राण पति ।
किस विध मिलूं दया में तुम को मैं कुमती ॥ ॐ जै ॥६॥
दीन बन्धु दुख हरता ठाकुर तुम मेरे ।
अपने हाथ उठाओ द्वार पड़े तेरे ॥ ॐ जै ॥७॥

विषय विकार मिटाओ पाप हरो देवा ।
श्रद्धा भक्ति बढ़ाओ सन्तन की सेवा ॥ ॐ जै ॥८॥

श्री गंगाजी की आरती

ॐ जय गंगे माता, श्री जय गंगे माता ।
जो नर तुम को ध्याता । जो नर तुम को ध्याता
मन वांछित फल पाता ॥ ॐ जै ॥१॥
चन्द्र सी ज्योति तुम्हारी जल निर्मल आता ।
शरण पड़े जो तेरी । शरण पड़े जो तेरी ।
सो नर तर जाता ॥ ॐ जै ॥२॥
पुत्र सगर के तारे सब जग को ज्ञाता ।
कृपा दृष्टि तुम्हारी । कृपा दृष्टि तुम्हारी ।
त्रिभुवन सुख दाता ॥ ॐ जै ॥३॥
एक ही बार जो तेरी शरणागत आता ।
जम की त्रास मिटा कर । जम की त्रास मिटा कर ।
परम गति पाता ॥ ॐ जै ॥४॥
आरती माता तुम्हारी जो जन नित गाता ।
अर्जुन वही सहज में । अर्जुन वही सहज में ।
मुक्ति को पाता ॥ ॐ जै ॥५॥

श्रीगुरू गीता प्रारम्भः

मंगलाचरणं शिष्टाचारद्वै फलदर्शनात् ।
मंगलं भगवान् विष्णुर्मंगलं गरुडध्वजः ॥
मंगलं पुंडरीकाक्षो मंगलायतनं हरिः ॥१॥
सच्चिदानन्दकंदाय जगदंकुरहेतवे ।
सदोदिताय पूर्णाय नमोऽनंताय विष्णवे ॥२॥
सत्यानन्दस्वरूपाय बोधैकसुख कारिणे ।
नमो वेदांतवेद्याय गुरवे बुद्धिसाक्षिणे ॥३॥

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुस्साक्षात् परंब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥४॥
अज्ञानतिमिरांधस्य ज्ञानांजनशलाकया ।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥५॥
स्थावरं जंगमं व्याप्तं यत् किंचित्सचराचरम् ।
त्वंपदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥६॥
अखंडमण्डलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरम् ।
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥७॥
चिन्मयव्यापितं सर्वं त्रैलोक्यं सचराचरम् ।
अस्तित्वं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥८॥
चैतन्यं शाश्वतं शान्तं व्योमातीतं निरंजनम् ।
नादबिन्दु कलातीतं तस्मैं श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥९॥
यत्सत्वेन जगत् सत्यं यत् प्रकाशेन भाति यत् ।
यदानन्देन नन्दंति तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥१०॥
न गुरोरधिक तत्त्वं न गुरोरधिकं तपः ।
न गुरोरधिकं ज्ञानं तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥११॥
ध्यानमूलं गुरो मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरो पदम् ।
मंत्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्ष मूलं गुरो कृपा ॥१२॥
गुरुपादोदकं पानं गुरोरुच्छिष्टभोजनम् ।
गुरुमूर्तेस्सदा ध्यानं गुरोर्नाम सदा जपः ॥१३॥
अज्ञानमूलहरणं जन्मकर्मनिवारणम् ।
ज्ञान वैराग्य सिद्ध्यर्थं गुरोः पादोदकं पिबेत् ॥१४॥
काशीक्षेत्रं निवासश्च जाह्नवी चरणोदकम् ।
गुरु विश्वेश्वरः साक्षात् तारकं ब्रह्म निश्चयम् ॥१५॥
आसनं शयनं यस्त्रं वाहनं भूषणादिकम् ।
साधकेन प्रदातव्यं गुरुसंतोषकारणम् ॥१६॥

शरीरमिन्द्रियं प्राणानथहृज्ज्ञान ज्ञान्धकान् ।
आत्मदारादिकं सर्वं सद्गुरुभ्यो निवेदयेत् ॥१७॥
गुरुरेको जगत् सर्वं ब्रह्म विष्णु शिवात्मकम् ।
गुरोः पर तरं नास्ति तस्मात् संपूजयेद् गुरुम् ॥१८॥
कर्मणा मनसा वाचा सर्वदाऽऽराधयेद् गुरुम् ।
दीर्घं दंडं नमस्कृत्य निर्लज्जो गुरुसन्निधौ ॥१९॥
सप्तसागरपर्यंतं तीर्थस्नानफलं यथा ।
गुरुपादोदबिन्दोश्च सहस्रांशेन तत्फलं ॥२०॥
शिवे रुष्टे गुरुस्त्राता गुरौ रुष्टे न कश्चन ।
ज्ञात्वा कुलगुरुं सम्यक् गुरुमेव समाश्रयेत् ॥२१॥
श्रीनाथचरण द्वंद्वं यस्यां दिशि विराजते ।
तस्यां दिशि नमस्कुर्याद्भक्त्या प्रतिदिनं प्रिये ॥२२॥
ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञान मूर्तिम् ।
द्वंद्वातीतंगगन सदृशंतत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं ।
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥२३॥
आनन्दमानन्दकरं प्रसन्नं ज्ञानस्वरूपं निजभाव युक्तम् ।
योगीन्द्रमीड्यं भवरोगवैद्यं श्रीमद्गुरुं नित्यमहं
नमामि ॥२४॥
हृदंबुजे कर्णिकमध्यसंस्थं सिंहासनेसंस्थित
दिव्यमूर्तिम् ।
ध्यायेद् गुरुं चन्द्रकलाप्रकाशं सचित् सुखाभीष्टकरं
दधानम् ॥२५॥
नित्यं शुद्धं निराभासं निराकारं निरञ्जनम् ।
नित्यबोधं चिदानन्दं गुरुं ब्रह्म नमाम्यहम् ॥२६॥
गुरु तुंकृत्य हुं कृत्य गुरुसन्निध्यभाषणः ।
अरण्ये निर्जले देशे संभवेद् ब्रह्मराक्षसः ॥२७॥

नित्यं ब्रह्म निराकारं निर्गुणं बोधयेत् परम् ।
भावयन् ब्रह्म भावं च दीपो दीपांतरं यथा ॥२८॥
द्वंद्वैर्हिं सच्चिदानन्दं भावातीतं जगद्गुरुम् ।
नित्यं पूर्णं निराकारं निर्गुणं स्वात्मसंस्थितम् ॥२९॥
गुरुः शिवो गुरुर्देवो गुरुर्बन्धु शरीरिणाम् ।
गुरुरात्म गुरुर्जीवो गुरोरन्यन्न विद्यते ॥३०॥
ज्ञानहीनो गुरुस्त्याज्यो मिथ्यावादी विडंबकः ।
स्वविश्रांतिं न जानाति पर शांतिं करोति किम् ॥३१॥
पाखंडिनः पापरता नास्तिका भेदबुद्धयः ।
स्त्रीलंपटा दुराचाराः कृतघ्ना बक वृत्तयः ॥३२॥
निरस्तसर्वं संदेहमेकीकृत्य सुदर्शनम् ।
रहस्यं यो दर्शयति भजामि गुरुमीश्वरम् ॥३३॥
गुरवोबहवसंति शिष्यवृत्यपहारका ।
तमेकं दुर्लभं मन्ये शिष्य हृत्तापहारकम् ॥३४॥
चातुर्यवान् विवेकी च अध्यात्मज्ञानवाञ्छुचिः ।
मानंस निर्मलं यस्य गुरुत्वं तस्य शोभते ॥३५॥
गुरवो निर्मलाः शान्ताः साधवो मित भाषिणः ।
कामक्रोधविनिर्मुक्ताः सदाचाराः जितेन्द्रयः ॥३६॥
एकाक्षरप्रदातारं यो गुरुनैव मन्यते ।
शुनां योनि शतं गत्वा चण्डालेष्वपिजायते ॥३७॥
गुरुत्यागाद्भवेन्मृत्युर्मंत्रत्यागाद्दरिद्रता ।
गुरुमंत्रपरित्यागी रौरवं नरकं व्रजेत् ॥३८॥
सप्तकोटि महा मंत्राश्चित्तविभ्रमकारकाः ।
एका एव महामंत्रो गुरुरित्यक्षरद्वयम् ॥३९॥
गुकारश्चांधकारःस्य रुकारस्तन्निरोधकृत् ।
अन्धकारविनाशित्वाद् गुरुरित्यभिधीयते ॥४०॥

अद्वाक्षुमुक्ति वाक्येषु वेदांतज्ञान लिप्सया ।
उपायनकरो भूत्वा गुरुं ब्रह्मविदं व्रजेत् ॥४१॥
श्रवणं तु गुरो पूर्वं मननं तदनन्तरम् ।
निदिध्यासनमित्येतत् पूर्णबोधस्य कारम् ॥४२॥
यथा यथा जात्यन्धस्य रूपज्ञानं न विद्यते ।
तथा गुरूपदेशेन विना कल्पकोटिभिस्तत्त्वज्ञानं न
विद्यते ॥४३॥
यदा सद्गुरुकटाक्षो भवति तदा भगवत् कथा
श्रवणध्यानादौ श्रद्धा जायते ।
शान्तो दांतोऽतिविरक्तः सुश्रद्ध. गुरुभक्तस्तपो-
निष्ठः ॥४४॥
शिष्यो ब्रह्मनिष्ठं गुरुमासाद्य प्रदक्षिणापूर्वक
दण्डवत् ।
प्रणम्य प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा विनयेनोपसङ्गम्य भगवन् ।
गुरोमे परम तऽवरहस्यं विवधं वक्तव्यमि ॥४५॥
सर्वज्ञ सर्ववेदं शान्तं सर्वेषां हृदये स्थितम् ।
सुसंवेद्यं गुरुमता सुदुर्बोधमचेतसाम् ॥४६॥
दिव्यज्ञानोपदेष्टारं देशिकं परमश्वरम् ।
पूजयेत्परया भक्त्या तस्य ज्ञानफलं भवेत् ॥४७॥
यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ।
तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥४८॥
कर्णधारं गुरुं प्राप्य तद्वाक्यं प्लववदृढम् ।
अभ्यास वासना शक्त्या तरन्ति भवसागरम्॥४९॥
दुर्लभो विषयत्यागो दुर्लभं तत्त्वदर्शनम् ।
दुर्लभा सहजावस्था सद्गुरोः करुणां विना ॥५०॥
सर्वपापप्रशमनं धर्मकामार्थमोक्षदम् ।
यं यं चिन्तयते कामं तं तं प्राप्नोति निश्चितम् ॥५१॥

शुचिभूता ज्ञान वंतो गुरुगीतां जपन्ति ये ।
तेषांदर्शन संस्पर्शात् पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥५२॥
इति श्रीगुरुगीता सार समाप्तं

॥ अथ श्रीगुर्वष्टकं स्तोत्रम् ॥

शरीरं सुरूपं तथा वा कलत्रं
यशश्चारु चित्रं धनं मेरुतुल्यम् ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥१॥

कलत्रं धनं पुत्रपौत्रादि सर्वं
गृहं बान्धवाः सर्वमेतद्धि जातम् ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नम्-
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥२॥

षडंगादिवेदा मुखे शास्त्रविद्या
कवित्वादि गद्यं सुपद्यं करोति ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं-
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥३॥

विदेशेषु मान्यः स्वदेशेषु धन्यः
सदाचारवृत्तेषुमत्तो न चान्यः
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं-
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥४॥

क्षमामण्डले भूपभूपालवृन्दैः
सदा सेवितं यस्य पादारविन्दं ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥५॥

यशो मे गतं दिक्षु दानप्रतापात् ।
जगद्वस्तु सर्वं करे यत्प्रसादात् ।

गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥६॥
न भोगे न योगे न वा वाजिराजौ
न कान्तासुखे नैव वित्तेषु चित्तम् ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं-
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥७॥
अरण्ये न वा स्वस्य गेहे न कार्ये-
न देहे मनो वर्तते मेऽत्रनध्ये ।
गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे मनश्चेन्न लग्नं-
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥८॥
गुरोरष्टकं यः पठेत्पुण्यदेही
यतिर्भूपतिर्ब्रह्मचारी च गेही ।
लभेद्वाञ्छितार्थं पदं ब्रह्म संज्ञं-
गुरोरुक्तवाक्ये मनो यस्य लग्नम् ॥९॥

इति श्रीमत्परमहंस परिव्राजकाचार्य श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्य

विरचितं श्रीगुरोरष्टकं

॥ समाप्तम् ॥

ॐ गुरुः ॐ

BOOKS BY SRI SWAMI SIVANADA AND WHAT ASPIRANTS SAY...

Your books are of great value, give vivid way for better life, act like a soothing balm and inspire for nobler deeds in this complex world. I have very high respect for you and greatly admire your teachings and inspiring passages.

Sri Ramnath Kapoor, Amritsar.

The Prasad of Lord Viswanath is given to my mother. She has improved considerably. I hope with thy blessing she will be alright soon.

Prof. Sri R. N. Nathani, Kandiaro.
B.Sc., Principal

My humble pranams to Swamiji. May he be spared long to do good to humanity and carry out the mission of the Lord. The teeming millions of India are steeped in ignorance and need to be aroused. Supermen like Swamiji Maharaj alone are capable of doing this arduous task. India needs more and more of these high souls. My hearty salutations to revered Swamiji again.

Sri S. T. Nanda, Deolali

I have continuously been thinking of you as I needed a great spiritual help these last months. I went through a great upheaval both physically and mentally and I had to fight very hard with myself. Your beautiful and inspiring letters were such a great help to me, and they always came just when I most needed them.

The noisy atmosphere of Bombay was a great change for me after my peaceful life in Mussorie and when acute pain used to come. mixed with this atmosphere I used to get a big mental depression. I was only saved by feeling your Divine Presence always helping and guiding me towards the right divine goal.

I pray to the Lord Almighty to come to help me in doing this. The children are simply delighted with your photo and I was really so happy to have it. It is naturally through your Divine thoughts and grace that I have resisted and am endeavouring to conquer these bad thoughts. May your good thoughts with the Divine Grace be always with me.

Sri Lila Samash, Bombay.

It is through your divine teachings that you lift me up and all other countless number of helpless suppliants showing as all. the way to find the Self.

Mr. S. S. Samash, Bombay.

It was a most pleasant surprise when I come across for the first time your book "Ananda Lahari."

That was a definite turning point in my life. Your commentary stirred in me sublime thoughts and made me go through more of your books. About a dozen of them I have read so far. Of these 'Practice of Yoga' in two volumes have become my inseparable companions. They are a source of great inspiration and I could not resist the

urge to start Sadhana.

Sri T. N. Siva, Sea command.

'Light Fountain' is excellent as a literary piece and has done full justice to the subject. It is an analytical and critical study of the life and philosophy of a great Karma Yogin and Saint. The author deserves the gratitude of all admirers of Sri Swamiji for having brought out a masterpiece in biographical study.

Sri Dwarakanath Jhingan, M. A. L. L. B.
Delhi.

I do not know how I should write to express my indebtedness for the guidance, inspiration, encouragement, grace, Kripa, blessing and what not that I have been getting from you. Had it not been for your soothing, comforting and elevating letters I would have long back collapsed.

Sri B. B. Desai, Bahrein.

I have gone through most of your publications and am delighted to read and I have so much gained about spirituality that I would not have gained so much had I gone to Mahatmas and saints for a hundred years.

Respected Swamiji! I might be wrong, I am under the impression that the saints and Mahatmas do not disclose as much secrets of spirituality as your goodself has done and voluntarily saying that I am in search of good aspirants.

Sri Sandyar Singh, Dharuhera.

I am especially thankful to Sivanandaji Ma-

haraj, the illustrious saint of Rikhikesh. The saint has a very enormous following in India and as writer of books dealing with almost all aspects of human life, he has endeared himself to one and all. We are sure the students will find in him a genius to inspire them to nobler thoughts and higher spiritual values in the practical sphere of life.

Prof. Lekraj Ailwadi, M. A., Peshawar.

My father has been a silent devotee of yours all these years. He has never met you in person but during his last illness a year ago, he had the wonderful satisfaction of seeing you and paying his respects to you in his meditation.

Sri Santilal M. Jivrajani, Karachi.

Swami Sivanandaji needs no introduction to readers of books on spiritual topics. Yoga is his special subject. His clear and impressive writings go home to both young and old.

The Daily Herald, Lahore.

As a student of the 'Yoga Darshana' for pretty long time I welcome the books written in such a simple, elegant and beautiful style with a vividness of expression, lucidity and a mastery of details. No ordinary person can undertake this kind of work, but only persons like the Swamiji who have renounced everything, and have become great can do this. I pay my humble tribute of homage to the sage. I am sure the blessings of this great Yogi will lead us on in true devotional life with increased love of the

Divine and lead on to the Eternal Light, in the face of which all untrue things disappear.

The books are, in my view, priceless gems and a study of the same will surely elevate one and make him soar in the higher regions of life.

Sri C. V. Vijayaraghavachariar, M.A.,
Bombay.

'Practice of Bhakti Yoga' is an excellent handbook from the pen of one who has practical experience of the subject. In going through the chapters one will find ample evidence of the author's mastery over details of Bhakti Marga. His views are catholic. To him 'Bhakti is not antagonistic to Gyana'. Both will lead to the same goal. The book will be an useful companion to those who wish to realise God through the path of devotion.

'Modern Review,' Calcutta.

In "Dialogues from Upanishads" the Himalayan Yogi Sivanandji gives a running commentary on the more important of the Upanishads such as Kathopanishad, Taittireya Upanishad, Chandogya Upanishad, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad etc. Though the subject itself provides a serious study for the student of philosophy, the present volume should prove more popullar because of the Swami's easy rendering.

'The Illustrated Weekly of India', Bombay.

I had to face a great calamity in the month of September. One of my dear relations died. It was a shock to the whole family. But your

kind teachings gave me strenghth to face the misfortune cheerfully. I was the only person in the whole family who could maintain the balance of mind. It is all, my Gurudev, due to the spiritual guidance received from you.

Sri Miss Rampiyari Shastri, M. A., B. T.,
Kotah.

I am feeling a great change in me after I had your Darshan. I think I am lucky. I am quite hopeful now. I am reading your book 'Light, Power and Wisdom'. Some other people come to hear and I read it to them at night. While reading the page 46 at 9 p m. on 23/11/44 we all felt a sort of thrill and silence prevailed. Pt. Kashmirilal and L. Ramnath asked me to read it again and again. Your Drishti has brought a great change in me.

Sri Dharmchand Tiwari, Balachour.

We the undersigned recently read your book "Sure ways for Succes in life and God-realisation." We found the book exceedingly instructive and inspiring.

Sri Anant T. Pandya,
"Jyotindla M. Bhatt, Ahmedabad.

I have studied most of the books written by the Swamiji and I have found them very useful in improving one morally and mentally.

Sri P. Tuljaram Rao, Madras.

Your book 'Sthree Dharma' is a valuable book.

Srimati Kumari K. Sabarwal, M.A. Lahore.

Your kind instructions have placed me on the right track. Now I want to breathe in the atmosphere close by your Holiness.

Sri C. P. Sarwaya, Chanda, C. P.

You remember that I went through a period of terrible depresseon and distraction of mind. You encouraged me often, out of your infinite love and often you mildly rebuked me. Well your letters during those days are one of the sweet ties between this humble soul and you.

Sri Mahendra Pratap, M.A., Patna.

Every Sadhaka is grateful to you for the instructions in your book Japa Yoga. I have been reading it for the 2nd time. It is a regular guide to me.

Sri Tej Bhan Malik, B.A., LL.B.
Montgomery.

I read your book 'Mind, Its mysteries and control', and the Magazine "Divine Life" along with some of the booklets and was deeply influenced by them.

Sri Gur Bux Singh, Kaimahra.

Your letters are inspiring and give me peace of mind.

Sri R. N. Desai, Bombay.

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WHAT THE HEARERS SAY ?

I have just received your beautiful and inspiring records. We passed a most lovely time this morning listenning to them and we enjoyed every one of them The song of '18 Ities' is very good and is really a very catching tune. The song of Siva Lorrie is beautifully combined. Rose Farida simply loved it. "The song of Real Sadhana" is also most lovely and melodious. One really feels uplifted to hear it. When I go to America I shall take all your lovely records with me and try to let others benefit as I have attained by hearing them.

Sri Lilian Rose Farida, Bombay.

I have received your new set of gramophone records. Thy sweet Sankirtan and Sangeeta Ramayana have got a gushing current of divine melody. The Sangita Ramayana in three records tells us the whole story of the greatest epic in short in thy sweet voice. Thy Sangeeta Ramayana and all records are bestowing incalculable benefit on the general public.

Sri Dr. H. J. Chatrapathi, M. B. B. S.
Junagad.

My wife, children and myself enjoy the divine music of the records every morning.

Sri M. M. Pillai, B. A. I. E. E. (Eng.)
Calcutta.

APPENDIX

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

PRINCIPLES

The Divine Life Society is an all embracing and all-inclusive institution; its objects, ideals and aims are broad and universal. It does not contradict any of the principles or tenets of any cult or religion. It includes all fundamental principles of all sects, cults and religions. There are no pet dogmas or sectarian tenets. It leads people in the spiritual path. It enables people to easily lead a divine life while living in the busy world.

The Society lays great stress on the practical side of Sadhana. It expounds in a rational and scientific manner the Yoga of synthesis.

The Society expounds that any man can attain the goal of life in his own station of life through a systematic course of daily spiritual practices. It prescribes a method of combination of all important items of Yoga Sadhana.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

1. To disseminate spiritual knowledge :—
   (*a*) By the publication and FREE distribution of books, pamphlets and magazines dealing with ancient Hindu philosophy, religion and medicine.
   (*b*) By propagating Hari Nam and by holding and arranging Hari Sankirtans.

(*c*) By spreading the teachings of ancient Rishis, sages, saints, prophets and Yogis.

(*d*) By establishing training centres or societies for :—

(i) the physical regeneration of youths through Hatha Yoga, Brahmacharya, Ashtanga Yoga, etc.

(ii) developing Viswa Prem (Universal Brotherhood).

(iii) rendering selfless service to the sick, the poor and Mahatmas and Bhaktas.

(iv) holding Kathas, Sat-sang and discourses.

(v) organising Spiritual Conferences at important places of the province and holding annual celebrations.

(vi) opening Libraries with religious books and periodicals for the benefit of the public.

2. To help deserving students by granting them scholarships for the prosecution of religious and spiritual training.

3. To establish a dispensary or any other like institution for providing free medical aid and free medicines for the poor especially and the public in general.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, RIKHIKESH

The Divine Life Society was established by H. H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in

1936 for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge far and wide and to help all aspirants in a practical manner. It has many branches in India and abroad.

ACTIVITIES

Spiritual instructions are imparted through correspondence in all branchas of *Yoga*. Students are trained at 'Ananda-Kutir' in *Yoga*, *Bhakti* and *Vedanta*. Regular classes on these different branches are held, apart from common prayers and meditation in the mornings, and *Kirtan* and *Bhajan* in the evenings.

The 'Divine Life Sadhana' is held for a week in X'mas and in the Easter Holidays. Members from all parts of India join the *Sadhana*. A large number of *Sadhus*, *Sannyasins*, *Mahatmas* and poor are fed on these occasions.

The Charitable Dispensary at 'Ananda Kutir' gives medical aid to the poor, the public and the pilgrims.

An *Annakshetra* is conducted in order to feed Mahatmas, the pilgrims and the poor.

Many leaflets and booklets are printed and distributed free by the Society and its branches. Anyone can bring out a reprint of these small booklets and leaflets and distribute the same free. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge is in the highest form of *Yajna*.

A small Primary School is being conducted by the Society for the teaching of the three 'R's to the children of the locality.

Correspondence on intricate problems in the spiritual path is received and replies are given by *Swamiji Maharaj.*

The 'Divine Life' is the monthly organ of the Society and is devoted to articles on *Yoga*, *Bhakti*, *Vedanta*, comparative religions, etc. It contains illuminating articles. poems, songs. *Kirtans*, lectures etc. of Swami Sivananda. (Annual subscription is Rs. 3/- Inland, and Sh. 7 Foreign).

Bhagawad Gita, (original text, with word by word meaning, notes and commentary) by Swami Sivanandaji is supplied at *actual cost of production.*

On the 8th of September every year, the Birthday of the Founder is celebrated at the headquarters and at all branches of the Society. Many *Mahatmas* and poor people are liberally fed on this occasion.

Voluntary donations are received from the public to disseminate the aims and objects of the Society and a statement of income and expenditure, duly audited, is given in the Annual Report.

All voluntary donation may kindly be addressed to :—

The Secretary,

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,

'Ananda Kutir' P.O.

RIKHIKESH, (Himalayas),

MEMBERSHIP FORM

of

The Divine Life Society, Rikhikesh

(Established in 1936)

The Secretary,

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,

RIKHIKESH (Himalayas)

I will try my best to lead a pure and virtuous life devoted to Truth, **Wisdom** and **Yoga** and persevere to attain the goal of life, *viz.*, Eternal Bliss and immortality. Kindly enlist me as a member and send me the membership card.

I am sending Re. 1/-, the annual membership fee for the year 194 .

Signature.....

Name (block letters).....

Date..... Address.....

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