

Sri Rudra Suktam



SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA

Sri Rudra Suktam

Commentary by
Swami Tejomayananda

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust

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Transliteration and Pronunciation Guide

In this book, Devanagari characters are transliterated according to the scheme adopted by the International Congress of Orientalists at Athens in 1912. In it one fixed pronunciation value is given to each letter, fq.w. x and z are not called to use.

Devanagari	Translit-eration	Sounds Like	Devanagari	Translit-eration	Sounds Like
अ	a	son	ट	ṭa	ṭank
आ	ā	fāther	ठ	ṭha	-
इ	i	differēnt	ड	ḍa	-
ई	ī	feēl	ढ	ḍha	adḥesive*
उ	u	full	ण	ṇa	under
ऊ	ū	boōt	त	ta	ṭabla
ऋ	ṛ	rhythm	थ	tha	ṭhumb
ॠ	ṝ	**	द	da	ṭhis
ऌँ	!̄	**	ध	dha	Gandḥi
ए	e	evade	न	na	nūse
ऐ	ai	delight	प	pa	pēn
ओ	o	cōre	फ	pha	pḥantom*
औ	au	nōw	ब	ba	bōil
क	ka	cālm	भ	bha	abḥor
ख	kha	kḥan	म	ma	mīnd
ग	ga	gate	य	ya	yēs

घ	gha	gh <u>o</u> st	र	ra	ri <u>g</u> ht
ङ	ṅa	aṅ <u>k</u> le*	ल	la	l <u>o</u> ve
च	ca	ch <u>u</u> ckle	व	va	v <u>er</u> y
छ	cha	wit <u>ch</u>	श	śa	sh <u>u</u> t
ज	ja	j <u>u</u> stice	ष	sa	s <u>u</u> gar
झ	jha	j <u>h</u> ansi	स	sa	s <u>i</u> mple
ञ	ña	ban <u>y</u> an	ह	ha	h <u>a</u> ppy
ं	m̐	im <u>p</u> rovis	क्ष	kṣ	ac <u>t</u> ion
ः	ḥ	-	त्र	tr	th <u>r</u> ee
S	'	A silent 'a'	ज्ञ	jñ	gn <u>o</u> sis

*These letters don't have an exact English equivalent. An approximation is given here.

**These sounds cannot be approximated in English words.

Preface

Listening to Vedic chanting of the Sūktams (hymns) with the right intonations (svaras) is an enchanting experience. Chanting them is even more so. Listening and chanting with meaning is both inspiring and elevating. Reflecting and meditating on their meaning is deeply absorbing and leads to realization of the supreme Truth that they convey.

Vedic chanting is a part of the daily morning routine in all Chinmaya Mission Vedānta Courses at Sandeepanis (Gurukulas). The Rishi Putras (students) learn, among other Vedic hymns, the famous Puruṣa Sūktam and Sri Rudra Sūktam. Puja Gurudev's commentary and my notes on the Puruṣa Sūktam is already in print. In the present Vedānta Course (2021-2023) at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai, I decided to study, reflect and teach the beautiful meaning of Śrī Rudra Sūktam to the Rishi Putras, who had already learnt to chant it. It was truly a revealing and inspiring experience for me. May it also be so for all of you.

I well appreciate the hard and patient labour of love and dedication that goes into the making of a book, right from the recording of my talks, transcribing, editing, re-editing, repeated proof-reading, pagination, designing, financing to the final printing of a book. I sincerely thank all whom I am aware of and unaware of, who worked for bringing out Sri Rudra Sūktam in this beautiful form. A special thanks to Shri Ravi & Smt. Nandini Nene for sponsoring the first print of Sri Rudra Suktam. May the blessing of Rudra Bhagavān and Puja Gurudev be on all of them and their families.

The entire Sri Rudra Sūktam (Namakam and Camakam), along with the meditation verses and nyāsa, etc., with the intonation marks as per the Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda, is given at the end of this book for easy reference and chanting. May we all chant Sri Rudra Sūktam with right intonation and meaning, worship Śrī Rudra with faith and devotion, and study, reflect and meditate to realize our true Self as Śrī Rudra Bhagavān Himself.

Wherever footnotes are given in Sanskrit Devanagari scripts, their English transliterations are given at the end of this book to facilitate the readers.

Swami Tejomayananda

Mahāśivarātri
18th February, 2023
Mumbai 400072

Introduction

The Vedas: Vedas are the realizations of eternal Truths that guide creation, revealed to Sages in their seat of meditation. The entire body of the knowledge enshrined in the Vedas are called mantras, as are individual sentences, verses and sections. Vaidika mantras are, therefore, not man-made (apauruṣeya), and are eternal (nitya). They have remained unchanged in their pristine glory over thousands of years as they were handed down through an unbroken lineage of the teacher and the taught (guru-śiṣya paramparā).

Vaidika Mantras: They are composed in prose, poetry and song and are chanted with particular intonations. According to the science of pronunciation (śikṣā), they should be recited with the correct alphabetic pronunciation (varṇa) and the right accent (svara) (consisting of the elevated (udātta), lower pitched (anudātta) and unaccented intonations (svarita)). They are chanted with the correct time (mātrā) required to pronounce be it short, normal or long and with the right emphasis and effort (balam). There should be uniformity and right conjoining of the letters (santāna).¹ The right chanting should be learnt from an adept teacher. Such recitation has enabled the Vaidika mantras to retain their purity of words and meaning. The mere chanting of the Vaidika mantras has a tremendous effect on the body and mind. However, it is better to say the mantras without intonations than to chant them wrongly.

Vaidika Hymns: The Vedas enshrine hymns to all forms of God like Viṣṇu (Narayana Saktam), Lakṣmi (Sri Sūktam) and even to the deities of Night (Ratri Sūktam) and Fortune (Bhagya Suktam). However, two of the most famous ones are the Puruṣa Sūktam (God as the Cosmic Form) and Sri Rudra Suktam (God as Rudra/Siva). The former is found in all the four Vedas and the latter in the Yajur Veda.

Puruṣa Sūktam and Sri Rudra Sūktam: Sri Kṛṣṇa says, "For one who sees Me (God) in all and all in Me, I am one with him and he is one with Me."² The Puruṣa Sūktam describes the entire world of things and beings as the Cosmic Form of God, the process of creation from God through Yajña and the essential Truth manifested as creation to be realized as the pure Self.³ It is the 'all in one' vision, akin to the Cosmic Form of countless beings shown to Arjuna by Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Gītā Chapter 11 - Viśva-rūpa-darśana Yoga).

Śri Rudra Sūktam describes how to see the entire creation as God. It is the 'one in all' vision akin to the cosmic tour given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna showing His glory everywhere (Gītā Chapter 10 - Vibhūti Yoga).

Hindus worship God through the ritualistic fire worship (homa/havana/yajña) and the sixteen-

¹ वर्णस्वरः । मात्रा बलम् । साम सन्तानः । इत्युक्तश्रीक्षाध्यायः । तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद्-१.२

² यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति । तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ भगवद् गीता-६.३०

³ सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः । सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात्... तस्मात्पञ्चात्सर्वहृत् । ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे . बेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम्... पुरुष सूक्तम्-१-४-७

step ritual worship (sodaśopacāra pūjā). The Puruṣa Sūktam and Sri Rudra Sūktam are employed for both forms of worship. It is said that God as Viṣṇu is fond of decoration (alaṅkāra priya), as the sun-god Sūrya, He is fond of prostrations (namaskāra priya), and as Rudra/Siva, He is fond of the special ritualistic bath (abhiṣeka priya). Hence to please Śiva, abhiṣeka with various materials like sandal paste, ashes, clarified butter and most commonly milk and water is performed with the chanting of Puruṣa Saktam or Śri Rudra Suktam.

Śrī Rudra Sūktam: Śri Rudra Saktam is found in both the Sukla Yajur Veda and the KṛsnaYajur Veda. It is variously called Rudra, Rudrādhyāya, Rudra-praśna and Rudropaniṣad. Since Rudra is worshipped through hundreds of His names, it is also called Satarudrīyam. There are hundreds of commentaries on Śri Rudra Sūktam. The commentary of the famous Sayāṇācārya (the brother of the equally famous Swami Vidyāranya) is noteworthy among them.

Śri Rudra Sūktam has two parts each with eleven sub-section (anuvāka). Eleven symbolizes the eleven Rudras Manyu, Manu, Mahīnasa, Mahāna, Śiva, Rtudvaja, Ugraretā, Bhava, Kāma, Vāmadeva and Dhṛtavrata. Elsewhere the eleven Rudras are given as Aja, Ekapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Tvaṣṭā, Rudra, Hara, Śambhu, Tryambaka, Aparajita, Isāna and Tribhuvana.

A hymn (sūktam) is a praise of God (stuti) with a prayer (prārthana). The first part of the Sri Rudra Sūktam is called Namakam as there is a praise of Rudra with prostrations (namah) to His various forms. The second part is called Camakam as there is a prayer asking for various things (ca me) from God.

The entire world works on give and take (adana and pradana). What can we give to God as everything already belongs to Him? We can only offer prostrations in recognition of His greatness and glory. He, in turn, can bless us with endless tidings all that we ask for, all that is good for us, all that we can never even imagine. Our head again bows down before Him in gratitude when we realize all that we have is already received from Him.

Śrī Rudra Sūktam Upāsanā: Sri Rudra Sūktam can be chanted each day as a daily chant (pārāyaṇa) or can be chanted in ritual fire worship (havan) or worship (pūjā) or during special ritual bath (abhiṣeka). There are many traditions of the employment of Sri Rudra Sūktam. One way is to chant the entire namakam with each anuvāka of the camakam. Another way is given below. One round of chanting of Sri Rudra Sūktam (eleven anuvākas of namakam and camakam) is called 'rūpa'.

11 x 1 (namakam and camakam) = 1 rūpa (1 time)
11 x 1 rūpa = 1 rudrī (11 times)
11 x 1 rudrī = 1 laghu-rudra (121 times)
11 x 1 laghu-rudra = 1 mahā-rudra (1331 times)
11 x 1 mahā-rudra = 1 atirudra (14641 times)

Many priests chant the Sri Rudra Sūktam together as they offer different oblations in the fire in the performance of laghu-rudra, mahā-rudra and atirudra. 'Rūpa' is done by thousands even to this day as a daily spiritual practice Rūpa, rudrī and laghu-rudra are done during special occasions like Śivarātrī, and mahārudra and atirudra are rare, but still performed. In the past, these elaborate rituals were more common and sponsored even by kings. They

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went on conquests (digvijaya yātrā), and after their conquest, as a gratitude to the deities for answering their prayers, they performed these yagnas, the proceeds of which were distributed to all as their benevolence.

Śrī Rudra Sūktam fire worship (homa): The fire-god 'Agni' is most respected and the first to be worshipped. Fire is the first visible element of the five elements-space, air, fire, water and earth. The most ancient scripture of the world, the Rg Veda starts with the invoking of Agni (agnimile purohitam ...). God is everywhere and can be invoked anywhere. We invoke God in the fire with mantras. When we perform a Gayatri homa we chant the Gayatri mantra, and Mr̥tyuñjaya homa is done with the Mr̥tyunjaya mantra. Similarly, while performing a Rudra homa (rudrī, laghurudra, etc.) we consider Agni as Rudra (eṣa agni rudrah) and chant the Śrī Rudra Sūktam. Agni is the cosmic courier who delivers our offering and oblations to whichever deity we invoke in the fire. For example, the offering with the chanting 'indrāya svāhā' goes to Indra.

The scriptures (āgama śāstras) specify in great details the size and shape of the homa kunda, the bricks to be used to make it, the mantras to be used, the offerings and their sequence for the performance of Sri Rudra Sūktam homa, and so on.

Śrī Rudra Sūktam ritual bath (abhiṣeka): The Śiva linga is the most commonly worshipped form of Śiva and is most dear to all Śiva devotees. The abhiṣeka or the ritualistic bath with the chanting of the Sri Rudra Sūktam is usually performed to the Śiva linga.

Who is Rudra? There exists the one infinite Truth one alone, without a second.⁴ That absolute Truth alone with its inherent, immeasurable and inexplicable power, known as māyā, is called God or Íśvara. Its further manifestation as the Total Mind is called Hiranyagarbha or Sūtrātmā and as the Total Gross World is the Virat - the Cosmic Form. Íśvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virāṭ are only names of the manifestations of the absolute Truth (Brahman) in reference to the conditionings of māyā, total subtle world and total gross world respectively. In this sūktam, Brahman and its manifestations as Íśvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virāṭ are called Rudra. As Íśvara/God, He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent (sarvajña, sarvaśaktimān, sarvavyāpī). He is the Lord and the creator, sustainer and destroyer of countless cosmoses (ananta-koṭi-brahmānda-nāyaka, sṛṣṭi-sthiti-samhāra-kāraka). 'With the preponderance of rajo guṇa, Rudra is referred to as the creator of the world Brahmā/Bhava. With the preponderance of tamo guṇa, He is called the destroyer Śiva/Maheśa (Hara), and with the preponderance of sattva guṇa, He is the sustainer of the world Viṣṇu (Mr̥da). Also, He alone is the substratum of the three, the supreme Truth free of all attributes (gunas).⁵ Śiva/God is well known specifically as the destroyer of the universe. He alone manifests as the eleven Rudras.

God as Viṣṇu has many incarnations. So does God as Rudra/Śiva. Unlike Viṣṇu, who incarnates as the son of Devaki and Vasudeva as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and as the son of Kausalyā and

⁴ एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म ।

⁵ बहुलरजसे विश्वोत्पत्तौ भवाय नमो नमः प्रबलतमसे तत्संहारे हराय नमो नमः। जनसुखकृते सत्त्वोद्विक्तौ मृडाय नमो नमः प्रमहसि पदे निस्त्रैगुण्ये शिवाय नमो नमः ॥ शिवमहिम्नः स्तोत्रम्-३०

Daśaratha as Śrī Rāma, Śiva's incarnations are self-born (svayambhū). Śiva Purāṇa relates a story of how amused Śiva was when asked who His parents were at the time of His marriage. He said, "Brahma, the Creator, is my father; Viṣṇu, the Sustainer, is my grandfather; and I myself am the great-grandfather!" Śrī Kṛṣṇa also says, "I myself am the mother, father, provider and grandfather of the world."⁶

One of Rudra/Śiva's most revered incarnation is as the Guru Dakṣiṇāmūrti⁷ and in more recent times as Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya³, the son of Āryāmbā and Śivaguru.⁸

His beautiful dancing form as Naṭarāja represents the five functions of God creation (srṣṭi), sustenance (sthiti), destruction (samhāra), benediction or blessing (anugraha) and punishing or disciplining (nigraha). In whatever form He manifests - the meditating Śiva or the frightening Virabhadra - He is the embodiment of compassion (karuṇāvatāram) and beauty (satyam śivam sundaram). He is easily pleased, easy to worship and quick to respond (āśutoṣa).

The name Rudra: There are many meanings of the name Rudra. People are fearful and cry even at the thought of death. Rudra is one who makes all cry at the time of death and at the time of the great deluge.⁹ He gives us the speech to express ourselves and is therefore called Rudra.¹⁰ All we get in life is the result of what we do. We cry when we get the unwanted and the painful. God is the giver of the result of our actions - even the painful and unpleasant ones; hence, He is called Rudra. But He alone is the one who makes them bearable and even removes them; hence, He is Rudra.¹¹ It is not that we always cry in pain, we even cry when our heart melts in love. Rudra is one who melts the heart of the devotees and makes them cry with love (rodhayati bhaktān). The Gopis cried in separation from God, and Vidura cried as he remembered His glories and greatness. Rudra is also the one who destroys our diseases (rujam drāvayati iti), physical and mental and most importantly the disease of samsāra (bhava roga). Rudra is also called the doctor that cures the disease of samsāra with the medicine of Self-knowledge.¹²

God 'as though' cries when He sees us harm ourselves with wrong thoughts, words and deeds and suffers; hence, He is called Rudra (roditi iti). God is said to have roared at the time of creation and hence is called Rudra.

⁶ पितामहस्य जगतः माता धाता पितामहः। भगवद् गीता-९-१७

⁷ गुरुवे सर्वलोकानां दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः। दक्षिणामूर्ति स्तोत्र ध्यान श्लोक-४

⁸ शङ्करं शङ्कराचार्यम् ।

⁹ संहारकाले प्रजाः संहर्न् रोदयतीति। विष्णुसहस्रनाम शङ्कर भाष्य-११४

¹⁰ रुदं राति ददातीति । विष्णुसहस्रनाम शङ्कर भाष्य-११४

¹¹ रुदुःखं दुःखकारणं वा, द्रावयतीति वा रुद्रः। विष्णुसहस्रनाम शङ्कर भाष्य-११४

¹² भिषजे भवरोगिणाम् । दक्षिणामूर्ति स्तोत्र ध्यान श्लोक-४

Śrī Rudra Sūktam Upāsanā (viniyoga): The Vedas have three main sections:

1. Karma Kāṇḍa, which has mantras regarding the what, how, why, where and when of ritualistic worship.
2. Upāsanā Kāṇḍa, which has mantras regarding worship and meditation.
3. Jñāna Kāṇḍa, which has mantras meant for enquiry and deep contemplation.

Sri Rudra Sūktam is employed for all the three purposes. The former two give specific worldly and other worldly results and also makes the mind pure, subtle and concentrated, which is a preparation for the last section.

Contemplation on the subtle implied meaning of the sūktam leads to the Realization of the Truth.

Sri Rudra Sūktam mantras, like all Veda mantras, can be understood at three levels:

1. Ādhidaivika Worship of Rudra/Śiva as God, His manifestation as various incarnations and the different deities that govern creation.
2. Ādhibhautika - God manifests as this entire creation - be it stone, plant, animal or human. Worship of the world we see around us in terms of lovingly serving others, conservation of nature and living by the values and laws that govern creation and society (following dharma).
3. Adhyatmika God and His manifestation as the deities that govern nature also govern our body, senses, mind and intellect. For example, the eleven Rudras also govern our individual five sense organs of action (hands, legs, speech, procreation and excretion), the five organs of perception (seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling) and the mind (thoughts of volition, determination, memory and ego). With this understanding we invoke and worship Rudra within us and pray to empower ourselves. God is also understood as the indweller and the Self of the seeker.

Grand vision of Śrī Rudra Sūktam: As the vision, so the world appears to us.¹³ Śrī Rudra Sūktam presents before us the vision of a Master who has realized the supreme Truth and sees the entire world as His manifestation. Just as the mother sees even her dirt covered infant as 'my baby', the Master sees everything in the world - the good, bad and the ugly as God's manifestation. Just as the x-ray machine sees what is inside us, the Master sees the divine essence within us. When Sage Aṣṭāvakra entered the court of King Janaka, everyone laughed at his crooked body. Sage Aṣṭāvakra said, "I had heard that the court of King Janaka had great men of wisdom, but I see only cobblers who see skin and flesh and not the Truth within. Are you laughing at the creation or the Creator who made this creation?" Most of us behave with others only based on outer appearances and fail to see the virtues and values of a person, much less their divine nature. The Sri Rudra Sūktam gives us this divine vision.

The Master has the vision of divinity in everything. We can start by seeing God in one thing at a time. In the Śrī Rudra Sūktam there is something to appreciate for everyone. The foody

¹³ यथा दृष्टिः तथा सृष्टिः ।

can worship Him as the Master of food (annānām pataye namaḥ), the forest lover can worship Him in and as the forests and Master of forests (vanānām pataye namaḥ), the business minded as a Master businessman and Master of all businessmen (vāṇijāya pataye namaḥ), the war mongers and the army lovers as the battle cries and commander of all foot soldiers (namaḥ uccairghoṣaya-ākrandayate pattīnām pataye namaḥ).

The Vibhūti Yoga of Gītā shows us God as His extraordinary, wonderful and divine glories among the ordinary things of the world. For example, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'Amongst all the rivers, I am the sacred Ganga, amongst the mountain ranges I am the grand Himālayas, and amongst the birds I am the divine and mighty Garuda the vehicle of Viṣṇu.'¹⁴

Śrī Rudra Sūktam gives us the vision to see God in even the most insignificant and ordinary things, for example, in an atomic particle and in the dust under our feet (namaḥ pāgr̥ṇ savyāya ca rajasyāya ca). He alone is seen and saluted in all the opposites of life, like the old and the young (namo jyeṣṭhāya ca kaniṣṭhāya ca), the first and the last (namaḥ pūrvajāya cāparajāya ca). God manifests as heavenly deities (namaḥ somāya), ordinary householders (grhyāya namaḥ), animals like horses (namo aśvebhyaḥ), as trees (namo vrkṣebhyaḥ) and even in the grain of sand (namaḥ sikatyāya). We can see God in our most ordinary actions like sitting and sleeping (nama āsīnebhyaḥ śayānebhyasca vo namaḥ) and in the phenomenal forces like lightning (vidyutyāya namaḥ). He is seen in holy places (namaḥ tīrthyāya) and in dark caves (gahvareṣṭhāya namaḥ). He can be seen even in the robber that steals and as a master of all robbers (stenānām pataye namaḥ), in the despicable (namo grtsebhyaḥ), the virtuous (nama uganābhyah) and in the divine (namaḥ śivāya).

God is the substratum of the universe of names, forms and qualities. All appear in Him as Him, but He remains free from their limitations. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "All things and beings be they sāttvika (noble), rājasika (dynamic) and tāmasika (inert) come from Me (God). They depend on Me, but I remain untouched by them.'¹⁵ When we too have this grand vision of Truth, we can rid ourselves of all divisive thoughts, likes, dislikes and prejudices and see divinity in all.

Most of us are on the fast, super-fast or bullet trains as we journey through life, missing out on all the interesting sights seen by the traveller in the passenger train which stops at every station and even in between! 'What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare. No time to see the woods we pass, where squirrels hide their nuts in grass' - W. H. Davies. Śrī Rudra Sūktam not only inspires us to pause and care, but see God in all, as we stand and stare.

It is said that we should look before we walk, correct our vision before we interact, be informed before we make opinions or speak and be alert as we move about in the world.'¹⁶

¹⁴ स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी, स्थावराणां हिमालयः, वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम्। भगवद्-गीता-१०.३१,२५,३०

¹⁵ ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ भगवद् गीता-७.१२

¹⁶ दृष्टिपूर्तं न्यसेत् पादम् ।

What better than to look at the world through the crystal clear, elevating and inspiring vision of Sri Rudra Saktam!

Glory of Sri Rudra Sūktam (mahima): The Brahmottara- khanda of Skanda Purāṇa has an interesting story. Once upon a time, more and more people started chanting the Śrī Rudra Sūktam. As a result, there were no new entrants in hell. Brahma then created faithlessness (aśraddhā) and sinful intellect (durmedhā) and hell started refilling!

Glorious Mantras: Every mantra of the Sri Rudra Sūktam is great. However, two of the most famous mantras of the Vedas, especially for the devotees of Śiva are found here. They are the Mṛtyuñjaya Mantra (tryambakam yajāmahe...) and the Pañcākṣara Mantra (namaḥ śivāya). These have been chanted by millions of people, trillions of times, over several millennia.

Glorious Result (phala śruti): The Kaivalya Upaniṣad says, 'One who repeats the Rudrī a hundred times or once daily attains the same purity as gained by the performance of agnihotra (agnipūto bhavati), prāṇāyāma (vāyu-pūto bhavati) and meditation (ātmapūto bhavati), and he is purified from sins due to drinking alcohol (surāpānāt-pūto bhavati), killing a noble person (brahmahatyāḥ pūto bhavati), stealing and due to actions of commission and omission. He attains the refuge of God (Śiva). Therefore, a renunciate (or one renouncing everything), should chant it at all times or once daily. The knowledge gained by its study, dries the ocean of saṃsāra, and one attains the results of Liberation (Kaivalya). Indeed, one attains Liberation.¹⁷ The above is not a license to steal or kill. It also does not mean that we do not receive the results of such actions. It only means that the Sri Rudra Sūktam has the power to cleanse us of all sinful thoughts and actions.

¹⁷ यः शतरुद्रीयमधीते सोऽग्निपूतो भवति स वायुपूतो भवति स आत्मपूतो भवति स सुरापानात्पूतो भवति स ब्रह्महत्यायाः पूतो भवति स सुवर्णस्तेयात्पूतो भवति स कृत्याकृत्यात्पूतो भवति तस्मादविमुक्तमाश्रितो भवत्वित्याश्रमी सर्वदा सकृद्धा जपेत्। अनेन ज्ञानमाप्नोति संसारार्णवनाशनम् । तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं कैवल्यं पदमश्नुते कैवल्यं पदमश्नुत इति ॥ - कैवल्य उपनिषद्-२.५

Śrī Rudra Sūktam - Laghunyāsa

The chanting of the Sri Rudra Sūktam starts with the chanting of laghunyāsa. It is said - śivo bhūtvā śivam yajet - being Śiva, worship Śiva. It means that making our mind auspicious, we worship Śiva who is an embodiment of auspiciousness, and invoking the Śiva who resides within us, we worship or meditate on the Śiva outside as a Siva Linga or an idol or as His manifestation as the world. Nyāsa has two opposite meanings to renounce and also to establish. In the nyāsa ritual described hereafter, we give up the inauspicious and ignoble and establish or invoke the auspicious and divine within us.

Initial Meditation Verses:

ॐ अथात्मानं शिवात्मानं श्रीरुद्ररूपं ध्यायेत् ॥

शुद्धस्फटिकसङ्काशं त्रिनेत्रं पञ्चवक्रकम् ।

गङ्गाधरं दशभुजं सर्वाभरणभूषितम् ॥ १ ॥

नीलग्रीवं शशाङ्काङ्क नागयज्ञोपवीतिनम् ।

व्याघ्रचर्मोत्तरीयं च वरेण्यमभयप्रदम् ॥ २ ॥

कमण्डल्वक्षसूत्राणां धारिणं शूलपाणिनम् ।

ज्वलन्तं पिङ्गलजटाशिखामुद्योतधारिणम् ॥ ३ ॥

वृषस्कन्धसमारूढं उमादेहार्धधारिणम् ।

अमृतेनाप्लुतं शान्तं दिव्यभोगसमन्वितम् ॥ ४ ॥

दिग्देवतासमायुक्तं सुरासुरनमस्कृतम् ।

नित्यं च शाश्वतं शुद्धं ध्रुवमक्षरमव्ययम् ॥ ५ ॥

सर्वव्यापिनमीशानं रुद्रं वै विश्वरूपिणम् ।

एवं ध्यात्वा द्विजस्सम्यक् ततो यजनमारभेत् ॥ ६ ॥

om athātmānam śivātmānam śrī-rudra-rūpam dhyāyet.

śuddha-sphaṭika-sankāśam trinetram pañca-vaktrakam,
gangadharam daśa-bhujam sarvābharaṇa-bhūṣitam. (1)

nilagrīvam śaśāṅkāṅkam nāga-yajñopavitinam,
vyāghra-carmottariyam ca varenyam-abhayapradam. (2)

kamandalvakṣa-sūtrāṇām dhāriṇam śūla-pāṇinam,
jvalantam pingala-jaṭā-śikhām-udyotadhāriṇam. (3)

vr̥ṣa-skandha-samārūdhām umā-dehārdha-dhāriṇam,
amṛtenāplutam śāntam divya-bhoga-samanvitam. (4)

dig-devatā-samayuktam surāsurā-namaskṛtam,
nityam ca śāśvatam śuddham dhruvam-akṣaram-avyayam. (5)

sarvavyāpinam-iśānam rudram vai viśva-rūpiṇam,
evam dhyātvā dvijas-samyak tato yajanam-arabhet. (6)

Om. We should meditate on the auspicious Self as Śiva in the form of Rudra.

1. He is pure and clear like crystal, three-eyed, five faced, holding Ganga on His head, with ten arms and decorated with all jewellery.
2. He is blue-throated, bears the crescent moon on His head, wears the snake as the sacred thread, wears the tiger skin as upper cloth, is great and bestows fearlessness.
3. He wears the necklace of rudrākṣa and has the kamandalu, holds the trident, is bright and bears Gangā within His golden hued locks.
4. He appears seated on the shoulder of Nandi, with Uma as half His body, drenched in nectar (from the moon on His head), enjoying divine pleasures.
5. He is surrounded by the guardians of the directions, is worshipped by the deities and demons, is eternal, ever-pure, firm, indestructible and immutable.
6. Thus, meditation on the all-pervading Lord Rudra of the Cosmic Form, the seeker should start His worship.

Creating a protective shield (kavaca)

प्रजनने ब्रह्मा तिष्ठतु । पादयोर्विष्णुस्तिष्ठतु । हस्तयोर्हरस्तिष्ठतु । बाहोरिन्द्रस्तिष्ठतु । जठरेऽग्निस्तिष्ठतु ।
हृदये शिवस्तिष्ठतु । कण्ठे वसवस्तिष्ठन्तु । वज्रे सरस्वती तिष्ठतु । नासिकयोर्वायुस्तिष्ठतु ।
नयनयोश्चन्द्रादित्यौ तिष्ठेताम् । कर्णयोरश्विनौ तिष्ठेताम् । ललाटे रुद्रास्तिष्ठन्तु । मूर्ध्यादित्यास्तिष्ठन्तु ।
शिरसि महादेवस्तिष्ठतु । शिखायां वामदेवस्तिष्ठतु । पृष्ठे पिनाकी तिष्ठतु । पुरतः शूली तिष्ठतु । पार्श्वयोः
शिवाशङ्करौ तिष्ठेताम् । सर्वतो वायुस्तिष्ठतु । ततो बहिः सर्वतोऽग्निर्ध्वालामालापरिवृतस्तिष्ठतु ।
सर्वेष्वङ्गेषु सर्वा देवता यथास्थानं तिष्ठन्तु । सर्वान् महाजनान् रक्षन्तु । मां रक्षन्तु ॥

prajanane brahmā tiṣṭhatu, pādāyor-viṣṇus-tiṣṭhatu, hastāyor-haras-tiṣṭhatu, bāhvor-indras-
tiṣṭhatu, jathare'gnis-tiṣṭhatu, hrdaye śivas-tiṣṭhatu, kanthe vasavas-tiṣṭhantu, vaktre
sarasvatī tiṣṭhatu, nāsikāyor-vayus-tiṣṭhatu, nayanayoś-candrādityau tiṣṭhetam, karnayor-
aśvināu tiṣṭhetam, lalaṭe rudras-tiṣṭhantu, mūrdhnyādityās-tiṣṭhantu, śīrasi mahadevas-

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tiṣṭhatu, śikhāyām vāmadevas-tiṣṭhatu, prsthe pinaki tiṣṭhatu, purataḥ śūli tiṣṭhatu, pārśvayoḥ śivā-śankarau tiṣṭhetām, sarvato vāyus-tiṣṭhatu, tato bahih sarvato'gnir-jvala-mala-parivrtas-tiṣṭhatu, sarveṣvaṅgeṣu sarvā devatā yathā-sthānam tiṣṭhantu, sarvān mahājanan rakṣantu, mām rakṣantu.

May Brahma reside in my reproductive organs. May Viṣṇu reside in my feet. May Hara reside in my hands. May Indra reside in my arms. May Agni (Fire-god) reside in my stomach. May Śiva reside in my heart. May Vasava reside in my throat. May Sarasvati reside in my mouth (speech). May Vayu (Air-god) reside in my nose (breath). May Candrama (Moon-god)= and Aditya (Sun-god) reside in my eyes. May the Aśvinī twins reside in my ears. May the Rudras reside in my forehead. May the Adityas reside on the top of my head. May Mahādeva reside in my head. May Vamadeva reside in my śikhā (tuft). May Pināki reside in my back. May Śūlī reside in the front. May Śiva (Parvati) and Sankara reside in my left and right sides. May Vayu (Wind-god) reside on all sides. May the garland of flames of Agni (Fire-god), surround me outside. May all the deities reside in their appointed places. May they protect all the great men. May they protect me.

Establishing the deities in different parts of the body thereby reinforcing the oneness between the individual Self and the supreme Self/Truth

अग्निर्मे वाचि श्रितः । वाग्हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
वायुर्मे प्राणे श्रितः । प्राणो हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
सूर्यो मे चक्षुषि श्रितः । चक्षुहृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
चन्द्रमा मे मनसि श्रितः । मनो हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
दिशो मे श्रोत्रे श्रिताः । श्रोत्रं हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
आपो मे रेतसि श्रिताः । रेतो हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
पृथिवी मे शरीरे श्रिता । शरीरं हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
ओषधिवनस्पतयो मे लोमसु श्रिताः । लोमानि हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।

इन्द्रो मे बले श्रितः । बलं हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
पर्जन्यो मे मूर्ध्नि श्रितः । मूर्धा हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ॥
ईशानो मे मन्यौ श्रितः । मन्युहृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
आत्मा मे आत्मनि श्रितः । आत्मा हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि ।
पुनर्म आत्मा पुनरायुरागात् । पुनः प्राणः पुनराकृतमागात् । वैश्वानरो रश्मिभिर्वावृधानः ।
अन्तस्तिष्ठत्वमृतस्य गोपाः ॥

agnir-mé vāci śṛitaḥ, vāg-hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmaṇi,
vāyur-mē prāṇe śṛitaḥ, prāṇo hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmaṇi,
sūryō me cakṣuṣi śṛitaḥ, cakṣur-hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmaṇi,
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cāndramā me manāsi śrītaḥ, maṇo hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 diśo me śrotrē śrītāḥ, śrotraṁ hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 apō me retāsi śrītaḥ, reto hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 pṛthivī me sarire śrītā, śarīraṁ hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 oṣadhi-vāṇaspatayō me lomāsu śrītāḥ, lomāni hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 indrō me balē śrītaḥ, balāṁ hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 parjanya me mūrdhni śrītaḥ, mūrdhā hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 īśāno me maṇyau śrītaḥ, maṇyur-hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 ātmā mā ātmani śrītaḥ, ātmā hṛdaye, hṛdayaṁ mayi, aham-amṛtē, amṛtaṁ brahmāṇi,
 punārma ātmā punarāyurāgāt, punaḥ prāṇaḥ punarākūṭamāgāt, vaiśvāṇaro raśmibhir-
 vāvṛdhānaḥ, antastiṣṭhatvamṛtāsyā gopāḥ.

Agni (Fire-god) is established in my speech. Speech is in my heart. The heart is in me. I am in immortality and immortality is one with the supreme Self/Truth.

Vāyu (Wind-god) is established in my prāṇa (breath). Breath is in my heart

Sūrya (Sun-god) is established in my eye. The eye is in my heart

Candramā (Moon-god) is established in my mind. The mind is in my heart

Diśa (Space) is established in the ears (hearing). The ears are in the heart

Apa (Water) is established in semen (ovum). The semen is in the heart

Pṛthivī (Earth) is in the body. The body is in my heart

Osadhi-vanaspataya (Herbs and Plants) are established in the body hair. The body hair is in the heart ...

Indra is established in my strength (arms). The strength is in the heart

Parjanya (Rain-god) is established in the head. The head is in the heart

Īśāna is established in my anger. The anger is in my heart

Ātma (I), the individual is established in the body. The body is in the heart. The heart is in me. I am in immortality and immortality is in one with the supreme Self/Truth. By such thoughts, I have gained a longer life and awareness. I have been revitalized and have gained good thoughts. My digestive fires have been rekindled. May God who protects immortality reside in me.

Invoking the grace of the Seer (Sage) of Śrī Rudra Sūktam and taking his permission to use the mantra for japa/homa

अस्य श्री रुद्राध्यायप्रश्नमहामन्त्रस्य अघोर ऋषिः, अनुष्टुप्छन्दः सङ्कर्षणमूर्तिस्वरूपो योऽसावादित्यः
परमपुरुषः स एष रुद्रो देवता। नमः शिवायेति बीजम् । शिवतरायेति शक्तिः । महादेवायेति कीलकम्। श्री
साम्बसदाशिवप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थं जपे विनियोगः ॥

asya śrī rudrādhyāya-praśna-mahā-mantrasya aghora rsih, anuṣṭup-chandah, sankarṣana-mūrti-svarūpo yo'savādityah parama-puruṣah sa eṣa rudro devatā, namaḥ śivāyeti bījam, śivatarāyeti śaktih, mahādevāyeti kīlakam, śrī sāmbasadāśiva-prasāda-siddhyarthe jape viniyogah.

The Seer of this Śrī rudra-adhyāya-mahā-mantra is Aghora, the metre is anustup, the deity worshipped is Rudra that is of the form of Sankarṣana who is Aditya the Supreme Self, 'namaḥ śivāya' is the seed (bija), 'śivataraya' is the power (sakti), 'mahādevāya' is the nail (kilaka that protects its power). This (Sri Rudra Sūktam) is used for japa/homa, for pleasing Śiva-Parvati.

Establishing the mantra in the hands (kara nyāsa)

ॐ अग्निहोत्रात्मने अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । दर्शपूर्णमासात्मने तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । चातुर्मास्यात्मने मध्यमाभ्यां नमः। निरुद्धपशुबन्धात्मने अनामिकाभ्यां नमः। ज्योतिष्टोमात्मने कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः । सर्वक्रत्वात्मने करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ॥

'om agnihotrātmane angusthābhyām namaḥ' - prostrations to the thumbs (of both hands).

'darśapūrṇamāsātmane tarjanībhyām namaḥ' prostrations to the index fingers.

'caturmāsyātmane madhyamābhyām namaḥ' prostrations to the two middle fingers.

'nirudha-paśubandhātmane anāmikābhyām namaḥ' - prostrations to the two ring fingers.

'jyotiṣtomātmane kaniṣṭhikābhyām namaḥ' - prostrations to both little fingers.

'sarva-kratvātmane

karatalakaraṇṣṭhābhyām namaḥ' prostrations to the both palms and back of hands.

Establishing the mantra in the body (anga nyāsa)

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अग्निहोत्रात्मने हृदयाय नमः । दर्शपूर्णमासात्मने शिरसे स्वाहा। चातुर्मास्यात्मने शिखायै वषट् ।
निरूढपशुबन्धात्मने कवचाय हुम् । ज्योतिष्टोमात्मने नेत्रत्रयाय वौषट् । सर्वक्रत्वात्मने अस्त्राय फट् ।
भूर्भुवस्सुवरोमिति दिग्बन्धः ॥

'agnihotrātmāne hrdayāya namah' prostrations to the heart.

darśapūrnamāsātmāne śirase svāhā' - prostrations to the head

'caturmāsyaātmāne sikhāyai vaṣaṭ' – prostrations to the tuft.

'nirūḍha-paśubandhātmāne kavacāya hum' - prostrations to the chest (which is like a shield).

jyotiṣṭomātmāne netra-trayaāya vauṣaṭ' – prostrations to the three eyes.

sarva-kratvātmāne astrāya phat' - prostrations to the weapons.

bhūr-bhuvas-suvarom-iti digbandhah' lock to the directions (so that no disturbance comes from any directions).

Meditation verses (dhyānam)

आपाताढनभः स्थलान्तभुवनब्रह्माण्डमाविस्फुरत् ज्योतिः स्फाटिकलिङ्गमौळिविलसत्पूर्णन्दुवान्तामृतैः ।
अस्तोकाप्लुतमेकमीशमनिशं रुद्रानुवाकाञ्जपन् ध्यायेदीप्सितसिद्धये ध्रुवपदं विप्रोऽभिषिञ्चेच्छिवम् ॥ १ ॥

āpātāḥa-nabhaḥ sthālānta-bhuvana-brahmāṇḍam-avisphurat jyotih sphāṭika-linga-mauli-
vilasat-pārṇenduvāntāmṛtaiḥ, astokāplutam-ekam-iśam-anīśam rudrānuvākāñjapan
dhyāyed-ipsita-siddhaye dhruva-padam vipro'bhīṣiñcecchivam. (1)

One should meditate and daily worship Siva with 'abhiseka with the chanting of the anuvakas of the Rudra for the gain of any desired results. His head shines like the crystal linga and encompasses the entire cosmos from the nether land to the end of space. He who is the one Lord who is drenched by the nectar-like rays that emanate from the full moon which adorns His head.

ब्रह्माण्डव्याप्तदेहा भसितहिमरुचा भासमाना भुजङ्गैः कण्ठे कालाः कपर्दाकलितशशिकलाश्चण्डकोदण्डहस्ताः
। त्र्यक्षा रुद्राक्षमालाः प्रकटितविभवाः शाम्भवा मूर्तिभेदा रुद्राः श्रीरुद्रसूक्तप्रकटितविभवा नः प्रयच्छन्तु सौख्यम्
॥ २ ॥

brahmanḍa-vyāpta-dehā bhasita-himarucā bhāsamānā bhujangaiḥ kanthe kalah kapardā-
kalita-śaśikalāś-canda-kodanda-hastāḥ, tryakṣā rudrākṣa-mālāḥ prakāṣita-vibhavāḥ
śambhavā mūrtibhedā rudrāḥ śrī-rudra-sūkta-prakāṣitavibhavā nah prayacchantu saukhyam.
(2)

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May Sambhu/Siva whose glory manifests in the various forms in the Sri Rudra Sūktam, bestow us with happiness. His body pervades the entire cosmos, He shines with the holy ashes smeared on His body and the rays of the moon. Black snakes adorn His neck. His matted locks are adorned by the crescent moon. He holds the mighty bow named Pināka, He is three-eyed and He wears the necklace of rudrākṣa.

Invocation of Gaṇeśa

ॐ गुणानां त्वा गुणपति ॥ हवामहे
कविं कवीनामुपमश्रवस्तमम् ।
ज्येष्ठराजं ब्रह्मणां ब्रह्मणस्पत
आनश्शृण्वन्नूतिभिस्सीद सादनम् ॥
महागणपतये नमः ॥

om gananam ton ganapatigim havāmahe kavim kavīnām. upamaśravastamam, jyestha-
rajam brahmaṇām brahmanaspata a nah syuvannutibhissida sadanam. mahāganapataye
namah.

O Master of our speech! We welcome the Lord of all deities the greatest of the Seers, the one of unique fame, the greatest among the praiseworthy, the Lord of all mantras. Listening to our praises, please do be seated in our place of worship, along with all Your powers. Prostrations to Śrī Mahāganapati.

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।
om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.

May peace be from all phenomenal forces, from our surroundings and from within us.

Śrī Rudra Sūktam

Namakam.

Anuvāka I.1

Our heads automatically bow down when we see, acknowledge and experience greatness in someone. We appreciate in humility that it is 'not my' (na ma) greatness but yours alone. As mentioned before, in the first part of Śrī Rudra Sūktam, the Namakam, . m...m of manifestations of God as Rudra are praised and prayed to with prostrations (namaskāra).

ॐ नमो भगवते रुद्राय । ॥

om namo bhagavate rudrāya.

Prostrations to God Rudra.

One with 'bhaga' (fortune or virtue) is called Bhagavan (God). He has the six virtues of righteousness (dharma), lordship (aiśvarya), wealth (śrī), glory or fame (yaśa), knowledge (jñāna) and dispassion (vairāgya). Being a part of God, we too have these - more or less. However, God has them in limitless and absolute measure. Prostrations to the great God Rudra.

We are frightened of a strong and angry person and that too one who is armed. Our first reaction is to ask him to calm down and lay aside his weapons. Once the person is calm, we ask him to remain so and use their might to protect us from others. The first mantra of the first of the eleven sections (anuvāka) of the Namakam, is a prostration to the mighty, armed and angry Rudra.

ॐ नमस्ते रुद्र मन्यव उतो तु इषवे नमः ।

नमस्ते अस्तु धन्वने बाहुभ्यां मुतते नमः ॥ १

om namāste rudra maṇyavā utotā iṣave namah,
namāste astu dhanvāne bāhubhyāṃ mṛta te namah. (1)

1. O Rudra! Prostration to You, to Your anger and also to Your arrow. Prostration to (Your) bow and also to both the arms (that hold the bow and the arrow). Prostration to You (again).

Does God get angry? God does not get angry, but appears so to the sinner. God is omniscient and omnipotent and presides over all our actions (karmādhyakṣa) and is the giver of the fruits of action (karma-phala-dātā). The unerring combination of actions and their commensurate results signify the many arrows shot at us from God's bow. We fail to understand where they come from and are surprisingly surprised! When the results are conducive and great, we think of them as a blessing from a kind God; but when they are the opposite, we imagine an angry God dispensing a cruel punishment. However, a true devotee sees only a loving and compassionate God, whatever form He assumes.

Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu, was afraid to approach the fierce-looking Narasimha (half-man half-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu) after He had killed the demon Hiranyakaśipu. However, His

great child-devotee, Prahlada, fearlessly sat on His lap - the same lap on which Hiranyakaśipu was killed shortly before.

Prostrations to God's anger (manyave namah): When does God appear angry? When we flout His norms of right conduct. Are not the increasing number of forest fires and scorching summers, the direct result of global warming caused by human beings flouting nature's laws? We should take heed of His global warning through the global warming we are witnessing!

On one hand, Rāvaṇa appeared to be a devotee of Śiva, yet he brazenly perpetrated wicked actions, troubled and disturbed saints and subjugated even the deities of heaven. His actions resulted in his own extermination and destruction of his kingdom.

God appears angry when His devotees are insulted and the good people are troubled. Śiva did not get angry when He was insulted in Dakṣa Prajāpati's Yajña, but He appeared as the fierce Virabhadra and destroyed the Yajña when His devoted wife was insulted. God does not brook any insolence towards His devotees. Kākabhuśundi, in his previous birth as a śūdra, showed disrespect to his Guru, and that angered Śiva who punished him.

To be angered when our selfish desires are not fulfilled is not praiseworthy. However, righteous anger, for a noble cause arising when God is insulted, a wrong is committed or when someone is exploited, is to be saluted. Also, anger has its own strength and the might of the mighty is to be saluted.

Prostrations to the bow, arrows and the arms that hold them (iṣave, dhanvane, te bāhubhyām namah): We salute God who presides over actions and unerringly dispenses the results of actions. God is omnipotent (mighty armed) and has mighty weapons which are infallible. They have the power to destroy the wicked and protect the good.

Salutations to God's anger, might and weapons. May they be directed towards our enemies and detractors and not towards us.

The second mantra is a prayer to Rudra to give us joy.

या त इषुः शिवतमा शिवं बभूव तेधनुः।
शिवा शरव्या यातव तयानो रुद्र मृडय ॥ २

yā ta iṣuḥ śivatāmā śivam babhūva te dhanuḥ,
śivā śaravyā yā tavā tayā no rudra mṛdaya. (2)

2. O Rudra! That arrow of Yours has quietened, so has Your bow quietened. So too Your quiver. With these (quietened bow, arrow and quiver), make us happy.

The first thing one would beg a person who is ready to shoot at us, is to take the finger off the trigger and lower the gun. By our sincere prayer and prostrations (in the first mantra), the angry appearance of Rudra is quietened and His bow and arrows are replaced in the quiver. This has made us happy.

Sri Rudra Suktam

Does that mean that we can do any wrong action and then through prayer escape from its result? Should we flout God's rules and then expect Him not to appear angry? Should we keep doing wrong, time and time again, and then pray for clemency?

We rarely understand the total consequence of the wrongs that we do. It is only realized when we actually face them. A thief understands that he can be jailed if he is caught thieving, but only when he is caught, sentenced and jailed, he realizes the hardships and torture of being jailed, the pain he has caused his family and friends, the harm he has caused to those from whom he stole, and so on.

Here is a prayer of a sincere seeker or devotee, who realizes that he does wrong sometimes knowingly, sometimes out of habit - regrets deeply, and prays to be forgiven. He appeals to Rudra to be kind and patient with his erring ways. He prays to God to pardon him, be lenient in dispensing the results or at least stagger them in bearable doses.

Everything about God is auspicious even His weapons - the bow, arrows and the quiver that holds them. The devotee considers all that he gets in life as an auspicious gift from God. That is why the great devotee Mīrābāī drank the poison sent by her relative, which because of His grace, turned to nectar.

The third mantra is a prayer for knowledge.

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोराऽपापकाशिनी ।
तया नस्तनुवा शन्तमया गिरिशन्ताभिचाकशीहि ॥ ३ ॥

yā tè rudra śivā tanūraghōrā pāpakāśinī,
tayā nastānuvā śāntamayā girisantābhicākāśīhi. (3)

3. O Rudra! O Girisanta! Through Your gentle and peaceful form that removes all our sins, please give us knowledge (that liberates us).

In this mantra, Śiva is addressed as Rudra and Girīśanta.

Girīśanta: Rudra is called Girīśanta as He dwells on the Kailāsa Mountain extending auspiciousness everywhere to everyone.¹⁸ He resides in our speech and also in the words of the Vedas and spreads its auspicious meaning.¹⁹

Two Forms of Rudra: The two forms of Rudra are the terrible (ghora) and the peaceful, gentle and graceful (aghora). He, in His own true nature, is full and fulfilled and without any likes or dislikes. Yet He appears before us as terrible action, terrible attachment and terrible anger.²⁰

¹⁸ गिरौ कैलासे स्थित्वा लोकानां शं तनोतीति गिरिशन्तः ।

¹⁹ गिरि वाचि स्थित्वा वेदे तिष्ठन्नर्थरूपेण शं तनोति ।

²⁰ कर्म रौद्रम्, रागश्च रौद्रः, कोपश्च रौद्रः, यस्य रौद्रत्रयं नास्ति अवाप्तसर्वकामत्वेन रागद्वेषादेरभावात् स अरौद्रः । - विष्णु सहस्रनाम शङ्कर भाष्य - ९०६

Prayer: O Rudra, You may be dwelling in Kailāsa, but You spread auspiciousness everywhere. You may appear terrible, but You are truly the embodiment of peace. Siva is considered to be five-faced, wherein one of them is called Aghora. He shows His gentle face (aghora) to sāttvika people, devotees and seekers, His fierce forms (ghora) to rājasika people who are lustful and greedy and His terrible and terrifying form (ghora-ghoratara) to those who are tāmasika - criminal and destructive.²¹

Goodness and knowledge does not abide when our minds are full of vāsanās. I appeal to Your gentle and peaceful form which removes all our sins (vāsanās). It is You alone who illumines such a pure mind (apāpa-kāśinī). This limitless joy-giving form of Yours gives us knowledge that liberates us. Do bestow us with knowledge of the supreme Self.

The previous mantras were for protection for oneself. Now is a prayer for protection of our family and our world.

यामिषु॑ गिरिशन्तु॑ हस्ते॑ बिभर्म्यस्तवे॑ ।
शिवां॑ गिरित्र॑ तां कुरु॑ मा हिगू॑सीः पुरुषं॑ जगत् ॥ ४ ॥

yāmiṣūṁ giriśantaḥ haste bibharmyastāve,
śivāṁ giritraṁ tāṁ kuru mā hīgūśīḥ puruṣaṁ jagat. (4)

4. O Giriśanta! O Giritra! Make that arrow that You are holding in Your hand for shooting, auspicious. Please do not hurt us, our family and that which constitutes our immediate world.

Rudra is addressed in this mantra as Giriśanta and Giritra.

Giritra: He is not just the dweller of Kailasa Mountain, but also its Lord (Kailasa-pati) and protector (Giritra).²² He also resides in our speech and protects us from speaking untruth, or harsh words.²³

Prayer (mā hīgmsīḥ puruṣam jagat): We have faith that our well-wishers will not harm us and those we care for, and that we will always be spared from their wrath and be relieved. We see that You have already taken on the arrow for shooting, but we appeal to Your kindness. Please spare not just us, but our family (puruṣam) and that which constitutes our immediate world (jagat), including our home, property, vehicles and wealth. In the present times, it would include our stocks, bitcoins and our mobiles! May Your arrows become favourable towards us. May their piercing sharpness be blunted and their impact become negligible.

²¹ अघोरेभ्योऽथ घोरेभ्यो घोरघोरतरेभ्यः । - महानारायण-उपनिषद्-१९

²² गिरि कैलासाख्यं त्रायते पालयतीति गिरित्रः ।

²³ गिरि वाचि स्थित्वा त्रायते इति गिरित्रः ।

"How should My arrows become favourable?" We pray-

शिवेन वचसा त्वा गिरिशाच्छावदामसि ।
यथा नः सर्वमिज्जगदयक्ष्मं सुमना असत् ॥ ५ ॥

śīvena vacasā tvā giriśācchāvadāmasi,
yathā naḥ sarvamijjagadayakṣmaṁ sūmanā asat. (5)

5. O Girisa! O Accha! May we always praise You with auspicious words and thereby become free from diseases and have a happy mind.

Rudra is worshipped in this mantra as Giriśa and Accha.

Giriśa: Since He resides in Kailāsa, He is called Giriśa. He also resides in my speech (Giriśa). Rudra resides in my speech (Giriśa), makes it auspicious (Giriśanta) and also protects my speech (Giritra). He also resides in the words of the Vedas.²⁴

Accha: It means both 'pure' and 'to gain'. God is purity personified and also the best purifier. His grace can be gained through His praise and auspicious words (śīvena vacasā). Saint Tulasīdāsa says, 'I worship Rāma by singing His praise to purify my speech.'²⁵

Worship through speech (vāk-pūjā): In the previous mantras, we worshipped Rudra through prostrations. Here, we worship Him through our words. Since God resides in my speech, I am able to worship God through auspicious words. Also, since He resides in the words of the Vedas, I can invoke Him with the chanting of the Veda mantras.

Prayer: May we always praise You with auspicious words. May we and our world (family, friends, etc.) be free from diseases and be happy. 'May our minds have auspicious thoughts and noble intentions'²⁶ 'May auspicious thoughts come to us from all sides.'²⁷ 'May my thoughts always be connected with that which is auspicious.'²⁸

It is important to note that the pronoun 'nah' is used and not 'me'. It is a prayer for 'us' and not just for 'me'. Will not the corona virus attack me when there is a raging pandemic? How can me and my world be happy, when others around me are not so?

The next mantra is a prayer for protection from harmful beings.

अध्यवोचदधिवक्ता प्रथमो दैव्यो भिषक् ।
अहीगश्च सर्वाञ्जम्भयन्त्सर्वाश्च यातुधान्यः ॥ ६ ॥

²⁴ गिरि कैलासे शेते तिष्ठति । गिरि वाचि वेदेषु वा शेते तिष्ठति ।

²⁵ निज गिरा पावन करन कारन राम यस तुलसी कह्यो । रामचरितमानस-१.३६१

²⁶ तन्मे मनः शिवसङ्कल्पमस्तु । - शिव-सङ्कल्प सूक्तम्-१

²⁷ आ नो भद्राः क्तवो यन्तु विश्वतः । ऋग् वेद संहिता-१.८९१

²⁸ स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु । श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद्-४.१

adhyāvocad-adhivaktā prāthamo daivyo bhisak,
ahīgścā sarvān-jambhayant-sarvāśca yātudhānyaḥ. (6)

6. The one who stands by, accepts and speaks for His devotees and is the divine and greatest of all doctors, please destroy all snakes (all harmful beings seen around us) and evil unseen forces like demons and ghosts (that persecute and trouble us).

The power of Your acceptance (adhyavocad-adhivaktā): We expect those we love and those who love us, to take our side. When a mighty person claims that we are his, others who may want to harm us, leave us alone. A diplomat gets diplomatic immunity and cannot be prosecuted or persecuted in a foreign country. When we tell God, 'I am Yours', and He accepts, 'You are mine', especially in presence of others, it is wonderful! O God! Please claim me as Yours. Your words, 'He is my', will scare away all seen and unseen, gross and subtle harmful beings and thoughts. Your words, "He is mine" will become my protection (kavaca), as they did for Vibhiṣana and Sugrīva against Rāvaṇa and Vāli respectively. Tulasidāsa says, "O Hanuman, no ghost or goblin will come near us, when they hear Your name."²⁹

The Doctor: O God, You are the greatest amongst all divine beings (prathamo daivyo). You are the divine doctor Dhanvantari (daivyo bhisak). You are divine and the greatest of all doctors (prathamo daivyo bhisak). Not only do You have the cure for all physical ailments but also mental sins and troubles and most importantly the disease of saṁsāra.³⁰ All doctors get their knowledge and skill only from You. They become Your instruments for our cure, so You alone are the foremost doctor (prathamo bhiṣak).

Destroy all harmful beings (sarvān jambhayan): Scorpions, snakes, alligators, bears, tigers and the like are sighted near homes in rural areas and forests and are known to attack us and our domestic animals. We are also attacked by deadly diseases, and our vegetation and crops are attacked by bugs and locusts. O God! Please destroy all those harmful beings seen around us (adhibhautika). You are the best of doctors, so when stung and attacked by them, please cure us.

Also, evil unseen forces like demons and ghosts can persecute and trouble us (yātudhāna).³¹ We are incapable of protecting ourselves from them since we do not even see them. We can only pray to You. You please destroy them. Our own subtle vāsanās and evil tendencies persecute us.³² Please destroy them.

Till now, prostrations were offered to the unseen form of Rudra. The next three mantras are a praise, prayer and salutations to Rudra as the Sun, directly seen by all of us (pratyakṣa rūpa).

²⁹ भूत पिशाच निकट नहि आवै। महावीर जब नाम सुनावै। हनुमान् चालीसा-२४

³⁰ भिषजे भवरोगिणाम्। - दक्षिणामूर्ति स्तोत्र ध्यान श्लोक-४

³¹ यातयन्ति दुःखयन्ति निवासेन इति यातुधान।

³² अनन्तजन्मसञ्चिताः वासनाः ता यत्र निधीयन्ते ताः यातुधान्यः।

असौ यस्ताम्रो अरुण उत बभ्रुः सुमङ्गलः ।
ये चेमाग्रुद्रा अभितौ दिक्षु श्रिताः सहस्रशोऽवैष्णवं हेड ईमहे ॥ ७ ॥

असौ योऽवसर्पति नीलग्रीवो विलोहितः ।
उतैनं गोपा अदृशन्नदृशन्नुदहार्यः ।
उतैनं विश्वा भूतानि स दृष्टो मृडयाति नः ॥ ८ ॥

नमो अस्तु नीलग्रीवाय सहस्राक्षाय मीढुषे ।
अथो ये अस्य सत्त्वानोऽहं तेभ्योऽकरन्नमः ॥ ९ ॥

asau yastāmro aruṇa uta babhruḥ sumangalāḥ,
ye ceṃāgm rudrā abhitō diḁṣu śrītāḥ sahasraśo vaiṣṇavaṃ heḁa īmahe. (7)
asau yō vāsarpaṭi nilāgrīvo vilohitaḥ,
utainaṃ gopā adṛṣannudahāryāḥ,
utainaṃ viśvā bhūtāni sa drṣṭo mṛḁayāti naḥ. (8)

namō astu nīlāgrīvāya sahasrākṣāya mīdhuṣe,
atho ye āsya sattvanō haṃ tebhyo karānnamaḥ. (9)

7,8,9. The sun who takes on a reddish hue (when it rises), a light red (thereafter), then a golden hue, is this same Rudra (praised in the previous mantras) who is auspicious and in the form of thousands of rays spread on all sides, in all directions. We pacify the anger of that Rudra with our praise and salutations. This (Rudra) in the form of the sun with reddish hue and blue neck moves (in the sky), so that the cowherd boys and also the women fetching water see Him. The entire universe sees Him. May He who is seen thus make us happy. Salutation to that blue-necked Rudra, with a thousand eyes, who gives the things prayed for. Further, I offer my salutation to those attendants of Rudra.

Beauty and glory of the sun: Each day we witness a unique and spectacular display of beauty and glory of the sun, right from its first sighting as it emerges from the eastern horizon, till it merges in the western horizon. It imparts beautiful hues to the sky at dawn and dusk and itself takes on a reddish hue when it rises (tāmra), a light red (aruṇa) thereafter, then a golden hue (babhru). Blinded by its brightness, we are unable to see the midday sun. The sun and its thousands of rays enliven, nourish and brighten our days, lives and our world. Its various moods, qualities and movement are indeed praiseworthy, auspicious, worshipful and joyful.

Blue-neck (nilagrīva): The Scriptures give us many images of the Cosmic Form for us to worship. In one, the heaven is considered as God's head, the blue sky His neck (nilagrīva), the air His breath, and the earth, His feet.

Directly seen (drṣṭa): God as the sun is seen daily by all beings, including the plants, animals and humans (viśvā bhūtāni), be they the simple village folks like the cowherds (gopa) or the damsels who carry pots of water (udahāryaḥ). The birds sing in anticipation of

its emergence when 'the dawn is still dark'. The lotus blooms in its light, animals forage in the daytime, and we go about our daily chores and duties throughout the day.

Thousand-eyed (sahasrākṣa): Every eye that sees is God's eye. Rudra is therefore called Sahasrākṣa. The sun with its innumerable rays illumines the entire world, and therefore, Rudra is called Sahasrākṣa. His vision is infinite and all-inclusive whereas ours is finite and often divisive. These rays give warmth, nourishment and life to all.

Sūrya Upāsanā: Worship of the Sun God (sandhyā vandana) is considered as a daily duty for those initiated to the Gayatri Mantra. Thousands worship Him by prostrations (sūrya namaskāra) and through various chants and offering of water (arghya).

Prayer: O Rudra as the Sun-god, we praise and worship You in many ways. Delight us always with Your beautiful form. We prostrate to You and Your followers (satvāna) - the Śiva ganas. The rich, glamorous and powerful have millions of followers. However, the noble ones who serve and follow the great and the divine, are worthy of our prostrations. The seeker prays, "O Sun, Your true nature is hidden from us by many desires and pleasures. Do remove them and withdraw Your scorching rays so that we may see Your most benevolent form - Your true nature which is my own Self."³³ The next three mantras are a prayer to God to dismantle and disarm all His weapons.

प्रमृश्च धन्वंनस्त्वमुभयोरार्त्नियोर्ज्याम् ।
याश्च ते हस्त इषवः पराता भगवो वप ॥ १०

Pramuñca dhanvanas tvam ubhayor ārtniyor jyām
Yāś ca te hasta iṣava ḥ parā tā bhagavo vapa (10)

10. O Bhagava! Please untie the strings from both the sides of the bow. Please keep away all the arrows that You wield in Your hand.

Śiva's bow: Viṣṇu can manifest His bow at will. Viṣṇu's incarnation, Śrī Rāma always carries the divine bow Sāranga. Śiva too manifests the divine bow Pināka at will. Both their bows are very powerful and created by God as the divine architect Viśvakarmā. Śiva used it to destroy the three cities, Tripuras, and the three demons who ruled over them. In order to win Sitā's hand in marriage, many kings, including the mighty Ravana, tried to string Śiva's bow. Most could not even lift it, leave alone string it. God, as Śrī Rāma, not only strung it but also broke it. It is God alone who creates and wields His weapons, and He alone can dismantle and destroy them. Hence the prayer.

Prayer: We can disarm someone with our charm. God is disarmed by our sincere and heartfelt prayers. A bow cannot be used if the string is loosened or one side is untied. "O Bhagavān, I am scared. Please untie the strings from both the sides and keep away all the

³³ हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । तत्त्वं पृषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

पृषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि ।

योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥ - ईशावास्य-उपनिषद्-१५, १६

arrows that You wield in Your hand which are ready to be shot at me. You alone can disarm the bow of karma and the arrows of karmaphala (results of actions)."
Furthermore,

अ॒व॒त॒त्य॒ ध॒नु॒स्त्व॒गः॑ स॒ह॒स्रा॒क्ष॒ श॒ते॒षु॒धे॑ ।
नि॒शी॒य॑ ऽ श॒ल्या॒नं॑ मु॒खा॑ शि॒वो नः॑ सु॒म॒ना॑ भ॒व ॥ ११

Avatatya dhanu ḥ tvam sahasrākṣa śateṣudhe
Niśīrya śalyānā ṁ mukhā śivo na ḥ sumanā bhava (11)

11. Sahasrākṣa! O Śateṣudhi! Untying the strings of Your bow and making Your arrows blunt, please be auspicious and have a blessing disposition towards us.

Rudra is addressed as Sahasrākṣa and Sateṣudhi.

Satesudhi (one with hundreds of quivers): An archer carries one quiver full of arrows. He cannot shoot when he runs out of arrows. Śrī Rāma's divine arrows returned back to His quiver, and Arjuna was blessed so that his quiver never became empty. Śiva has countless quivers with countless arrows.

Prayer: Nothing is impossible for the mighty God. He can shoot an arrow even without a bow. O all-seeing God (Sahasrākṣa)! You may have untied the strings of Your bow, please also make Your arrows blunt. Just like the airbag takes the shock of the accident, do reduce the impact of our karmaphalas. Please do show us only Your pleasing look and blessing disposition (sumanā bhava).

Now is a prayer for total dismantling and disarmament of God's weapons.

वि॒ज्यं॑ ध॒नुः॑ क॒प॒दि॒नो॒ वि॒श॒ल्यो॒ बा॒र्ण॒वा॒ंगः॑ उ॒त ।
अ॒ने॒श॒न्न॒स्ये॒ष॒व आ॒भु॒र॒स्य॑ नि॒ष॒ङ्ग॒थः॑ ॥ १२

Vijya ṁ dhanu ḥ kapardino vīśalyo bā ṇ avā uta
Aneśan asya iṣava abhurasya niṣa ṅ gathi ḥ (12)

12. May the bow of Rudra, the one with the matted locks, be bereft of string. Also, may the quiver be devoid of arrows. May the arrows (outside the quiver) of Rudra be destroyed. May the scabbard of Rudra lose its power (to hold a sword).

This mantra refers to Rudra as Kapardi - one with matted locks or braided hair.

Prayer: An empty quiver, an empty scabbard and bow without strings are like an armoury with only scrap metal. Even a blunt arrow when thrown with force can hurt. O God! Please

destroy all the arrows inside and outside the quiver and also the sword inside and outside the scabbard.

The next mantra is a prayer for protection.

या ते हेतिर्मिदुष्टम् हस्ते बभूव ते धनुः ।
तयास्मान् विश्वतस्त्वम यक्ष्मया परिभुज ॥ १३

Yā te hetir mī ḍ huṣ ṭ ama haste babhūva te dhanu ḥ
Tayā asmān viśvatas tvam ayakṣmayā paribhuja (13)

13. O Midhustama! With Your weapons in hand and the bow of Yours, which are the cause of health, please protect us, from all troubles.

Here, Rudra is addressed as Midhuṣṭama.

Midhustama (fulfiller of all desires): All conscious actions are born from desires, and all actions give results. We read this book with a desire to gain knowledge and thereafter gain knowledge. Being the giver of the results of all actions (karma-phala-data), God is the fulfiller of all desires. Also, He fulfils the valid and auspicious desires of all - especially His devotees.

Prayer: A stick in the hand is enough to scare away a stray dog from attacking. O fulfiller of all desires! May the weapons in Your hands, even an unstrung bow or blunt arrow, protect me from all troubles - especially from ill health.

The next mantra is a prostration to the potential power of Rudra's weapons.

नमस्ते अस्त्वायुधा यानातताय धुष्णवे ।
उभाभ्यामुत ते नमो बाहुभ्यां तव धन्वने ॥ १४

Namaste astu āyudhāya anātatāya dh r ṣ ṇ ave
Ubhābhyām uta te namo bāhubhyā m tava dhanvane (14)

14. Salutation to Your weapon that is at rest and that has the potential power to strike. Further, salutation to both Your arms and also to Your bow.

God's power: Rudra is omnipotent. This endless creation is only a fraction of His potential creativity. The potential power of His weapons and the arms that wield them is unfathomable. Even a weapon at rest has the potential to be used at any time. O God! Salutations to Your weapons at rest, their potential power and the arms that wield them.

God's laws of Karma, like 'every action has a result', 'the doer of action alone is the enjoyer or sufferer of the results' and 'good begets good and bad actions result in sorrow', are infallible. God's bow and His arms represent the means of dispensing the results. Prostrations to Your infallible laws and the means by which You faultlessly dispense them.

The last mantra of the first anuvāka is a prayer for destruction of our enemies.

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परि ते धन्व॑नो हे॒तिर॒स्मान् वृ॑णक्तु वि॒श्वतः॑ ।
अथो॒ य इ॑षु॒धिस्तवा॑रे अ॒स्मन्निधे॑हि तम् ॥ १५

Pari te dhanvano hetir asmān v ṛṇ aktu viśvata ḥ
Athō ya iṣudhi ḥ tavāre asmān nidhehi tam (15)

15. (O Rudra!) Let the arrow set on Your bow avoid us from all directions. Further, let the (arrows in the) quiver of Yours, target our enemies.

It is said that one should hate the sin and not the sinner. It is the host of enemies within us like anger, jealousy, lust and hatred that make us sin and suffer. Hence, they are our real enemies.

Prayer: O God! Please do not target us with Your weapons, but let them destroy all the self-destructing enemies within us.

There are enough nuclear warheads and biological weapons stockpiled to destroy the world many times over. Countries in conflict have large defence budgets, and heavy weapons are being produced, stocked and sold officially and unofficially in unbelievably large numbers. How can we avoid war when all are armed to the teeth and are very willing to use force? Therefore, international peace conferences focus on arms control and disarmament. An appeal to lay down arms - a ceasefire - is a prerequisite for peace talks to succeed and peace to prevail. With so much hatred, revenge, greed and prejudice in us, there is bound to be violence - at home, in society, between communities and between nations. O God! May wars cease and internal and external peace reign in the world. That is Your true auspicious form! This entire anuvāka is in praise of and a prayer to Rudra to show His auspicious form.

The following beautiful and famous mantra is usually chanted at the end of the first anuvāka.

ॐ श॒म्भवे॑ नमः॑ । नम॑स्ते अस्तु॒ भगव॑न्वि॒श्वेश्व॑राय॒ महा॑दे॒वाय॒ त्र्यम्ब॑काय॒ त्रिपु॑रान्त॒काय॒ त्रिका॑ला॒ग्निका॒लाय॑
का॒लाग्निरु॑द्राय॒ नील॑क॒ण्ठाय॑ मृ॒त्युञ्ज॑याय॒ सर्व॑ेश्व॒राय॑ सदा॒शिवाय॑ श्रीमन्महादे॒वाय॑ नमः॑ ॥ १६ ॥

om śambhāve namaḥ, namāste astu bhagavan-viśveśvarāyā mahādevāya tryambakāya
tripurāntakāya trikālāgnikālāyā kālāgnirudrāyā nīlakaṇṭhāyā mṛtyuñjayāya sarveśvarāya
sadāśivāyā śrīman-mahādevāya namaḥ. (16)

16. Salutation to the auspicious one. May salutation be unto You O God, who is the Lord of the universe, who is the self-effulgent one, who is three-eyed, who is the destroyer of the three cities, who is the consumer of the fire of three periods of time, who is Rudra of the nature of the fiery time, who is blue-necked, who is the victor of death, who is the Lord of all, who is always auspicious, who is endowed with all wealth and who is the great God.

Rudra - the three-eyed (tryambaka): The two eyes of Śiva symbolize justice and compassion. He uses both when He presides over our actions and dispenses the results. Justice without compassion would be harsh and heartless, and compassion without justice

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would be sentimental and unjustified. Śiva has the third eye of wisdom by which He balances between them. Salutations to the omnipotent and omniscient Rudra, who wisely dispenses the results of our actions with justice and compassion.

Rudra the destroyer of the three cities (tripurāntaka): The three sons of the demon Tārakāśura Vidyunmālī, Tārakākṣa and Kamalākṣa - did severe austerities and were given a boon by Brahma, the Creator. They asked for three different palaces to be built in three different cities made of gold, silver and iron respectively. They desired to meet once in a thousand years in one place and could be killed only when they were together and that too by someone as mighty as Śiva. Their boon was granted. Thinking themselves to be invincible separately and together, they became arrogant and troubled everyone. The deities pleaded with Śiva to save them. Once when they met, Śiva shot all three of them with one arrow, destroying not just the three of them, but also their three palaces and cities. He is therefore called Tripurāntaka, Tripurārī or Purārī.

The three cities are the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep and Vidyunmālī, Tārakākṣa and Kamalākṣa are the waker, dreamer and deep sleeper respectively. It is the jiva (the ego) that experiences these states. Their coming together is possible in meditation. When the arrow of knowledge is shot, the finite individuality ends, along with its identification with the three palaces of gross, subtle and causal bodies, the cities of the waking, dream and deep sleep states and the assumed entities of waker, dreamer and deep sleeper. Salutations to Rudra, the destroyer of the demons and the destroyer of ignorance.

Rudra - the consumer of the fire of three periods of time (trikālāgnikāla): The three periods of time are the past, present and future, which are like the all-consuming fire.³⁴ Everything is subject to change and is destroyed in time. The past and the future are experienced in the present, and the present too is experienced due to the presence of the changeless and timeless Truth or Śiva. Being the very Lord of time, He is called Mahākāla and worshipped as Mahākāleśvara in Ujjain. Salutations to the ageless, eternal Rudra- the very essence of time.

Rudra - the fiery time (kālāgnirudra): Rudra is not just the timeless, but also time itself. Bad times make us weep, and hard times make us weak. We are scared when our time of death comes, and most of us are consumed by thoughts of aging and running out of time. We burn with regrets of the past, anxieties of the future and agitations in the present. Salutations to Rudra, the fire of time, who can not only make us cry but also burn away our regrets, anxieties, agitations and fears.

There are many types of fires like dāvāgni (forest fire), vadavāgni (oceanic fire), pralayāgni (fire of deluge), jatharāgni (digestive fire), krodhāgni (fire of anger) and śokāgni (fire of grief). Śrī Hanuman leapt across the ocean, burnt the city of Lanka and doused the fire of sorrow (śokāgni) in Mother Sītā, caused due to her separation from her beloved Śrī Rāma.³⁵ The third eye of Rudra represents the fire of knowledge (jñānāgni) which burns away

³⁴ कालो जगद्भक्षकः । - शिवापराध क्षमापण स्तोत्रम्-१२

³⁵ उल्लङ्घय सिन्धोः सलिलं सलीलं यः शोकवह्निं जनकात्मजायाः। वाल्मीकी रामायण ध्यान श्लोक

the ignorance, ignorance born actions and their vast account of future results.³⁶ Salutations to Rudra who is the fire of knowledge.

Fire is that which leads us from front, as does time. Salutations to Rudra, who as fire and time leads us on the right path towards prosperity and removes our sins.³⁷

Rudra-blue-necked God (nilakantha): Siva is all capable and effortlessly takes up impossible tasks without getting the least bit affected. This is illustrated in a story from the Puranas of how Śiva became blue-necked. When the demons and deities churned the milky ocean, the terrible destructive poison (halāhala) emerged. Knowing that none except Śiva could consume it and save the world, they went to Him. Out of compassion for all beings, Śiva consumed it and retained it in His throat and thus became blue-necked. He did not allow either His head or heart to be poisoned. His blue-neck thus became an ornament. Salutations to the blue-necked compassionate Rudra, who is willing to help all who come to Him and save them from the most terrible problems.

Rudra - victor of death (mr̥tyuñjaya): One who survives death has conquered death. Rudra is timeless and changeless, and therefore, birthless and deathless.

Fear of death is inborn and invincible, and we are all plagued by it. Śrī Ramana Maharshi urges us, who are scared of death, to surrender to Śiva, the conqueror of death. When one who is fearful, merges with the immortal Śiva, there remains no more the fear from death as the Self of one who surrenders is the immortal Śiva.³⁸ Young Markandeya held on to Siva and attained immortality. Dhruva put his foot on the bowed head of death and became immortal. Salutations to Rudra, the conqueror of death.

³⁶ ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा । भगवद् गीता-४.३७

³⁷ अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् । युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम ॥ ईशावास्य-उपनिषद्-१८

³⁸ मृत्युञ्जयं मृत्युभियाश्चितानाम् अहं मतिर्मृत्युमुपैति पूर्वम् । अथ स्वभावादमृतेषु तेषु कथं पुनर्मृत्युधियोऽवकाशः । - सददर्शनम्-२

Anuvāka I.2

God is all (sarva), He is all-pervading (sarva-vyāpi), the essence of all (sarvātmā), the Lord of all (sarveśvara) and the indweller in all (sarvāntaryami). The next eight sections (anuvākas) are a prostration to the Cosmic Form signifying these aspects of Rudra. A paint company's advert had the words-'Wherever you see colour, think of us.' The following mantras showcase Rudra in all that we see and as whatever we think. So, never ask, "Where is God?" Say, "Where is He not." Each mantra of the next three sections (second to fourth) starts and ends with a prostration (namah). Each mantra of this second section starts with 'namah' and ends with 'pataye namah'.

नमो हिरण्यबाहवे सेनान्ये दिशां च पतये नमः ॥ १

namo hirānyabāhave senānye diśām ca pataye namah (1)

1. Salutation to the one who has arms decorated with golden ornaments, who is the leader of the armies and who is the Lord and protector of all the directions.

hiranyabāhave namah: Prostrations to Rudra whose arms are decorated with golden ornaments, whose arms and entire body shines like gold and who is of the very nature of Consciousness (rukma varna).

senānye namah: All abilities come from God. A leader must have the ability to lead, guide, protect, nourish, empower and inspire all who follow him. He must be mighty, fearless and brave - especially if he leads an army into war. God is the ultimate leader of all - the demons, deities, siddhas, gandharvas and humans. Prostrations to the universal leader of all armies. Prostrations also to Rudra, who led the army to kill Tripurasura and all Generals who lead armies and leaders in every field of activity. Prostrations to Skanda, the son of Siva, who is considered as the best among all army generals.³⁹

diśām pataye namah: The guardians or rulers of the eight directions (aṣṭa-dikpāla) are Kubera (N), Īśāna (NE), Indra (E), Agni (SE), Yama (S), Nirrti (SW), Varuna (W) and Vayu (NW). Together with Brahma (upwards) and Viṣṇu (downwards), there are ten deities of directions (daśa-dikpālas). So, whichever direction I face, I face God alone. Prostrations to Rudra who is the Lord and protector of all deities including the Dikpalas.

नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशेभ्यः पशूनां पतये नमः ॥ २

namó vrkṣebhyo harikeśebhyaḥ paśūnām pataye namah (2)

2. Prostration to the one as the trees with green leaves and as the Lord and protector of all beings.

³⁹ सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः । - भगवद् गीता-१०.२४

vṛkṣebhyo harikeśebhyo namah: This mantra helps us see trees not just as verdant, beautiful, shade-giving, life-sustaining, eco-supporting beings, but as divinity itself. Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes this ever-changing world as an upside-down banyan tree with divine roots and the scriptural mantras as its innumerable leaves.⁴⁰ Prostrations to Rudra as the millions of trees bearing innumerable unique leaves of all shapes, sizes and colours.

paśūnām pataye namah: Paśu literally means animal. Rudra is the lord (pati) of all beings (paśu) - plant, animal or human. One who 'sees' is called 'paśu' (paśyati iti). One who thinks what he sees alone is real and takes everything at face value is called 'paśu'. Rudra is the protector of even the most dull-witted, animalistic and superficial among us. Rudra is worshipped as Paśupatinātha in a famous temple in Nepal. Prostrations to Pasupati - the Lord and protector of all beings.

नमः सुस्मिञ्जराय त्विषीमते पथीनांपतये नमः ॥ ३

namassaspiñjarāya tviṣimate pathīnām pataye namah (3)

3. Prostration to the one who has the colour of tender grass that is a mixture of red and yellow, who is bright and who is the Master and protector of all paths.

saspiñjarāya namah: Tenderness has both a beauty and strength. An infant has the might to bring anyone to his knees in tenderness. The tender shoot of grass breaks the hard ground and expresses its joy and freedom in beautiful colours, spoken of here as red and yellow. Prostrations to Rudra as this most tender grass!

tvisimate namah: Prostrations to Rudra, who is flaming bright and illumines our path.

pathinām pataye namah: There are many religious and

spiritual paths spoken about in the Scriptures. One category is the Path of Devotion (Bhakti Yoga), the Path of Action (Karma Yoga), the Path of Meditation (Dhyana Yoga) and the Path of Knowledge (Jñāna Yoga). Some follow the Vaidika path and some the Tantrika path. Also, the individual is led to the after-world by the path of Uttarayana or Dakṣiṇāyana, depending on the good deeds and spiritual practices that he has done in this world. Then, there is the path of Liberation (mokṣa mārga), which is a path of no return.

At the material level also, there are many paths. For example, political ideologies like Socialism, Communism and Democracy. God is the founder, the expounder, the initiator and the leader of all paths - secular, religious or spiritual. Prostrations to Rudra, the Master and protector of all paths.

The path we take to reach a destination is important. Prostrations to Rudra, the guide who leads us on the path to success.

⁴⁰ ऊर्ध्वमूलमधः शाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम्। छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि ...। भगवद् गीता-१५१

नमो॑ ब॒भ्लु॒शाय॑ वि॒व्या॒धिनेऽन्न॑ना॒ना पत॑ये नमः॑ ॥ ४

namo babhluśāyā vivyādhinē nnānānā patāye namāḥ. (4)

4. Prostration to the one who rides on the bull, who is the special destroyer and who is the Master and protector of all foods.

babhluśāya namaḥ: One who nourishes is babhlu (bibharti iti). One who rides on babhlu Nandi is Babhluśa (tasmin śete tiṣṭhati iti). Śiva rides on Nandi, the bull, and is therefore called Babhluśa. Nandi means one who gives joy. Nandi also represents Dharma - righteousness which nourishes and gives joy in life. Dharma, Śiva's vehicle, takes us towards mokṣa Liberation. When Śiva is not riding on Nandi, he always sits facing Śiva. Prostrations to Rudra whose vehicle is Nandi and prostrations to Nandi who is the chosen one fit to be His vehicle.

vivyādhine namaḥ: The mighty demons like Hiranyakaśipu get special boons which make them 'almost' impossible to be destroyed. Since no one except God is immortal, He finds unique and special ways to destroy them (viśeṣa vyādhī). Hiranyakaśipu could not be killed in the day or night, inside or outside, on earth or in the sky and by deities, man or animal. God took the form of Narasimha half-man-half-lion - and killed him at dusk, placing him on His lap, while sitting on the threshold. Prostrations to Rudra, the special destroyer.

Were it not for hunger and thirst tormenting us each day, we would never work and progress. Our fructifying actions too torment us, but were it not for them, we would never put in efforts to overcome difficulties and progress. Most tormentors only do so to trouble us but God is compassionate. Prostrations to Rudra, the special compassionate tormentor.

annānām patāye namaḥ: Not only does God give us hunger body and and thirst, but He also provides the food and water to mind. Food also symbolizes all material wealth. God is the Lord of all material wealth and its giver as well. Prostrations to Rudra, the Master and protector of food. alleviate them and nourish and strengthen our

नमो॑ हरि॒के॒शायोपवी॑तिने पु॒ष्टानां॑ पत॑ये नमः॑ ॥ ५

namo harikeśāyopavītinē puṣṭānānā patāye namāḥ. (5)

5. Prostration to the one, who has green hair, who has the holy thread (upavita) and who is the Lord and protector of all those who are nourished.

harikeśāya namaḥ: In the second mantra of this subsection, 'harikeśa' was used as an adjective with the meaning 'evergreen leaves', and God as the trees with evergreen leaves (harikeśaḥ vṛkṣaḥ - 1.2.2). Here, it refers to God with green locks of hair. Just like our clothes look different coloured in different light, Śiva's matted locks look green, blue, golden and black in the changing light of the sun. In the present day, people tint and dye their hair with different colours. Śiva's hair could be any colour and still be beautiful. Our hair grey and fall in time. Śiva's locks are ever green - young, strong and beautiful. He manifested the

powerful Virabhadra from a teach Dakṣa Prajāpati a lesson. Prostration to Rudra with green hair. single hair.

upavīṭine namah: During the Upanayana ceremony, a child is given the sacred thread (upavīṭa or yajñopavita) and initiated into the ritual of daily worship (sandhyā vandanam) and the famous Gayatri Mantra. He is, thereafter, called a dvija (twice born).

The upavita is made by nine threads knotted in three strands of three, representing the three qualities (sattva, rajas, tamas) and the deities. It bestows long life, strength, nobility and vitality.⁴¹ All Gods and Goddesses of India are seen wearing the sacred thread. Even in the daily worship, the upavīṭa is offered to God. Prostrations to Rudra, who is adorned by the upavīṭa and all it symbolizes.

puṣṭānām pataye namah: God is the nourisher of all and the Lord of all those who are nourished. Food nourishes our body, and noble qualities like love and compassion nourish our soul. God is full of noble qualities (sadguṇa sampanna). Prostrations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of all nourishment.

नमो भवस्य हेत्यै जगतां पतये नमः ॥ ६

namo bhavasya hetyai jagatām patāye namaḥ. (6)

6. Prostration to the one as the destroyer of the world and as the Lord and protector of the world.

bhavasya hetyai namah: The world is in a constant state of becoming (bhava). There is continuous creation and destruction. Earlier forms are destroyed and new forms are created. A child, when chided by his mother for breaking a crystal vase said, "I may have destroyed the vase, but I also created a lot of crystal pieces!" God is the creative destroyer of this world. Prostrations to Rudra, the destroyer of the world.

We too are part of the world and are therefore, in a constant state of becoming - someone or the other, to someone or the other, for some reason or the other. It is ignorance of our true nature (avidyā), ignorance born desires (kāma) and desire-prompted actions (karma) that keeps us bound to the world, expressed as this 'state of becoming'. Through the weapon of Self-knowledge, God destroys this 'state of becoming' and we realize our true nature as a 'state of being'. Prostrations to Rudra, the destroyer of our worldly bondage.

jagatām pataye namah: Not only does God create and destroy, but He alone protects this world. Prostrations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of the world.

How ready and willing is God to protect us?

⁴¹ यज्ञोपवीतं परमं पवित्रं प्रजापतेर्यस्सहजं पुरस्तात् । आयुष्यमग्रचं प्रतिमुञ्च शुभ्रं यज्ञोपवीतं बलमस्तु तेजः ॥ - ब्रह्मोपनिषद्-५

नमो रुद्रायतताविने क्षेत्राणां पतयेनमः ॥ ७

namo ruḍrāyātataṁvine kṣetrāṇāṁ patāye namaḥ. (7)

7. Prostration to Rudra, who is ever ready to protect us and who is the Lord and protector of all holy places.

rudrāya-ātātāvine namah: God is ever ready and always willing to remove our sorrows and protect us. Sri Hanuman is seen sitting in 'vīrāsana' and Śrī Rāma always carries a bow with a quiver full of arrows even when He is posing for a family picture immediately after His coronation! A doctor on a house call came out of the patient's room and asked for a screw driver and a hammer. The terrified family members asked what was wrong. The doctor said, "I am trying to open my locked bag which has the stethoscope!" Śiva's arrow is set on the bow, ready to shoot immediately (atāto dhanuṣā avati rakṣatīti). Prostrations to Rudra, who is ever ready to protect us.

kṣetrāṇām pataye namah: Kṣetra means a place, like Annakṣetra (dining hall), Kalākṣetra (art centre), Karma-kṣetra (place of work) or an agricultural land which gives crops. This body too is called kṣetra⁴² since it can be protected from injury (kṣata-trāṇāt), since it slowly decays (kṣayāt), dies (kṣaranāt) and is like a field where we experience the crop of the results of our actions (kṣetravad asmin karmaphala nivṛtteh). God protects all places and all bodies from the unicellular amoebic body to the complex human body. The great Saint Tukārām was tasked to protect the fields. He kept singing the glories of God and not only was he saved from the wrath of his employer, but the fields yielded a bumper crop. Prostrations to Rudra, the protector of every place and everybody. Prostrations to Rudra, the Lord of all holy places (tirtha-kṣetra), and who especially resides and protects us in places like Kashi, Prayag and Rameswaram.

नमः सूतायाहन्त्याय वनानां पतये नमः ॥ ८

namaḥ sūtayāhantīyāya vanānāṁ patāye namaḥ. (8)

8. Prostration to Rudra as the charioteer, as the one who cannot be destroyed by any enemies and as the Lord and protector of the forests.

sūtāya namah: Sūta is the great disciple of Śrī Veda Vyāsa, who was entrusted with the task of expounding of the Purāṇas. Sūta is also a class of people who are charioteers by vocation. The world is described as a chariot and God it's charioteer (sārathi). The body is described as a chariot and the intellect its charioteer.⁴³ God as Śrī Kṛṣṇa became the charioteer of Arjuna in the Mahābhārata war and led him to victory. Prostrations to Rudra the driver, the one who drives the world and guides us from within.

⁴² इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते। भगवद् गीता-१३.१

⁴³ बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विदधि । - कठोपनिषद्-१.३.३

ahantyaaya namaḥ: Prostrations to Rudra, the invincible charioteer, the one who cannot be destroyed by any enemies and is therefore always victorious.

vanānām pataye namaḥ: Forests are vital for life on earth. They purify the air, filter the water and prevent erosion and detrimental climate change. There are thousands who protect forests and are involved in reforestation. God is the Lord of the forests. Prostrations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of the forests.

'Vanam' also means one who is adorable and worshipful. God Himself is the most adorable and worshipful (sambhajanīyam) and is the Lord of all who are adorable and worshipful. Salutations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of all that is adorable and worshipful in this world.

नमो रोहिताय स्थपतये वृक्षाणां पतये नमः ॥ ९

namo rohitāya sthapataye vṛkṣāṇām pataye namaḥ (9)

9. Salutation to the one, who is red in colour, who is the architect who sustains, protects and empowers all and who is the Lord and protector of all trees.

rohitāya namaḥ: Salutations to Rudra, who is red in colour.

sthapataye namaḥ: One who sustains and protects is called a 'sthapati' (sthātā ca asau pātā ceti). An architect, civil engineer and constructor is also called 'sthapati'. Viśvakarmā is the divine architect. God as the designer, creator and constructor of this universe is the ultimate architect who inspires and empowers all others. Salutations to Rudra, the architect, who sustains, protects and empowers all.

vṛkṣāṇām pataye namaḥ: It was already said in this section that Rudra is the evergreen trees (harikeśa vṛkṣa - 1.2.2) and the Lord of all forests (vanānām pataye namaḥ - 1.2.8). The sap keeps the trees alive from within and the soil and water from outside. Salutations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of all trees - in the forests and elsewhere.

नमो मन्त्रिणे वाणिजाय कक्षाणां पतये नमः ॥ १०

namo mantriṇe vāṇijāya kakṣāṇām pataye namaḥ (10)

10. Salutation to the one as the ministers, as all business and businessmen and as the Lord and protector of inaccessible places.

mantrine namaḥ: There are seven crore mantras in our Scriptures. Salutations to Rudra, the mantras, revealer of mantras and Lord of all mantras. It is the job of ministers (mantri), consultants and counsellors to give right advice. The king/head cannot succeed if his advisors are corrupt, ill-advised or incompetent. Salutations to Rudra as the wise ministers and the Lord and guide of all ministers.

vānijāya namaḥ: The industrialists, businessmen, traders, farmers are all resource creators of society. Salutations to Rudra as the businessmen and the Lord and protector of all business and businessmen.

kakṣāṇām pataye namaḥ: 'Kakṣa' means a dense forest or an inaccessible place. It also means a room or a category. God is the Lord and protector of the most inaccessible places. He is also the Lord and protector of all categories and rooms, including the classrooms where we receive knowledge that protects and guides us in life. Salutations to Rudra, the protector and Lord of all the inaccessible dense forests and enclosed spaces.

नमो भुवन्तये वारिवस्कृतायौषधीनां पतये नमः ॥ ११

namo bhuvantaye varivaskṛtāyauṣadhīnām pataye namaḥ. (11)

11. Salutation to the Creator of the fourteen worlds, the one who abides in the devotees (who serve Him) and the Lord and protector of all vegetation.

bhuvantaye namaḥ: The fourteen realms of experience (caturdaśa bhuvana) described in the Scriptures are the seven upper worlds (Bhū, Bhuva, Suva, Maha, Jana, Tapa and Satya) and the seven lower worlds (Atala, Vītala, Sutala, Rasātala, Talātala, Mahātala and Pātāla). God expands as these realms (bhuvanam tanotīti). Salutations to Rudra, the creator of the fourteen worlds.

vārivaskṛtāya namaḥ: One who serves and worships is called 'varivas' (vārivasya tu suśruṣā). One who stays close and abides in such devotees is called 'vārivaskṛta'. God is always close to us. Do we not feel close to Him when we serve and worship Him? Salutations to Rudra, who is always close to the devotees who serve Him.

'Vāri' also means wealth. Salutations to Rudra, the creator of all wealth. Vārivaskṛta also means one who stays in water (vāriṇi tiṣṭhatīti). Prostrations to Rudra as all beings that stay in water and is also their Lord and protector.

auṣadhīnām pataye namaḥ: Trees, plants and herbs are the wealth of the earth. They cure us of illnesses and sustain and nourish life. Salutations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of all vegetation.

नमो उच्चैर्घोषायाऽऽक्रन्दयते पत्तीनां पतये नमः ॥ १२

nama uccairghoṣāyākṛandayate pattīnām pataye namaḥ (12)

12. Salutation to the one as all great loud sounds, who makes the enemy cry and who is the commander and protector of foot-soldiers.

uccairghoṣāya namaḥ: All natural loud sounds like the crack of lightning, thunder, stormy oceans and strong winds are powerful and awe-inspiring. All loud animal sounds like the roar of a lion or the trumpet of an elephant can also be scary. The Kenyan unification call

'Harambe' which in Swahili language now means 'pull together' is derived from the words 'Har Ambe' shouted by Indians to pull heavy loads when they were building the railways in Kenya. There is also the loud plea of devotees to God for mercy like 'pāhi mām, trāhi mām' (Do protect me, remove my afflictions). The loud band and war cries like 'Hara Hara Mahadeva' fill the army with courage and enthusiasm. The loud cry of victory to God (jai jaikāra) by devotees fills their heart with love.

Bhīṣmācārya declared war with the loud blowing of the conch, accompanied by different war instruments. The Pandavas along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and their commanders, responded by blowing their respective conches.

This heart-rending sound reverberated in the entire battlefield and filled their enemies, the Kauravas and their army, with fear.⁴⁴ Salutations to Rudra as all great loud sounds.

akrandayate namah: Salutations to Rudra, who makes the enemy quiver and cry in fear and make the devotees cry in love.

patīnām pataye namah: A 'patti' consisted of chariots, elephants, horses and foot soldiers in the proportion 1:1:3:5. For example, one platoon 'akṣauhini' consisted of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65610 horses and 109,350 foot-soldiers. Imagine the scale of the Mahabharata war in which eighteen akṣauhinis participated! Salutations to Rudra, who is the commander and protector of every unit of foot-soldiers, a platoon, a battalion or a brigade.

नमः कृत्स्नवीताय धावते सर्वनां पतये नमः ॥ १३

namaḥ kṛtsnavītāya dhāvate sattvanām pataye namaḥ. (13)

13. Salutation to the one who surrounds all, who runs and who is the Lord and protector of all noble and virtuous people.

kṛtsnavītāya namaḥ: The defence forces in the present day consists of the army, navy and the air force, each with many different sections. The internal and external defence of the country, especially one which is under threat like India, has a truly huge defence machinery. God is the one who surrounds the enemies from all sides using this machinery (kṛtsnam sainyaṁ veśitam iti). Prostrations to Rudra, the all surrounding defender and commander of all defence forces. Also, salutations to Rudra who is all pervading (kṛtsnam veśitam).

dhavate namaḥ: Salutations to Rudra who runs after the enemy or chases away the enemy in war and also chases them away from His devotees. He also runs to protect and save His devotees. When Draupadi called out to Sri Kṛṣṇa for help, He came dressed as He was and protected her chastity. He ran carrying the chariot wheel towards Bhīṣmācārya in order to protect Arjuna from his arrows. As a cowherd, He ran behind the cows in order to tend them. Salutations to Rudra, who runs to protect and save His devotees.

⁴⁴ स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् । नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ - भगवद् गीता-१.१९

Śrī Kṛṣṇa considered it wiser to withdraw from the battle with Jarasandha and leave Mathurā along with its people to save them. Jarasandha called Him Ranachoda one who ran away or left the battlefield. However, that which is a slur for a coward who runs away from a challenge, became His adored epithet.

sattvanām pataye namah: Salutations to Rudra, who is the Lord and protector of all noble and virtuous people.

Anuvāka 1.3

नमः सहमानाय निव्याधि॑नं
आव्या॑धिनीनां पतये॑ नमः ॥ १

Nama ḥ sahamānāya nivyādhinā
āvyādhinīnā ṛṇ pataye namo nama ḥ (1)

1. Salutation to the one who defeats enemies and forbears, who totally vanquishes the enemies and who is the commander and protector of all army encirclements and sieges.

sahamānāya namaḥ: Salutations to Rudra who defeats all the enemies outside and inside us.

Forgetting God who has given us everything is a huge mistake. Yet He never forgets us. Not only does God forbear all the wrongs we do, but He also forgives us for the wrong we do. We get and forget, whereas He gives and forgives! Salutations to Rudra who forbears and forgives and also gives us the strength to forbear and forgive.

nivyādhine namaḥ: Even a defeated and weakened enemy can regroup, empower and then attack. Salutations to Rudra who decides and then totally vanquishes the enemies (niścayena viśeṣa vyādhim).

āvyādhinīnām pataye namaḥ: Some armies attack a few strategic targets that causes the defeat of the army, like the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some armies surround the enemy from all sides cutting out their supplies and reinforcement, forcing their surrender and defeat, like in the Battle of Tikrit against ISIS or the Cakravyūha in the Mahabharata war. Salutations to Rudra, who is the commander of all army encirclements and sieges.

The following seven mantras (2nd to 8th) are very interesting and unique. Here, Rudra as God is saluted as various types of thieves and as their protector and Master. This needs some understanding.

The whole universe is the Cosmic Form of God. This includes all living beings the good, bad and the ugly. Hence, all criminals too are His forms. Does that make God a criminal? No. He is all forms, yet transcends all forms. For example, everything made of gold is gold - even an idol of Satan. That does not make gold a Satan or satanic.

The following mantras give us a vision to see beyond names and forms and realize the divinity inherent in all -even in criminals.

Creation is made up of the five elements and the three qualities noble and knowledge (sattva), active and passionate (rajas) and the ignoble and dull (tamas). Prompted by rajas and tamas, people do criminal activities. God enlivens, sustains and nourishes all. He does

not stop the air supply to the criminal. He has given the choice and freewill to humans to make or mar their lives, but has also given us a conscience that tells us what is right and wrong and a will to avoid the wrong. He is the indweller in all and a guide to all who seek Him - even a criminal. In fact, all pray to Him the criminal, to succeed in his crime; the victim, to be saved from the criminal; and the police, to succeed in catching the criminal. All receive results of actions as ordained by Him. Also, no one is a thief 24/7. Only when a person is thieving, he is a thief. That, of course, does not give him the right to say, "I was a thief last night, but I am a different person today and therefore innocent." However, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "One may top the list of criminals, but if he decides to change and worships Me (follows Dharma), I consider him good as he has given a new direction to his life."⁴⁵ No one is beyond redemption. Saint Ekanātha said, "Indeed God takes care of all beings"⁴⁶ - even the ferocious, violent, cunning and deceptive.

The power of the name of God is such that even if a criminal chants His name, his sins get exhausted as also his sinful tendencies.

नमः ककुभाय निषङ्गिणे स्तेनानां पतये नमः ॥ २

namaḥ Kakubhāya niāṣan gi ṇe stenānā m pataye nama ḥ (2)

2. Salutation to the one who is eternally great, who holds the sword and who is the Lord and protector of thieves who steal, keeping their identity hidden.

kakubhāya namaḥ: Great men have fallen in the eyes of people through one actual or seemingly wrong act. But, Sri Kṛṣṇa remains the darling of His devotees when He steals butter and pranks the gopis. Salutations to the eternally great Rudra.

nisangine namaḥ: An 'astra' is a weapon released by a machine like an arrow shot from a bow or a missile launched from a missile launcher. It can also be a hand grenade thrown by the hand. A 'śastra' is a weapon like a sword which is used by keeping it in the hand. Salutations to Rudra who holds the sword.

stenānām pataye namaḥ: There are many types of thieves. Here, the word 'stena' is used for those who keep their identity hidden with masks and the like, and steal at night (gupta cora). They may be house breakers or cat burglars who climb walls and enter through upstairs windows or doors. They may be armed and may even harm. Those who plagiarize are called 'sāhittika cora', those who evade taxes are called 'kara cora', and those who avoid work are called "kama cora"! God is the protector of all. In ancient Greek mythology, Hermes is considered as the god of thieves for his cunning insight and is also considered the protector of travellers. Salutations to Rudra, the master and protector of all-even thieves and the arms like swords used in carrying out their robbery.

⁴⁵ अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् । साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥ भगवद् गीता-९३०

⁴⁶ सकल जीवांश्च करितो सम्भाल ।

who do not share the profits with all who have worked to achieve success are thieves (sthena)⁴⁷.

Those ungrateful people who do not give due credit to those who help them achieve success and usurp all the name and fame for themselves are also called 'stena.' Also, selfish people
Salutations to Rudra who is the master and protector of even ungrateful and selfish people.

नमो निषङ्गिणं इषुधिमते तस्कराणां पतये नमः॥ ३॥

namo Niṣa ṅ gi ṇa iṣudhimate taskarā ṇ ā m pataye nama ḥ(3)

3. Salutation to the one who has set His arrow on the bow, who has a quiver (full of arrows) and who is the Master and protector of thieves who thief in broad daylight.

niṣaṅgiṇa iṣudhimate namah: It was said earlier that Rudra protects with a bow, ever ready to be used (ātātāvin - 1.2.7). Here, niṣaṅgiṇa means one who has set his arrow on the bow. He also has a quiver full of arrows. Salutations to Rudra who is well armed and ever ready for any challenge.

taskarāṇām pataye namah: 'Taskara' means a smuggler, a drug runner or one who thieves in broad daylight. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the master thief and who is the protector of all such thieves.

नमो वञ्चते परिवञ्चते स्तायुनां पतये नमः॥ ४

namo Vañcate parivañcate stayūnā m pataye namaḥ(4)

4. Salutation to the one who is an occasional cheater, who is a habitual cheater and who is the Lord and protector of those who cheat remaining close by.

vancate namah: One who gains trust of another and uses it to deceive and steal from them is called 'vañca'. Such cheating is also done online in today's world. An embezzler converts property entrusted to his care and fraudulently uses it for himself. A shoplifter pretends to be a customer and robs despite guards and cameras. One such person was asked by the salesman what he was looking for. He said, "An opportunity!" Another known shoplifter was scrutinized for all 'in' his trolley. He was actually stealing the trolley! Salutations to Rudra who appears as the opportunist and occasional cheater, and master and protector of all opportunist cheaters.

parivañcate namah: There are some who are habitual cheaters and do so at every opportunity and in all their transactions. They live on dishonesty, deception and stealth. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as the habitual cheater and the master and protector of such habitual cheaters.

⁴⁷ तैर्दत्तानप्रदायेभ्यो यो मुञ्जे स्तेन एव सः। भगवद् गीता-३१२

stāyūnām pataye namah: Then there are the professional and master cheaters who live among us and scam hundreds of people in a big way. Victor Lustig, a con artist, sold the Eiffel Tower twice! God's māyā, deceives us and robs us of our peace and happiness. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as the master deceiver (Mayavi) and the master and protector of all con men and swindlers.

नमो॑ निचे॒रवे॑ परिच॒रायार॑ण्यानां॒ पत॑ये नमः॑ ॥ ५

namo nicerave paricarāya āra ṇ yānā ṁ pataye nama ḥ (5)

5. Salutation to the one who steals from those he serves, who moves around and steals in public places and who is the Lord of all dacoits and bandits.

nicerave namah: These are people who serve us and then steal from us. The lady of the house did not want to embarrass the maid who had stolen a ring, so she took it back and replaced it in the cupboard. The maid in indignity said, "I resign. I do not want to work for those who steal back!" God serves us by stealing our pride. Salutations to Rudra in the form of one who steals from those he serves.

paricarāya namah: Those that move around and steal in public places are 'paricara'. Pickpockets like magicians use sleight of hand, distraction, misdirection and speed to rob people even in crowded places. Muggers attack and rob in public places whereas heisters hold up people and rob. There are hijackers who steal goods in transit and kidnappers who abduct people and hold them captive for ransom. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as the master stealer and master and protector of all master stealers.

aranyānām pataye namah: There are bandits and dacoits who rob, and if resisted, even murder people in isolated places like forests. Pirates hijack ships in high seas and loot them, and highway robbers loot travelers in less travelled roadways. The transformation of the notorious dacoit, Ratnākara, into the famous Sage Vālmīkī, the author of Rāmāyaṇa is noteworthy. He was such a die-hard dacoit that when he was asked to chant God's name 'Rāma Rāma' by Sage Nārada, he could only say marā marā (kill and die).

However, God is indeed the savior of all, Sri Kṛṣṇa says that even the worst among us can be saved from the worst of our sins by Self-knowledge received by His blessings.⁴⁸ Salutations to Rudra, the Master and protector of all dacoits and bandits.

नमः॑ सू॒का॒वि॒भ्यो॒ जिघाँ॑स॒द्भ्यो॒ मुष्ण॑तां पत॑ये नमः॑ ॥ ६

namass ṛ kāvibhyo jighāsadbhyo muṣ ṇ atā ṁ pataye namo nama ḥ(6)

⁴⁸ सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि । . भगवद् गीता.४.३६

6. Salutation to the one who appears as those who possess weapons for their protection, who are desirous of destroying others and who is the Lord and protector of all looters and plunderers of grains.

srkā vibhṛyo namah: One who carries a weapon (srka) for one's protection, especially the vajra - is called 'srkāvi'. Salutations to Indra who carries the thunderbolt. Everyone has the right to protect themselves. Many learn defense tactics like judo and karate, and some possess pepper sprays or even guns. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as those who possess weapons for their protection.

jighāmsadbhṛyo namah: Those who have scarce value for life and are violent by nature, kill and loot. The poachers kill an elephant or a rhino, just for its tusk. The infamous Veerappan, killed more than a hundred people, over 2000 elephants and smuggled millions of rupees worth of sandalwood and ivory. Salutations to Rudra, who is both, those who carry weapons to protect themselves and those who kill others with weapons and loot them.

muṣṇatām pataye namah: Some loot grains from granaries, steal crops from fields when they are ready for harvesting or loot trees that are laden with fruits. Some loot and plunder during wars and riots, from fields, stores and homes. Ramayana speaks of the army of monkeys under Angada, who in a victorious mood ate their fill of the fruits in the Madhuvan orchards, despite being prohibited by the guards. When reported, Sugrīva, their king, realized that their mission was accomplished and so did not mind their impetuous behaviour. Salutations to Rudra, the Master and protector of all looters and plunderers of food and grains.

नमोऽसिमद्भ्यो नक्तं चरद्भ्यः प्रकृन्तानां पतये नमः ॥ ७

namo'simadbhṛyo nakta m caradbhya ḥ prakr ntānā ṁ pataye nama ḥ(7)

7. Salutation to (the one who appears as) those who carry a sword, who wander in the night and who is the Lord and protector of all those who kill and rob.

asimadbhṛyo namah: Salutations to the sword-bearing Rudra.

naktañcaradbhṛyo namah: Some robbers prowl dark lanes at night, attacking and robbing people. Salutations to Rudra, the night prowling robber.

prakentānām pataye namah: Salutations to Rudra, the Master and protector of all who kill and rob.

नम उष्णीषिणे गिरिचराय कुलुञ्चानां पतये नमः ॥ ८

nama uṣ niṣine giricarāyakuluñcānā ṁ pataye namo nama ḥ(8)

8. Salutation to (Rudra as) the turban wearing robber, the mountain-dwelling robber and the Lord and protector of property thieves.

uṣṇiṣine namah: In the olden days, in India, people wore topis and turbans like they wore hats in England. These were signs of being respectable and gentlemanly. Those who cheat and rob using such garbs of respectability, were called 'uṣṇiṣi'. Salutations to Rudra, the turban wearing robber.

giricarāya namah: Mountains and forests are good hiding places. Also, it is easy to rob those who are camping or travelling in such places. Salutations to Rudra, the mountain-dwelling robber.

kuluñcānām pataye namah: Those who encroach or grab land illegally are 'kuluñcas'. Some forge, create false documents or bribe to get ownership of land and property. Salutations to Rudra, the Master and protector of property thieves.

Stolen identity: Claiming or taking away something that does not belong to us, without permission from the owner and claiming it to be ours is called stealing. At the most fundamental level, we are all thieves. It is said that we as individuals are in essence the supreme infinite Truth.⁴⁹ The body, mind and intellect are made up of the five elements and the three qualities. These belong to God, His prakṛti or māyā. Can we say that the air we breathe is 'I' or 'mine'? Yet we claim the body-mind-intellect as 'I' and 'mine'. Is this not a false claim, a misappropriation?

The reflection of the sun in a lake is due to the coming together of the sun and water. The 'I' notion, similarly, comes into play because of the pure Self (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) reflected in the body-mind-intellect. So, to whom does the 'I' notion belong to the Self or to the inert matter? So, is not my basic identity, the 'I' notion, a stolen one? Once we realize our true identity as the pure Self, all false claims are given up. Salutations to Rudra, the Self of all and the one who appears as the imposter, cheater, robber, and so on.

The next four mantras depict Rudra in the different stages of the use of His bow and arrow.

नम॑ इ॒षु॑म॒द्भयो॑ ध॒न्वा॒वि॒भ्य॑श्च वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ९

नम॑ आ॒तन्वा॒ने॒भ्यः॑ प्र॒ति॒धा॒ने॒भ्यश्च॑ वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ १०

नम॑ आ॒यच्छ॑द्भयो॑ वि॒सृ॒ज॒द्भ्यश्च॑ वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ११

नमो॑ऽस्स॒द्भयो॑ वि॒द्य॒द्भ्यश्च॑ वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ १२

⁴⁹ जीवो ब्रह्मव नापरः। ब्रह्मज्ञानावलीमाला-२०

namo iṣumadbhya o dhanvāibhyaś ca vo namaḥ (9)

namā ātanvānebhyaḥ pratīdadhānebhyaśca vo namaḥ (10)

namā āyacchādbhyo visrjadbhyaśca vo namaḥ (11)

namo syādbhyo vidhyādbhyaśca vo namāḥ(12)

9, 10, 11, 12. Salutation to (Rudra as) those who have arrows and to those who hold bows; to those who string the bow and to those who set the arrow on the bow; to those who draw back the string of the bow and to those who release the arrow; and to those who send the arrow that reaches the target and those who pierce the target.

The forms of Śiva more popular in the present day are Śiva-Pārvati riding on Nandi, Śiva-Pārvatī as Ardhanārīśvara, Śiva in meditation, the dancing Śiva, and of course, the very common Śivalinga.

The bow-arrow bearing tribal form of Śiva - Kirāta rūpa which He assumed to battle with Arjuna and the bow-arrow bearing Śiva who killed the Tripurasuras is not that commonly seen. However, the Sage of Sri Rudra Sūktam seems to have realized and seen the bow-arrow bearing Śiva, as we see many mantras indicating this.

The strings of a string instrument are tightened 'just right' before it is played. The gun user cleans and prepares the gun, loads it, then aims and shoots the target. Similarly, one with bow and arrow (iṣumad, dhanvāvi), strings the bow (ātanvāni), then sets the arrow on the bow (pratīdadhāni), then draws back the string poised to shoot (āyacchad), aims and releases the arrow (visrjad) which then shoots towards the target (asyad) and finally pierces it (vidhyad). Human effort is seen only till the arrow is released. The travelling of the arrow and its piercing the target happen by the laws of nature. We can see God in the skill and strength of the archer and his instruments and in the laws of nature that govern all actions - from start to finish. Salutations to Rudra as the skilled archer Kirāta and all skilled archers.

An action does not stop with our seen effort. It ends when we get its result. For example, between giving the exam and getting the result, there are many things that can happen which are not in our hands. God is the one that presides over all actions till they culminate in the results that we reap. Salutations to Rudra as the one who presides over actions (karma-adhyakṣa) and is the giver of results (karma-phala-dātā).

Meditation and Realization is beautifully described with the metaphor of the bow and arrow. Om or the Upaniṣad mantra is like the bow, the meditator is like the arrow and the supreme Truth is the target. With an alert mind we meditate on Om and thereby the individual, like the arrow piercing the target, becomes one with the supreme Truth.⁵⁰ He realizes his true nature. Salutations to Rudra, the meditator, the realizer, the realized Truth and the one who makes it happen.

50 प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते । अप्रमत्तेन वेदध्वजं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ मुण्डक उपनिषद्-२.२.४

The next three mantras (13-15) enable us to see God in the most ordinary activities of our own life and in others.

नम॑ आसी॑नेभ्यः॒ शया॑नेभ्यश्च वो नमः॑ ॥ १३

नमः॑ स्व॒पद्भ्यो॒ जाय॑द्भ्यश्च वो नमः॑ ॥ १४

नम॑स्तिष्ठ॑द्भ्यो धाव॑द्भ्यश्च वो नमः॑ ॥ १५

namaāśīnebhyāḥ śayānebhyāścavō namaḥ (13)

namaḥ svāpadbhyō jāgrādbhyaśca vō namaḥ(14)

namāstiṣṭhādbhyō dhāvadbhyaśca vō namaḥ (15)

13, 14, 15. Salutation to (Rudra as) those who are sitting and to those who are in a reclining posture; to those who are sleeping (dreaming) and to those who are awake; and to those who are standing and to those who are running.

'In birth, life and death and in all experiences - sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika - the wise men see God/Truth with the eye of knowledge, whereas, the deluded ones see not this most evident Truth."⁵¹ Actions and the instruments of action are inert and dependent on God/Consciousness.⁵² When asked by a devotee to show God, Śrī Ramana Maharshi said, "I can show, but you may not see." When he was insisted upon, he moved his finger and said, "See God!" The devotee was puzzled. Śrī Ramana Maharshi explained, "Were it not for life/Consciousness, this finger could not move nor would you have seen it." Salutations to Rudra who is seen as all those who perform ordinary daily activities like sitting, sleeping, dreaming, waking, standing and running. Salutations also to those sitting in meditation, standing guard on duty, running marathons, and so on.

We see Śiva seated on the Nandi, Viṣṇu reclining on the thousand-hooded serpent, Hanuman standing ever ready to serve and Śrī Kṛṣṇa running to save Draupadi. Salutations to Rudra in all these divine forms.

It is said that the fortune or luck of those who are inactive or lazy, sleeps, of those who sit, sits, of those who stand, stands and of those who start walking, walks.⁵³ Therefore, we are asked to 'walk the talk' and we should always keep moving forward and work hard.⁵⁴ Salutations to Rudra in all these forms.

⁵¹ उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम्।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥ - भगवद् गीता-१५.१०

⁵² कर्म किं परं कर्म तज्जडम्। उपदेश सार-१

⁵³ आस्ते भग आसीनस्य शेते भाग्यं शयनस्य । तिष्ठद्भ्यो तिष्ठतस्य चरति चरतो भगः ॥ सुभाषितम्

⁵⁴ चरैवेति चरैवेति । ऋगू वेद ऐतरेय ब्राह्मणम्-७.१५

The wisemen are ever awake to the Truth, to which the ordinary ignorant person is asleep or unaware.

The ordinary person is ever awake to the false world, to which the wisemen are asleep or are unaware.⁵⁵ Therefore, the Upaniṣads say, "Arise, awake and attain the highest Truth."⁵⁶ Salutations to Rudra as both the wisemen and the ignorant men.

नमः सुभाभ्यः सभापतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १६

namāssābhābhyāssābhapātibhyaśca vo namaḥ (16)

16. Salutation to (Rudra as) all assemblies and the head of all assemblies.

sabhābhyo namaḥ: A hall, court gathering, an assembly of people or a meeting of people of authority is called a 'sabha'. We see many parliament sessions or important gatherings, where instead of civil discussions, those assembled are unruly, disrespectful, rude and disruptive. The Mahabharata says, 'An assembly is no true assembly if there are no wise and experienced people who speak what is right and the truth and are not deceptive.'⁵⁷ Salutations to Rudra as all assemblies and all those gathered in such assemblies.

sabhāpatibhyaśca namaḥ: The speaker of the assembly guides the proceedings of the assembly. Without the presence of a King, President or Chairman of the board, the laws passed or decisions taken are invalid. Salutations to Rudra, the king, leader, head and convener of all assemblies.

The sanctum sanctorum of the Chidambaram Temple in Tamil Nadu, India, is called 'Chit Sabha'. Śiva is worshipped here as the space of pure Consciousness and the element of space (Cid-ambara). God is also worshipped as a Śivalinga. Here, in the presence of great sages, saints, deities and devotees, Śiva as Naṭarāja, performs the Cosmic Dance (tandava nṛtya). He is therefore called Cidsabheśa or Sabhāpati. Salutations to Rudra as Naṭarāja, the Lord of the Chidambaram Temple.

नमो अश्वेभ्योऽश्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १७

namo aśvebhyośvapātibhyaśca vo namaḥ (17)

17. Salutation to (Rudra as) all horses and to the master of all horses.

⁵⁵ या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।

यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥ भगवद् गीता-२.६९

⁵⁶ उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत । कठोपनिषद्-३.१४

⁵⁷ न सा सभा यत्र न सन्ति वृद्धा न ते वृद्धा ये न वदन्ति धर्मम् । नासौ धर्मो यत्र न सत्यमस्ति न तत्सत्यं यच्छलेनानुविद्धम् ॥ - महाभारत उद्योग पर्व-३५.५८

aśvebhyo namah: In the past, horses and horse-driven chariots were one of the main forms of transport. The horses not only have a lot of horsepower, but are swift and trainable. They were used extensively in wars and hunting. Horse races and polo are a form of sport even to date. Salutations to Rudra, as all horses.

Hayagrīva is the horse-faced incarnation of Viṣṇu who killed the demon and restored the Vedas. He is considered as knowledge incarnate (jñānāvatāra) who destroys our ignorance. Salutations to Rudra as Hayagrīva.

aśvapātibhyaśca namah: Horse riders, horse owners, soldiers of the cavalry and kings who command all cavalries are 'aśvapātis'. A cavalier attitude may be off hand and unconcerned, but a cavalier (horseman) cannot afford to be so. Salutations to Rudra as the rider, master and protector of all horses.

Anuvāka I.4

नमः आव्याधिनाभ्यो विविध्यन्तीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १

namá avyādhīnābhyo vīvidhyāntībhyāśca vo namaḥ (1)

1. Salutations to the one whose army destroys from all sides and whose army destroys in special ways.

āvyādhinībhyo namah: Rudra was saluted as one who defeats the enemies, totally vanquishes them and destroys them by surrounding them (namah sahamānāya nivvyādhina āvyādhinīnām pataye namah 1.3.1). Here, His army that destroys from all sides (āvyādhini) and defeats the enemies in various ways (vivyādhini) is saluted.

God is neither a man or a woman and so can appear as either. In India, God is widely worshipped in all feminine forms. The feminine forces like dākinī, hākinī, piśācinī, who by their mere look or sighting can trouble and destroy, are also called 'āvyādhinis'. Salutations to Rudra in the form of such forces and one who protects us from such forces when directed at us.

vividhyantībhyāśca namah: The feminine forces like Śītālā, Mariammā and Viśūcikā, who can trouble and destroy in different ways, are also indicated here as 'vivyādhinīs'. They are worshipped for their ability to cure diseases like small pox, chicken pox and cholera. Salutations to Rudra in the form of these destructive and curative forces.

नमः उगणाभ्यस्तृगं हृतीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ २

namaḥ ugaṇābhyastrīṃhṛtībhyāśca vo namaḥ (2)

2. Salutation to the one who appears as great followers like the seven great feminine powers that bless and who appears as all harmful and destructive forces like Durgā.

uganābhyo namah: The Sapta Mātṛkās, the seven mother figures, being great powers that bless (utkrsta gaṇā), especially in conception, birth and protection of children, are referred to here as 'ugaṇā.' They are Brahmāṇi, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrānī and Camunda. They adopted and took care of Skanda, the child of Siva and Pārvatī. In Varaha Purāṇa it is said that the Sapta Mātṛkās symbolize Self-knowledge (ātmavidyā) that killed the demon Andhakāśura (darkness of ignorance). Salutations to Rudra, as the caring and motherly protector and destroyer of ignorance.

trmhatībhyāśca namah: The feminine forces which appear ferocious and can harm and destroy like Durgā, Bagalamukhī and Chinnamastā are indicated here as trmhanā. It is important to note that all forces that can destroy can also bless and vice versa. Love can empower and attachment can harm. Salutations to Rudra as all harmful and destructive forces.

नमो॑ गृत्से॒भ्यो॑ गृत्सप॑तिभ्यश्च वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ३

namo grtsebhyo grtsapátibhyaśca vo namaḥ (3)

3. Salutation to the one in the form of all the greedy and indulgent ones and as the master of such people.

grtsebhyo namah: Those who are greedy and indulgent (gardhanaśila) are called 'grtsa'. Like fuel to fire, the greed of the greedy and the pleasure-seeking of the indulgent grows more when fed. God alone is full and ever-fulfilled, and therefore, all those who try to fulfil themselves with wealth and pleasure, unknowingly, seek God alone. Salutations to Rudra who is all the greedy and indulgent ones and their ultimate goal of total fulfilment.

grtsapatibhyo namah: The feeling of enoughness or satisfaction controls greed. Salutations to Rudra as the Master and protector of greedy and indulgent people and also the fulfilled and satisfied people.

नमो॑ व्राते॒भ्यो॑ व्रात॑पतिभ्यश्च वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ४

namo vrātēbhyo vrātapátibhyaśca vo namaḥ (4)

4. Salutation to the one in the form of associations of all professions and communities and as their guide and head.

vrātebhyo namah: A professional association or community group is called 'vrāta' (jati sangha). We have groups like Merchants Chamber, Engineers Association and Film Federation and communities like sonis (goldsmith), kumbhārs (potters) and lohārs (blacksmiths). Salutations to Rudra who appears as the associations of all professions and communities.

vrātapatibhyo namah: Some are nominated, some appointed by vote and some buy their way to become heads of professional associations as they have a big influence, power, name and fame associated with the post. Salutations to Rudra, as the guide, head and protector of all professional and community groups.

नमो॑ गु॒णे॒भ्यो॑ गु॒णप॑तिभ्यश्च वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ५

namo gaṇebhyo ganapátibhyaśca vo namaḥ (5)

5. Salutation to the one in the form of all ganas (attendants) and as their head.

gaṇebhyo namah: Just as we have professional, religious, social, political and community groups, the deities, demons, celestials, musicians, etc., too have their groups (gana). Śiva has His own entourage of close devotees like Nandi, Bhṛngi, Canda, Kundodara, Vyāghrapāda and Patañjalī and other groups of followers (ganas) like Bhūtas, Pretas,

Piśācas, Vetālas, Vināyakas and Pramathas. Salutations to Rudra as all ganas, especially Siva ganas.

ganapatibhyo namah: God is the guide, master and protector of all groups, especially the Siva ganas. Salutations to Rudra, the head of all groups.

नमो विरूपेभ्यो विश्वरूपेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ ६

namo virūpebhyo viśvarūpebhyaśca vo namaḥ (6)

6. Salutation to the one who appears as all who are disfigured and as all diverse forms.

virūpebhyo namah: God appears as all forms, even deformed and disfigured forms (vikṛta rūpa). Śiva gaṇas as ghosts and goblins look scary and act weird but are still accepted and loved by Śiva. Śiva Himself looks scary with a bare body smeared with ashes from the cremation ground, a necklace of skulls, snakes as ornaments, a face with three eyes and trident in hand. Menāvati fainted when she first saw Śiva, her future son-in-law, but Pārvatī, her daughter, performed severe austerities to attain Śiva as her husband. Some people with weird tattoos, piercings and hairstyles could look quite scary and to some, quite ugly. Salutations to Rudra, who looks quite terrible to some and who appears as all who are disfigured, deformed, ugly and terrible.

viśvarūpebhyo namah: God is the Cosmic Form (viśva rūpa), and therefore, all different forms (vividha rūpa), celestial, human or animal, are His forms. Also, because He is in essence without form (virupa), He can assume any and every form (viśva rūpa). Siva Himself incarnates in different forms like Naṭarāja, Kirāta and Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as all different forms.

नमो महद्भ्यः क्षुल्लकेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ ७

namo mahadbhyaḥ kṣullakebhyaśca vo namaḥ (7)

7. Salutation to the one who appears as the greatest and great among all and as the not so great among all.

mahadbhyo namah: The great, extraordinary, brilliant prodigies, geniuses, highly educated, wise and powerful people are worshipped and respected everywhere.⁵⁸ In India, elders too are respected. Salutations to Rudra, the greatest and the great among all (aiśvarya yukta).

kṣullakebhyo namah: God is also the not-so-great, the ordinary, the dullard, the uneducated, foolish, weak and childish persons. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the not so great among us.

⁵⁸ विद्वान् सर्वत्र पूज्यते । - सुभाषितम्

नमो रथिभ्योऽरथेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ ८

नमो रथेभ्यो रथपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ ९

namo rathibhyo' rathebhyaśca vo namaḥ (8)

namo rathebhyo rathapatibhyaśca vo namaḥ (9)

8. 9. Salutations to the one who appears in the form of those who come in chariots and as others who are without chariots; who appears as the chariots and as the master of the chariots.

rathibhyo, arathebhyo, rathebhyo, rathapatibhyo namah: From a simple one horse drawn buggy, a two-horse drawn war chariot to an eight-horse drawn royal carriage, there are many types and forms of chariots. The chariot, the one riding the chariot, the one without the chariot and the owner, protector and master of the chariot, are all God. Some own vehicles and are driven by chauffeurs while most owners drive themselves. Some ride on public transport and some walk to reach their destination. Salutations Rudra in all these forms.

The Kathopaniṣad has a beautiful metaphor. The body is like the chariot (vehicle), 'I' the sentient individual is its owner, the intellect is its driver and the thoughts of the mind are the reins by which the horses of the senses are controlled by the driver. The chariot traverses the roads of the sense pleasures, and because of the owner's identification with the vehicle, he becomes the doer of actions and the enjoyer and sufferer of the results.⁵⁹ Tulasīdāsa says that Rāvaṇa came to the battle with a chariot and Śrī Rāma without one.⁶⁰ The ignorant ones like Rāvaṇa identify with the body (rathi), whereas the Realized Masters like Śrī Rāma (viratha) and King Janaka of Mithila (Videha) do not. They become victorious in the battle of life. Salutations to Rudra as the body, the mind, intellect, senses and the individuals who own it and ones who do not identify with it and their Master and protector.

नमः सेनाभ्यः सेनान्निभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १०

namassenābhyah senānibhyaśca vo namaḥ (10)

10. Salutation to the one who appears as the entire army and as their commanders.

senābhyah senānibhyaśca namah: Salutations to Rudra as the entire army and the commanders and protectors of its different units.

⁵⁹ आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु । बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥ इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् । आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ - कठोपनिषद्-१.३३-४

⁶⁰ रावतु रखी विरथ रघुवीरा । - रामचरितमानस-६.७९१

नमः क्षत्तृभ्यः संग्रहीतृभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ ११

namaḥ kṣattrbhyassangrahītrbhyaśca vo namaḥ (11)

11. Salutation to the one who trains charioteers and who wields the reins of the chariots.

"The more you sweat in peacetime, the less you bleed in war.' Training and practice are important not just for the army but for every job, skill and profession. One who holds the reins well or one in total control of the chariot is called 'sangrahītr'. Training given by an expert and the trainer who is 'hands on' is even more effective. Salutations to Rudra, the one who trains charioteers and is Himself the expert charioteer.

An alert and discerning intellect is like the expert charioteer with complete control of the reigns of the horses and can lead us to our ultimate goal.⁶¹ Salutations to Rudra who trains our intellect and trains thinkers, as He is Himself the expert intellect and Master thinker.

नमस्तक्षभ्यो रथकारेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १२

namastakṣābhyo rathakārebhyaśca vo namaḥ (12)

12. Salutation to the one in the form of carpenters and chariot makers.

The architect designs the house and the constructor builds it. God is the carpenter (manufacturer) who makes the chariot (all vehicles) and their designer. Salutations to Rudra who is both the chariot maker and designer.

नमः कुलालेभ्यः कुमारीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १३

namaḥ kulālebhyaḥ karmārebhyaśca vo namaḥ (13)

13. Salutation to the one as pot-makers and blacksmiths.

Indian villages were self-sufficient in the sense that they could satisfy the basic material needs - food and products - of its villagers. Farmers, potters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths and the like were an integral part of this self-sufficient system. In the present day, everything is imported and outsourced, and therefore, there is much more inter-dependency. Even the most ordinary skilled workers, the experts and artists are all God's forms. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the pot makers, the blacksmiths and all other skilled workers, professionals and experts.

⁶¹ विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनः प्रग्रहवान्नरः ।

सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ - कठोपनिषद्-१.३.९

नमः पुञ्जिष्टेभ्यो निषा देभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १४

नमः इषुकृद्भ्यो धन्वकृद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १५

नमो मृगभ्यः श्वनिभ्यश्च वयो नमः ॥ १६

namaḥ puñjīṣṭebhyaḥ niṣādebhyaśca vo namaḥ (14)

namā iṣukṛdbhyaḥ dhanvakṛdbhyaśca vo namaḥ (15)

namo mṛgayubhyaśśvanibhyaśca vo namaḥ (16)

14, 15, 16. Salutations to the one as bird catchers and fishermen; as the makers of arrows and bows; as those who hunt animals and those who lead dogs.

Men have hunted from time immemorial for sustenance - as a training, for work and as a sport. They have shot birds flying in the sky, caught fish in waters and hunted animals on land.

The primitive hunting tools and tools of the past like fishing nets have now taken forms of fishing trawlers which catch tons of fishes with each trip into the sea. Also, the hunting accessories like hunting dogs have now become sophisticated drones. Hunting of birds and animals, especially for pleasure is no more considered legal or moral;

however, fishing goes on unrestricted. God appears as all forms of hunters, the makers of hunting tools, the hunting tools and their accessories. Salutations to Rudra, as all of them.

नमः श्वभ्यः श्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १७

namaḥ śvabhyaḥ śvapatibhyaśca vo namaḥ (17)

17. Salutation to the one in the form of dogs and as their masters.

Dogs are the most popular pets and considered man's best friend as they are loving, friendly and faithful. They are bred, groomed and cared for in this day at a lot of expense. All pet dogs are house trained. Police dogs are trained by experts to apprehend criminals and detect drugs and bombs. An encounter with a fierce looking large sniffing dog at the airport can be quite scary if you are not a dog-lover or if you are carrying drugs! Service dogs are trained to take care of the visually challenged or physically disabled people. Sheep dogs are trained to keep the sheep in check and hunting dogs to hunt. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the different types of dogs and their trainers, protectors, owners and masters.

Anuvāka 1.5

Each mantra of the following five anuvākas (5th to 9th) starts with a namah (prostration), but does not end with a namah as in the previous three anuvākas. The following anuvāka describes the special forms meant for worship and meditation (asādhāraṇa upāśya rūpa).

नमो भवाय च रुद्राय च ॥ १ ॥

namo bhavāya ca ruḍrāya ca (1)

1. Salutation to the one from whom the whole world emerges and who is the remover of sorrows.

One from whom the whole world emerges is 'Bhava'.⁶² Salutations to Rudra, the creator of the universe.

Rudra is the one who removes all diseases and sorrows of worldly existence.⁶³ Self-knowledge alone removes all sorrows.⁶⁴ Salutations to Rudra, the remover of sorrows and the giver of Self-Knowledge.

नमश्शर्वाय च पशुपतये च ॥ २ ॥

namassarvāya ca paśupatāye ca. (2)

2. Salutation to the one who destroys and who is the master of all ignorant beings.

sarvāya namah: One who destroys all at the time of deluge and one who destroys all our sins is called 'Sarva'. Salutations to Rudra, the destroyer.

paśupataye namah: It was already said - salutations to Rudra, the Lord and protector of the dull witted and animalistic beings (paśūnām pataye namah - 1.2.2). One who only sees but does not think is a paśu (paśyati na tu cintayati). We do not think deeply about the most important and fundamental aspects of life and are ignorant about who or what we are in our true nature and the ultimate goal of our human life. Salutations to Rudra, the master and protector of all ignorant individuals.

नमो नीलग्रीवाय च शितिकण्ठाय च ॥ ३ ॥

namo nilāgrīvāya ca śitikaṇṭhāya ca. (3)

⁶² यस्मात् सर्व जगत् भवतीति ।

⁶³ संसाररुजं च दुःखं द्रावयतीति ।

⁶⁴ तरति शोकमात्मवित् । - छान्दोग्य उपनिषद्-७.१.३

3. Salutation to the one who appears as both the blue-necked and the white-necked.

The blue neck of Rudra as blue sky of the Cosmic Form (1.1.8-9) and the one who forbears the troubles for the sake of others was mentioned earlier (1.1.16).

Śiva has a fair complexion (karpūra-gauram); so, His throat too is fair (śitikantha). When He swallowed poison, His throat became blue (nilagrīva). Some get agitated by a tiny pimple on the face. God is beautiful and unaffected whether He is white-necked or blue-necked.

Anti-venom is made from snake poison. We too, like Śiva, have the antidote for all our problems. The poison that the world gives belongs to the world, not to us, even if we have to take it. Like Śiva, we too should not possess it; just forbear it, as what is taken on can also be given up. Salutations to God as Rudra, who appears as both the blue-necked and the white-necked.

नमः कपर्दिने च व्युप्तकेशाय च ॥ ४ ॥

namāḥ kapardinē ca vyūptakeśāya ca. (4)

4. Salutation to the one who is with matted locks and to the one who is clean-shaven.

Siva with the matted locks is called 'Kapardi'. Here, it also represents Śiva's incarnation - Virabhadra - and all renunciates who perform austerities. 'Vyupta-keśa' is one who is clean-shaven. This also refers to Śiva's incarnations like Durvāsā and great renunciates who propagate the supreme knowledge like Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. Salutations to Rudra as one who is with matted locks, one who is clean-shaven and all renunciates who come in different guises.⁶⁵

नमस्सहस्राक्षाय च शतधन्वने च ॥ ५ ॥

namassahasrākṣāya ca śatadhanvane ca. (5)

5. Salutation to the one with thousand eyes and who has countless weapons (bows).

Earlier, Rudra as the Sun with thousands of rays was called 'Sahasrākṣa' (1.1.9). God has thousands of eyes. It means that He sees everything and everyone. He is omniscient. Also, Indra appears with thousand eyes. God has hundreds of bows (śatadhanvani). It means that He is omnipotent and wields all forms of weapons. Physical weapons bring physical destruction, but knowledge destroys ignorance, and virtues destroy vices. Salutations to Rudra who is the omniscient and omnipotent, and also one who appears as the thousand-eyed Indra and bears all weapons.

⁶⁵ जटिलो मुण्डी लुधितकेशः काषायाम्बरबहुकृतवेषः । - भज गोविन्दम्-१४

नमो गिरिशाय च शिपिविष्टाय च ॥ ६ ॥

namo giriśāyā ca śipiviṣṭāya ca. (6)

6. Salutation to the one who lives on the mountain and who pervades and dwells in all beings.

God lives in all mountains and has His special abode in Mount Kailāsa. He pervades all beings and dwells in all and is, therefore, called Śipiviṣṭa.⁶⁶ This name also refers to God as Viṣṇu. Also, one who enters the rays of the sun is called Śipiviṣṭa.⁶⁷ Salutations to Rudra as Kailasa-pati and Viṣṇu, the indweller of all.

नमो मीढुष्टमाय चेषुमते च ॥ ७ ॥

namo mīdhuṣṭāmāya ceṣūmate ca. (7)

7. Salutation to the one who appears as rains that showers us with plenty of food and prosperity and who has a bow.

In the first anuvāka, Śiva was addressed as 'Midhuṣṭama' the fulfiller of all desires (I.1.13). Here, Midhuṣṭama means God who appears as the rains that showers us with plenty of food and prosperity and showers plentifully as grace and joy.⁶⁸ It also means God, who imparts the seed of creation (Hiranyagarbha).⁶⁹ Salutations to Rudra, the bow and arrow wielding God, who appears as abundance of rains of prosperity and grace and the creator of the world.

The world is full of opposites and contradictions. The next three mantras show us that God and His greatness is very evidently seen in them.

नमो ह्रस्वाय च वामनाय च ॥ ८ ॥

नमो बृहते च वर्षीयसे च ॥ ९ ॥

नमो वृद्धाय च सुवृध्वने च ॥ १० ॥

namo hr̥ṣvāya ca vāmanāya ca. (8)

namo bṛh̥ate ca varṣīyase ca. (9)

namo vṛddhāya ca saṁvṛdhvane ca. (10)

⁶⁶ शिपयः पशवः प्रविष्टः इति ।

⁶⁷ शिपयो रश्मयस्तेषु निविष्ट इति । विष्णुसहस्रनाम शङ्कर भाष्य-२७३

⁶⁸ यदा त्वमभिवर्षस्यथेमाः प्राण ते प्रजाः । आनन्दरूपास्तिष्ठन्ति कामायान्नं भविष्यतीति ॥ प्रश्नोपनिषद्-२.१०

⁶⁹ मीढवान् सेचकः । अतिशयेन सेक्ता मीढुष्टमः ।

8, 9, 10. Salutation to the one who is short and who is small, the big and the one full of virtues, the virtuous elderly and the wise.

God is the dwarf (hrasva) and the giant (brhat), the small (hrasva) and the big (brhat), the child (hrasva) and the elderly (vṛddha). He incarnated as Vāmana, a short form and then took the huge form of Trivikrama. Whatever be His form, He is adorable and beautiful (vāmana sambhajanīya), virtuous (varṣīya) and wise (samvṛddha).

Sage Aṣṭāvakra, even when very young, defeated the great scholar Bandi, in the court of King Janaka, in scriptural debate (śāstrārtha). He was wise beyond his age. It means that we should respect knowledge, virtues and wisdom irrespective of age and other outer considerations.

As children we are sweet and adorable. As adults we should be virtuous, and as elders, we must grow to become wise. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the short and small, the adorable and sweet, the big and huge, the virtuous elderly and wise.

Space is vast beyond imagination (brhat), but the supreme Truth is the infinite unqualified bigness (brhattamatvāt brahma). It is vāmana, the blissful Self, seated in the cave of our heart and worshipped by the senses with the offerings of the sense objects.⁷⁰ Salutations to Rudra, the infinite Blissful Truth/Self.

नमो अग्रियाय च प्रथमाय च ॥ ११ ॥

namo agriyāya ca prathamāya ca. (11)

11. Salutation to the one who exists before everything and who is always the first.

agriyāya namaḥ: God walks ahead and protects His devotees (agrya) and leads seekers to the highest.⁷¹ Just as a poet has to exist before he writes a poem, God as the Creator exists before creation. Also, the Truth/Self as the one principle of Existence, exists before any existing objects or creation comes into existence.⁷² Salutations to Rudra who is ever-existing and exists before everything.

prathamaya namaḥ: God is also the first in everything Since He is the material and sentient cause of the world. He Himself manifests as the world and is therefore, the first born (prathama), Hiranyagarbha. He also appears as the first-born child, the first citizen of a city (Mayor), the one who comes first in any race, is on the top position, and worshipped or honoured the first. In the Rājasūya Yajña, Yudhisthira offered the first worship (agra pūjā) to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the most worshipful. It is said that the supreme Truth/Self, remaining

⁷⁰ मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते। कठोपनिषद्-२.५.३

⁷¹ अयं प्रकृष्टं पदं नयति मुमुक्षुनिति अग्रणीः। विष्णुसहस्रनाम शाङ्कर भाष्य-२१८

⁷² सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदु। - छान्दोग्य उपनिषद्-६.२.१

stationary, still outruns all fast runners like the senses, speech and mind. Salutations to Rudra who is always the first.

नमः॑ आ॒शवे चाजि॑राय॒ च ॥ १२ ॥

namá āśave cājirāya ca. (12)

12. Salutation to the one who is all-pervading and who appears as all those who are efficient in movement.

āśave namaḥ: One who is all-pervading is called Āśu (aśnoti vyāpnotiti). God pervades creation space-wise, time-wise and object-wise. Being spaceless, the Truth/Self pervades all. Salutations to the all-pervading Rudra.

ajirāya namaḥ: God as 'Āśu', being all-pervading, moves not, and as 'Ajira', He always moves. Ajira also means undecaying and ageless. God is ageless and efficient in His work and movements (gamana-kuśala), and in His ability to produce results without waste of time or energy. There is no waste in the Totality. Nothing is redundant, and everything is reused and recycled. Salutations to Rudra, the epitome of efficiency and who appears as all those who are efficient in work and movement.

नमः॑ शीघ्रि॑याय॒ च शी॒भ्याय॒ च ॥ १३ ॥

namaśśīghriyāya ca śībhyāya ca. (13)

13. Salutation to the one who is fast and quick and who appears as all aquatic beings.

śīghriyāya namaḥ: There are fast flowing rivers, fast speed bullet trains, quick lightning, fast winds and jet speed travelling. Light is the fastest in the phenomenal world. The mind is faster than light and God is even faster than the mind (manaso javīyah). He moves fast (śīghragāmī) and is quick to help His devotees. He exists as the Truth/Self that can be realized in a blink of an eye. Salutations to Rudra who is fast and quick.

śībhyāya namaḥ: God is in the flowing rivers as the beings - small or big - that thrive in their flow.⁷³ Salutations to Rudra as all aquatic beings.

नमः॑ ऊ॒र्म्याय॑ चाव॒स्वन्या॑य॒ च ॥ १४ ॥

namá ūrmyāya cāvāsvanyāya ca. (14)

14. Salutation to the one who is the indweller of all waves and wavy water bodies and who appears as the waveless and silent water bodies.

⁷³ शी॒भे उदक॑प्रवाहे भवः शी॒भ्यः ।

ürmyāya namaḥ: Waves are created by the friction between the wind and surface water. They rise and fall almost at the same place in the ocean, but appear to travel towards the shore. The flow of water and the waves in all water bodies are beautiful. The gentle sound of a ripple, the roar of the waves over the rocks or crash of waves at the beach, is also meditative and relaxing. There are also the sound waves, light waves and the thought waves. Salutations to Rudra, who is the indweller of all waves and wavy water bodies.

avasvanyāya namaḥ: Where there is no wind, there are no waves. The ocean or lakes when they are still, calm and soundless are called 'avasvanya'.⁷⁴ A mind that is still and has no noisy thought waves, is the still and silent lake of Consciousness. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as the waveless and silent water bodies and the thoughtless mind in a state of absorption.

नमस्स्रोतस्याय च द्वीप्याय च ॥ १५॥

namássrotasyāya ca dvīpyāya ca. (15)

15. Salutation to the one who (appears as and) dwells in all streams and islands.

srotasyāya namaḥ: 'Śībha' is a huge river and 'srota' is a stream or a rivulet. The source of water or a river is also called srota, like Gomukh is the srota of river Ganga and Amarkantak, of river Narmadā. God is the rivers of thoughts and also the Truth, their source. Salutations to Rudra, who dwells in all streams⁷⁵ and also in their source.

dvīpyāya namaḥ: Lakes, rivers and oceans have islands. Some countries like Indonesia is an archipelago - made of an extensive group of islands, whereas some countries like Śrī Laṅkā are single islands. Islands can be small islets or a huge country like Greenland or a whole continent like Australia. The Purāṇas speak of the seven 'dvīpas' - islands or continents-which are Jambu, Śaka, Kuśa, Plakṣa, Puṣkara, Śamala and Kauñca. India or Bharat is part of Jambu dvīpa. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as, and is the indweller of all islands.

⁷⁴ अवस्वने ध्वनिरहितजले भवः ।

⁷⁵ स्रोतसि प्रवाहे भवः ।

Anuvāka I.6

नमो॑ ज्येष्ठाय॑ च कनिष्ठाय॑ च ॥ १ ॥

नम॑ पूर्वजाय॑ चापरजाय॑ च ॥ २ ॥

नमो॑ मध्यमाय॑ चापगल्भाय॑ च ॥ ३ ॥

namō jyeṣṭhāya ca kaniṣṭhāya ca. (1)

namā pūrvajāya cāparajāya ca. (2)

namō madhyamāyācāpagalbhāya ca. (3)

1, 2, 3. Salutations to the one who appears as the eldest and the youngest, the cause and the effect, the in-between and the undeveloped and the underdeveloped.

God is the eldest (jyestha), the youngest (kanistha) and every one in between (madhyama). God incarnated as Śrī Rama the eldest son (jyestha putra) and as Śrī Kṛṣṇa the youngest child (kanistha putra). He is the one who is great in virtues, knowledge and power (jyestha) and one who is not so great (kanistha). He is the first and the best (jyestha), the last and the worst (kanistha) and everyone and everything in between (madhyama). He appears as the stability and sustenance between creation and destruction (madhyama).

He is the one born earlier (pūrvaja) and thereafter (aparaja). He is the immediate and ultimate cause (pūrvaja) and the immediate and consequent effect (aparaja). The unmanifest Prakṛti is the cause and Hiranyagarbha the effect, which itself is the cause of the gross world, which is its effect. God is the joke and the laughter that follows, the understanding of the joke and the joke of not understanding it!

God is the foetus in the womb and the infant whose senses are not fully developed (apagalbha) and all other beings with undeveloped mind and senses. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as the eldest and the youngest, the cause and the effect, the in-between, the undeveloped and the underdeveloped.

नमो॑ जघन्याय॑ च बुध्नियाय॑ च ॥ ४ ॥

namō jaghanyāya ca budhniyāya ca. (4)

4. Salutation to the one who appears as animals and plants and trees.

Animals like cows and horses which are born from the hind part are called 'jaghanya'.⁷⁶
Plants and trees which are born from roots are called budhniya.⁷⁷
Salutations to Rudra who manifests as all such animals, plants and trees.

नमस्सोभ्याय च प्रतिसर्याय च ॥ ५ ॥

namassobhyāya ca pratisaryāya ca. (5)

5. Salutation to the one who appears as all human beings and as all who wear the ritual thread.

sobhyāya namaḥ: The fructifying results of actions of previous births decide the place (sthāna) and the womb meritorious actions (punya) is births like deities in heaven, (yoni) in which we are reborn. The result of predominantly and the result of predominantly sinful actions (pāpa) is births like animals and demons. The human birth is a result of both in good measure.⁷⁸ Therefore, human beings are called sobhyaḥ - one born as a result of both merit and sin. Consequently, there is both joy and sorrow in our lives which many take quite philosophically (kabhi dhūpa kabhi chaun). Being human beings ourselves, we have maximum affinity and feelings towards other humans. Understanding that God is in the form of all human beings, hating someone is like hating God, and loving all is like loving God. Salutations to Rudra as all human beings born in the human world.

pratisaryāya namaḥ: 'Pratisara' is a red and yellow ritual thread tied by a priest usually on the right wrist of the man and left wrist of a woman as a protection, a vow or an intent of completing the ritual. When tied during a wedding ceremony, it is a mark of creating a binding relationship. It is also tied around the pot of water (kalaśa) used during rituals. It is also called kañkaṇa, kautuka, mauli or rakṣā sūtra. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as all who wear the ritual thread and worship God by performing rituals and by taking up vows.

नमो याम्याय च क्षेम्याय च ॥ ६ ॥

namo yāmyāya ca kṣemyāya ca. (6)

6. Salutation to the one who is the indweller of those in hell and heaven.

Generally, Yamaloka is considered as hell and Kṣemaloka is heaven. Salutations to Rudra who is the indweller of those in heaven and hell.

Fear of death disciplines and controls our life. The God of Death (Yama) is therefore, the ultimate controller.⁷⁹ Kṣema means well-being. Liberation (mokṣa) is the ultimate well-being for all. Salutations to Rudra who binds and liberates, and who disciplines for our well-being.

⁷⁶ जघने पृष्ठभागे भवः जघन्यः ।

⁷⁷ बुन्ने मूले भवः बुधन्यः ।

⁷⁸ पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन पापं उभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् । - प्रश्नोपनिषद्-३.७

⁷⁹ यमः संयमतामहम् । - भगवद्-गीता-१०.२९

नम॑ उ॒र्व॒र्याय॑ च॒ ख॒ल्याय॑ च॒ ॥ ७ ॥

namā urvāryāya ca khalyāya ca. (7)

7. Salutation to the one who appears as the crops in the fertile land, the threshing ground and the granary.

A fertile land full of crops is called 'urvarya bhūmi.' After harvesting, the crops are taken to the threshing floor called 'khala sthāna', and the grains thereafter are stored in a granary, also referred to as 'khala'. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the crops in the fertile land, the threshing ground and the granary. Interestingly, Rudra is also the Master and protector of one who steals these crops and grains (muṣṇatām pati - 1.3.6).

A fertile land gives bountiful crops again and again. Our mind is like a fertile land that produces new thoughts and ideas which become great inventions and creations. The human body is the fertile field through which we produce bountiful crops of karmas which get collected and stored (sañcita). Salutations to Rudra who dwells in all creative minds and their creations and in all human bodies, their actions and their results.

नम॑ः॒श्लो॒क्याय॑ च॒ऽव॒सान्याय॑ च॒ ॥ ८ ॥

namaśślokyāya cā vasānyāya ca. (8)

8. Salutation to the one who is established in the mantras of the Vedas and the end portion of the Vedas.

God, who is praised through hymns and verses (śloka), is the most praiseworthy (uttama-śloka) and the most auspicious and famous (punya-śloka). He is the one expounded by the mantras of the Vedas (Veda-pratipādyā). It is God alone who is established as the infinite Truth by Vedānta (Vedānta-pratipadya) - the end or ultimate portion of the Vedas (avasana). Salutations to Rudra, the famous, praiseworthy God with attribute (Saguna Brahma) and the attributeless Truth (Nirguna Brahma).

नमो॑ व॒न्याय॑ च॒ क॒क्ष्याय॑ च॒ ॥ ९ ॥

namo vanyāya ca kakṣyāya ca. (9)

9. Salutation to the one who is the indweller of all that grows in forests and also in creepers (and dead trees found in dense forests).

God has already been saluted as the protector and Master of forests (vanānām pataye namah - 1.2.8), trees (vṛkṣāṇām pataye namah 1.2.9) and the dense interiors of forests (kakṣāṇām pataye namah 1.2.10). Here, 'vanya' refers to all that is born and grows in forests, and 'kakṣya' refers to creepers and even dead trees that are found in dense forests. Dead trees too provide food and shelter to many creatures. Salutations to Rudra who is the

indweller of all forms of trees, creatures of forests, creepers and dead trees found in dense forests.

नमः॑श्रवाय॑ च प्रति॒श्रवाय॑ च ॥ १० ॥

namáśśrāvāya ca pratiśrāvāya ca. (10)

10. Salutation to the one who is both the sound and its echo.

God is both the sound and its echo. Śrava is what is heard (śrūyate iti). We hear what we speak to others (śrava). They in turn respond through words which come back to us (pratiśrava). We are therefore, told to speak truthful, kind and loving words with a prayer that we too hear auspicious words.⁸⁰ The words of the great echo in our minds and are often quoted (pratiśrava). Salutations to Rudra who is the words. sound and its echo, words and their response.

नमः॑ आ॒शुषे॑णाय चाशु॒रथाय॑ च ॥ ११ ॥

namá āśuṣeṇāya cāśurathāya ca. (11)

11. Salutation to the one in the form of fast-moving army and fast-moving chariot (vehicles).

God is the fast moving army and the fast vehicles used by the army. He is the rapid response force, the quick surgical strike and the fast surprise and strong blitzkrieg attacking forces. People love fast cars, bullet trains, supersonic aircrafts and speed boats. Salutations to Rudra who appears as all forms of fast armies and fast vehicles.

नमः॑शूराय॑ चा॒वभि॑न्दते च ॥ १२ ॥

namáśśūrāya cāvabhindate ca . (12)

12. Salutation to the one who is brave and who breaks and pierces the fort of enemies.

Bravery is a great quality and acts of courage are awarded. Those children who display bravery, armies that break enemy lines, soldiers that pierce the armour of the enemy and their fortified places are all called heroes. Śrī Rāma single handedly killed Khara and Dūṣaṇa along with their large army. Salutations to Rudra, who appears as all the bravehearts and those who break and pierce the enemy armours and their fortified places.

नमो॑ व॒र्मिणे॑ च वरु॒थिने॑ च ॥ १३ ॥

नमो॑ बि॒ल्मिने॑ च कव॒चिने॑ च ॥ १४ ॥

⁸⁰ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम। अथर्व वेद शान्ति पाठ

namó varmiṇe ca varūthiné ca . (13)

namá bīminé ca kavāciné ca. (14)

13, 14. Salutation to the one who has the best armour and who is in the form of secret bunkers, who has the protective helmet and a protective cover.

Police and soldiers wear protective gear (varma) in the line of duty, like body armour (kavaca), bulletproof vests, helmets (bilma), protective gloves and combat shirts. War vehicles like chariots had special protectors (varūtha), in the same way as we have fenders for our cars. Additonal protection in cars is provided by seat belts and air bags. The army also has secret bunkers (varūtha) to protect the soldiers. Salutations to Rudra, who is the protective armour, all who don the protective armours, the armoured vehicles and protective shelters.

Devotees chant hymns like Nārāyana Kavaca and Rāma Raksā Stotra as protective armour against seen and unseen enemies outside and within us. Salutations to Rudra who appears as devotees who don the armour of God and His name.

नमःश्रुताय च श्रुतसेनाय च ॥ १५ ॥

namáśśrūtāya ca śrutasenāya ca. (15)

15. Salutation to the one who is well known through the scriptures and who has an army well known through the scriptures.

God is famous and well known through the scriptures (śruti prasiddha). The army of God too is famous and well known through the scriptures (śruti prasiddha senā). God is famous and is also the famous armies. Salutations to the famous Rudra, who appears as all who are famous and as famous armies.

Anuvāka I.7

नमो॑ दुन्दु॒भ्याय॑ चाह॒न्याय॑ च॒ ॥ १ ॥

namo dundubhyāya cahanānyāya ca . (1)

1. Salutation to the one in the form of battle drums and the drum-beating stick.

It was earlier said that God manifests as all the battle cries and the tumultuous sound of battle instruments (uccair-ghoṣa-1.2.12). The Mahābhārata mentions that these sounds continued from sunrise to sunset with a break whenever a great hero died on the battlefield. The 'dundubhi' along with the śankha (conch) was played to denote the commencement of the day's battle.

Besides battle drums, different types of drums are played in religious ceremonies during festival celebrations, as a worship of God and for cultural events. Pujya Gurudev would love listening to the 'cenda', which is famous in Kerala. Salutations to Rudra, as the drums, the drumsticks and the rhythm and sound that gladdens our heart and makes our feet dance.

नमो॑ धृ॒ष्णवे॑ च प्र॒मृ॒शाय॑ च॒ ॥ २ ॥

namo dhr̥ṣṇavé ca pram̐śāya ca . (2)

2. Salutation to the one who is brave (and does not run away from the battlefield) and who is a good army advisor.

dhr̥ṣṇave namah: One of the characteristics of a kṣatriya a soldier or leader is that he does not run away from the battlefield ⁸¹ and bravely faces challenges. Salutations to Rudra, the braveheart who does not back away from difficulties and is ready to face all the battles in life.

pram̐śāya namah: There are experts in every country who know all the details and workings of the enemy country or the opposition party. They are able to help decision makers, formulate strategies of war, trade and treaties. They make good advisors because of their analytical ability and clarity of thinking (pram̐śa). 'If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles' - Sun Izu. Salutations to Rudra, as the expert on enemies and opposition parties.

नमो॑ दू॒ताय॑ च॒ प्र॒हि॒ताय॑ च॒ ॥ ३ ॥

namo dūtāya ca prahitāya ca . (3)

3. Salutation to the one who is a messenger (in war) and emissary in foreign land.

⁸¹ युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् । भगवद् गीता-१८.४३

A messenger or courier is called a 'dūta', and one who is commissioned by the ruler or government as their representative and who takes care of their interests is called a 'rājadūta' or 'prahita'. Śrī Hanuman was a very effective messenger of Sri Rama to both Sītāji and Rāvana. He gave solace to Sītāji and filled Rāvana and his army with dread and took care of the best interest of Śrī Rāma by burning Lañkā. He was truly a Rāmadūta a dūta and prahita.

The ruler and government always take special care of their emissaries in foreign lands (prahita). By the grace of Śrī Rāma, Hanuman did not feel the heat of his burning tail as he set fire to Lañkā. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the messengers, the emissaries and their protector.

नमो॑ निषङ्गि॑णे॒ चेषु॑धि॒मते॑ च ॥ ४ ॥

नम॑स्तीक्ष्ण॒षवे॑ चायु॒धिने॑ च ॥ ५ ॥

नम॑स्स्वायु॒धाय॑ च सु॒धन्व॑ने च ॥ ६ ॥

namó niṣangiṇē ceṣudhīmatē ca . (4)

namāstīkṣṇeṣave cāyudhinē ca . (5)

namāssvāyudhāyā ca sudhanvāne ca. (6)

4,5, 6. Salutation to the one with a sword, quiver full of arrows, sharp arrows, all weapons, beautiful weapons and a beautiful bow.

A musician may be proficient in playing many instruments, but he still has one or two instruments which are his favourite. Similarly, God uses all weapons, however, each of His form is usually seen with their weapons of choice (svāyudha). Śiva has Triśūla (trident), Śrī Rāma has the Kodanda (bow) and Indra has the Vajra (thunderbolt). A royal weapon or God's weapon is not just functional, but it is beautiful and well decorated (sundara-āyudha).

The bow and arrows symbolize the mind and the five subtle elements.⁸² God's bow also symbolize the beautiful five senses⁸³ which enable us to appreciate the beautiful world of sense objects. Salutations to Rudra, who carries beautiful and special weapons and who also appears as such weapons.

नम॑स्सु॒त्याय॑ च प॒थ्याय॑ च ॥ ७ ॥

namāssrutyāya ca pathyāya ca. (7)

⁸² मनोरूपेक्षकोदण्डा पञ्चतन्मात्रसायका। ललितासहस्रनाम-१०-११

⁸³ शोभनमिन्द्रियादिमयं शाङ्गं धनुरस्यास्तीति। विष्णुसहस्रनाम शाङ्कर भाष्य-५६७

7. Salutation to the one who is the indweller of all who travel on mud paths and highways. Lanes, by-lanes, mud trails and foot-paths are called 'śruti' (kṣudra mārṅa), and highways or super highways are called 'patha' (praudha mārṅa). Salutations to Rudra who is the indweller of mud paths and highways and of those who travel on that.

The following four mantras describe Rudra as the indweller (antaryami) of various water bodies.

नमः॑ का॒ट्याय॑ च नी॒प्याय॑ च ॥ ८ ॥

नम॑स्सू॒द्याय॑ च सर॒स्याय॑ च ॥ ९ ॥

नमो॑ ना॒द्याय॑ च वै॒शन्ताय॑ च ॥ १० ॥

नमः॑ कू॒प्याय॑ चाव॒ट्याय॑ च ॥ ११ ॥

namah kātyāya ca nīpyāya ca. (8)

namassūdyāya ca sarasyāya ca . (9)

namo nādyāya ca vaiśantāya ca. (10)

namah kūpyāya cāvṛtyāya ca. (11)

8, 9, 10, 11. Salutation to the one present as a trickle of water and canals; as sea and perennial waterfalls; as marsh land and slushy land; as small lakes and large lakes; as seasonal rivers and perennial rivers; as water reservoirs and sacred ponds; and as deep wells and shallow puddles.

Thousands of living beings thrive on earth because of water; hence, Indians worship all water bodies and use water as a purifier in all rituals. Rudra was described as indweller of large rivers (śībhya), small streams (srotasya), waves (ūrmya) and the still ocean and pond (avasanya) in the fifth anuvaka (1.5).

God is present as a trickle of water and canals (kātya), as the sea and perennial waterfalls (nīpya) like the Niagara Falls, as marsh land and slushy land (sūdyā), as small lakes and large lakes like the Manasarovara (sarasya), as seasonal rivers and perennial rivers (nādyā) like the Brahmaputra, as water reservoirs and sacred ponds (vaiśanta), as deep wells (kūpya) and shallow puddles (avatya). Salutations to Rudra, who is the indweller of all life-sustaining water bodies.

The next three mantras describe Rudra as the indweller of the sources of water.

नमो॑ व॒र्ष्याय॑ चाव॒र्ष्याय॑ च ॥ १२ ॥

नमो॑ मे॒ध्याय॑ च वि॒द्युत्याय॑ च ॥ १३ ॥

नम॑ ई॒ध्रियाय॑ चा॒त॒प्याय॑ च ॥ १४ ॥

namo varṣyāya cāvarṣyāya ca . (12)

namo meḡhyāya ca vidyutyaaya ca . (13)

namo meḡhyāya ca vidyutyaaya ca . (14)

12, 13, 14. Salutation to the one as the waters of rains, ocean, rain-bearing clouds, thunder and lightning, snow-white clouds and the scorching heat of the sun.

Rains (varṣā) are the source of all water bodies on land, like the rivers and lakes. The ocean, which is also called avarsa, is the main source for rains. God appears as the drizzle, the downpour, the cloudburst and the cyclonic rains. He is the dark rain-bearing clouds (meghya) and the snow-white clouds (idhriya). He is in the thunder and lightning (vidyutya). He is in the summer rains, the monsoon rains, the autumnal rains and the winter rains. He is in the mild heat and the scorching heat of the sun (ātapya). Salutations to Rudra, who is indweller of the source of water the ocean, sun's heat, clouds and rains.

नमो॑ वा॒त्याय॑ च रे॒ष्मियाय॑ च ॥ १५ ॥

namo vātyāya ca reṣmiyāya ca . (15)

15. Salutation to the indweller in the wind and to the power of destruction.

God is in the gentle breeze, the strong winds and the whirlwinds (vātya). He is final dissolution and destruction caused by fire, water and winds (reṣmya). Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in wind and dissolution. Salutations to Rudra, also as the storm (vatya)⁸⁴, the hailstones and snow (reṣmya).⁸⁵

नमो॑ वा॒स्त॒व्याय॑ च वा॒स्त॒प्याय॑ च ॥ १६ ॥

namo vāstavyāya ca vāstupāya ca . (16)

16. Salutation to the one who dwells in all objects and places and to the protector of all objects and places.

⁸⁴ वातेन सह वृष्टिः वात्यः ।

⁸⁵ सर्करपाषाणादिसहितो वृष्टिजलविशेषः रेक्यः ।

God dwells in wealth (vāstu) and also as its protector (vāstupa). Kabīradāsa says that "You (God) are the wealth, the treasury and the spender of the wealth."⁸⁶ He dwells in all objects (vāstu) and protects all places where they are kept (vāstupa). He lives in all dwelling places (vāstu) and also protects them (vāstupa). Salutations to Rudra, the indweller and protector of all objects and places.

⁸⁶ आप माल और आप खजाना, आप हि खर्चनवाला। - कबीरदास

Anuvāka I.8

This anuvāka is considered important and is chanted while offering special ritualistic bath (abhiseka) to Śiva and Śiva linga during worship (pūjā). It also has the famous pañcākṣara mantra.

नमस्सोमाय च रुद्राय च ॥ १ ॥

namāssomāya ca ruḍrāya ca. (1)

1. Salutation to the one who is with Uma and to the one who removes all sorrows.

"Soma" denotes the moon, the Moon-god and also Śiva along with His consort Umā.⁸⁷ In Kenopaniṣad, Umā appears as the knowledge of the Truth (Brahmavidyā) and the Guru who teaches it. God is the giver of Knowledge (Soma) and the remover of ignorance and its resulting sorrows (Rudra). The Sage of Kaivalyopaniṣad, therefore, meditates on Rudra as the supreme Lord with Uma to attain the Truth beyond all darkness of ignorance.⁸⁸ Salutations to Rudra as 'Soma' and one who removes all sorrows.

'Om' consists of the three letters a-u-m. Uma too has these three letters, which represent the entirety of the manifest and unmanifest universe. God is the essence and the Truth immanent in this universe. Salutations to Rudra who is the Truth.

नमस्ताम्राय चारुणाय च ॥ २ ॥

namāstāmrāya cāruṇāya ca. (2)

2. Salutation to the one appearing as the pre-dawn and dawn, and also as the pre-dusk and the dusk sun.

This has already been spoken of in the 7th mantra of the first anuvāka (asau yas-tāmro aruṇa uta babhruḥ sumangalah). Salutations to Rudra as the pre-dawn and dawn, and also the pre-dusk and the dusk sun.

नमश्शङ्गाय च पशुपतये च ॥ ३ ॥

namāśśaṅgāya ca paśuṇpataye ca. (3)

3. Salutation to the one who gives joy and who is the loving protector of all beings.

⁸⁷ उमया सह वर्तते इति सोमः ।

⁸⁸ उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभु त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् । ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं समस्तसाक्षि तमसः परस्तात् ॥ -कैवल्योपनिषद्-७

One who gives joy is called 'sanga'.⁸⁹ We are happy when we are cared for and feel protected (pātīti). Salutations to Rudra who gives joy and is the loving protector of all beings.

नमो॑ उ॒ग्राय॑ च भी॒माय॑ च ॥ ४ ॥

namā ugrāya ca bhīmāya ca. (4)

4. Salutation to the one who appears as the fierce-looking and huge.

No one is scared of one who is tiny and gentle nor do many listen to one who is soft and sweet. God can assume huge and fierce forms like Virabhadra who create fear in the minds of all, especially of evil doers. He is the task master because of whose fear everyone follows His commands and laws including the phenomenal forces like the wind and the sun.⁹⁰ Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands with one leg straight and the other crossed. God is kind to those who are straight and is stern with those who are crooked. Salutations to Rudra as the huge and fierce-looking God, and all who are fierce, huge and create fear in us.

नमो॑ अ॒ग्रेव॒धाय॑ च दू॒रेव॒धाय॑ च ॥ ५ ॥

namó agrevadhāya ca dūrevadhāya ca. (5)

5. Salutation to the one who kills from the front and from far.

God is the one who kills the enemies of His devotee who are near and far. He kills the enemies within us and in front of us and by remaining in front of us. Śrī Kṛṣṇa destroyed the enemies of delusion (moha), confusion (sandeha) and grief (śoka) of Arjuna by knowledge of the Gītā. Also, He guided him how to destroy the enemies in front of him on the battlefield, and became his shield as he faced the enemy weapons.

The knowledge given on the battlefield destroyed Arjuna's confusions and sorrows, each time, wherever he was, all through his life. He also told Arjuna in the battlefield, "I have already killed all the Kauravas, you just be an instrument."⁹¹ On one occasion during the war, Arjuna experienced that someone effulgent and carrying a spear was moving in the enemy lines rendering them powerless. He said, "People think that I killed the enemies with my arrows, but they were already killed before my arrows reached them." Later, when Arjuna asked who it was who made the enemies powerless, Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied, "It was Rudra."⁹² God indeed protects us at all times, in all ways, everywhere. Also, one can get killed by a heart attack or a distant sniper's shot. Salutations to Rudra who kills from near, from front and from far.

⁸⁹ शं सुखं गमयति इति शङ्गः।

⁹⁰ भीषाऽस्माद्वातः पवते। भीषादेति सूर्यः। तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद्-२.८.१-२

⁹¹ मर्देवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन्। भगवद् गीता-११.३३

⁹² तं विद्धि रुद्रं कौन्तेय। - महाभारत शान्ति पर्व-३३०.६९

नमो हन्त्रे च हनीयसे च ॥ ६ ॥
namò hantre ca hanīyase ca. (6)

6. Salutation to the one who is the killer and destroyer.

The tiger and its prey in our dream are both projections of our waking mind. Similarly God is in the heart of both the killer and the killed. Even though He appears to kill and get killed, as the pure Self, He is neither the killer nor the one killed.⁹³

God kills individuals and also destroys or dissolves the total universe. He takes incarnations and destroys proud demons like Rāvana and insulting ones like Dakṣa. Salutations to Rudra, the killer and destroyer of one and all.

नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशेभ्यो ॥ ७ ॥
namò vṛkṣebhyaḥ harikeśebhyaḥ. (7)

7. Salutation to the one who manifests as the sacred trees and sacred green leaves.

"Salutations to Rudra as the trees with evergreen leaves' was already said before (1.2.2). The green leaves denoted here are the sacred leaves like the bilva and palāśa, offered to Śiva in worship. The trees referred to are the sacred trees like the bilva, palāśa, aśvattha and the heavenly wish-fulfilling tree, Kalpavṛkṣa. Salutations to Rudra, who manifests as the sacred trees and sacred green leaves.

नमस्ताराय ॥ ८ ॥
namastārāya. (8)

8. Salutation to the one who is the Omkara.

The sacred mantra 'Om' is called the 'Taraka Mantra' as it takes us across the ocean of transmigration.⁹⁴ Every eastern Scripture and religion and every eastern saint and sage has extolled the glory of Om. It denotes both the formless Truth and God with form. It also denotes the manifest and unmanifest universe and the Self which is the substratum of the universe. Therefore, it is said to be the supreme means to realize God/Truth/Self.⁹⁵

It is believed that people who die in Kaśī attain immortality as they are given the Taraka Mantra (Om and Rāma) by Śiva Himself, before the body perishes.⁹⁶ Having themselves crossed over samsāra, Gurus, saints and sages also help us to cross over.⁹⁷ Salutations to

⁹³ नायं हन्ति न हन्यते । - भगवद् गीता-२.१९

⁹⁴ तारयति संसारसागरात् इति तारः ।

⁹⁵ एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते । कठोपनिषद्-१.२१७

⁹⁶ तारकस्योपदेशेन काशीसंस्थोऽमृतो भवेत् । स्कन्द पुराणम्-४.१.३०.१४

⁹⁷ स तरति स तरति स लोकांस्तारयति । नारद भक्ति सूत्र-५०

Rudra, as the Omkara and the Gurus, saints and sages who are the means of Liberation.

नमः॑शम्भवे॑ च मयो॒भवे॑ च ॥ ९ ॥

नमः॑शङ्कराय॑ च मयस्क॒राय॑ च ॥ १० ॥

namáśśambhavé ca mayobhavé ca. (9)

namáśśankarāya ca mayaskarāya ca. (10)

9. 10. Salutation to the source and giver of worldly and divine happiness; the Supreme auspiciousness and the bliss of Liberation.

God both creates and gives worldly joys (Sambhu)⁹⁸ and heavenly pleasures (Mayobhū).⁹⁹ Being our own blissful Self, He is indeed the source and giver of all happiness including the bliss of Liberation (mokṣa sukha - Mayaskara). He also brings goodness and auspiciousness in our life (Saṅkara). For every undertaking, even when a couple gets married, they seek the good wishes and blessings of all. Salutations to Rudra, the source and giver of worldly and divine happiness, good wishes, auspiciousness and blessings.

नमः॑रिश्वाय॑ च शि॒वतराय॑ च ॥ ११ ॥

namáśśivāya ca śivatārāya ca. (11)

11. Salutation to the auspicious one and to the one who bestows auspiciousness in greater and greater degrees.

namaḥ śivāya: The famous pañcākṣara mantra (five-lettered mantra - na-ma-si-vā-ya) is considered the core of the Scriptures and its repetition and meditation, the highest form of worship of Śiva (Śiva upāsanā). Thousands of saints and sages, devotees and seekers of the past have proved the efficacy of this powerful mantra. The five letters represent the five faces of Śiva (Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa, Īśāna), the five gross and subtle elements that constitute the universe (earth, water, fire, air and space), the five directions (west, north, south, east and upwards) and the five main functions of God [creation, sustenance, dissolution, blessings (liberation) and disciplining] respectively. It is, therefore, called a mahāmantra - the great mantra. Śiva is the embodiment of peace, auspiciousness and bliss. The glory and greatness of this mantra is infinite and has to be experienced and realized for oneself. It is a direct means to invoke God (Śiva) and receive His infinite blessing.

This mantra is usually chanted with the addition of "Om", making it six lettered. 'Om', so to speak, holds the mantra, like an ice-cream cone for the ice-cream, or like the husk holds the rice and adds power and efficiency to the mantra. Salutations to Rudra, the auspicious one.

⁹⁸ शं सुखं भावयति उत्पादयतीति वा शम्भुः ।

⁹⁹ मयः सुखं भावयति उत्पादयतीति वा मयोभूः ।

śivatarāya namaḥ: A bonus along with the pay is most welcome and a promotion accompanying it is even more welcome. The manager, director and managing director become aspired stages of one's growth in a company. God is capable of giving more, more and more, more than enough and more than imagined. All we have to do is ask. One employee did not get a raise for twenty five years. When he asked why, the employer said, "You are working here because you did not ask for a raise (otherwise you would have been fired long back!)" Salutations to Rudra, who can bestow joy, auspiciousness, peace and blessings in greater and greater degrees.

नमस्तीर्थाय च कूल्याय च ॥ १२ ॥

नमः पार्याय चाव्याय च ॥ १३ ॥

namastīrthyāya ca kūlyāya ca . (12)

namaḥ pāryāya cāvāryāya ca. (13)

12. 13. Salutation to the indweller of holy places and river banks and one who exists on both sides of the river (of samsara).

tīrthyāya namaḥ: The water after bathing the Guru's feet or the God's idol is called 'tirtha'. All sacred water bodies and holy places are also called 'tirtha'. Prayāga is called 'Tirtha-rajā', the king of pilgrim places, as it is at the confluence of the three most sacred rivers - Ganga, Yamuna and Sarasvati.

Ganga washes the sins of all. When asked what purifies Her, She said, "The holy men who take a dip in me!" It is such holy men that add sacredness to these holy places.¹⁰⁰ God dwells in all holy places, the deities worshipped in such places, the sacred water bodies in these places, the holy men who reside there or visit, the pilgrims, the priests and even the beggars that live on the largesse of the devotees in holy places. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of holy places.

kūlyāya namaḥ: Civilizations like the Indus Valley Civilization, Egyptian Civilization and Sarasvati Valley Civilization have thrived on the banks of rivers from ancient times. Cities, towns and hamlets on their banks are nourished and sustained by them. It is common to consecrate Śiva lingas for worship on the banks of rivers. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of river banks.

pāryāya ca avāryāya namaḥ: God is both in this side (arvāk tīram avāram) and the other side (param) of the ocean or river. He is in the ocean or river of samsāra and also on the other side of samsāra. At Pandharapura, on the banks of river Candrabhāga, God as

¹⁰⁰ तीर्थोर्कुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि । - नारद भक्ति सूत्र-६९

Vitthala stands with His hands on His waist. He is lovingly beckoning devotees to cross over the river of samsāra, reassuring them that if they keep looking at Him as they cross, all will be fine, as the water is only waist deep and they shall not drown. He is truly our saviour and helps us cross over the fast flowing, dangerous river of samsāra. Salutations to Rudra who is on both sides of the ocean or river of samsara.

There is a big divide among people because of caste, creed, race and religion. We should remember that God is on both sides, even in those with opposing views and on opposite sides. Salutations to Rudra who exists on both sides of all divisions.

नमः प्रतरणाय चोत्तरणाय च ॥ १४ ॥

namáh pratarāṇāya cōttarāṇāya ca. (14)

14. Salutation to the one who helps to overcome sinful tendencies and who helps to cross over all sorrow and limitations.

Actions of atonement (prāyaścitta karma) and spiritual practices like repetition of mantra (japa), worship (pūjā), reading of scriptures (pārāyaṇa) and visit to holy places (tirtha yatrā) are great ways to overcome sinful tendencies (pratarana), thereby purifying the mind. However, knowledge of the Truth helps us cross over all sorrow and limitations and is therefore, the greatest (uttarana). The former leads us to the latter i.e. a pure mind makes us capable of attaining Knowledge and Liberation. Salutations to Rudra, who is the means of purification and Liberation.

नम आतार्याय चालाद्याय च ॥ १५ ॥

namā ātāryāya cālādyāya ca. (15)

15. Salutation to the indweller in the individual being reborn and experiencing the results of his action.

One who is reborn again and again is 'ātārya', and one who enjoys or suffers the results of actions in each birth is 'ālādyā'. Due to the ignorance of our true identify as the unborn Self, the individual (jīva) takes birth again and again, in different bodies and in different realms of experience. What does the individual do in each birth? Like the metaphoric second bird, ignoring God/Self, the individual performs actions and enjoys and suffers its results and creates more karmas to experience in future lives.¹⁰¹ But who is this sentient individual (jīva)? Swami Vivekananda calls him 'God playing the fool'. It is God alone who, 'so to speak', enters within the body as the individual limited being.¹⁰² Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in us and who appears as the individual being reborn and experiencing the results of his actions.

¹⁰¹ अलं सम्पूर्णं कर्मफलम् अति इति आलाद्यः भोक्ता जीवः इत्यर्थः ।

¹⁰² अनेनैव जीवेनात्मनाऽनुप्रविश्य नामरूपे व्याकरोत् । छान्दोग्य उपनिषद्-६.३३

नम॑ श॒श॒ष्प्या॑य च॒ फे॒न्या॑य च॒ ॥ १६ ॥

namaśśaṣpyāya ca phenyāya ca. (16)

16. Salutation to the indweller in tender sacred grass and foam.

Rudra was saluted as the tender grass (saspiñjarāya namaḥ -1.2.3). Here too, God is referred to as the tender grass like the durvā offered to Gaṇeṣa and the kuśa grass used in worship. We see foam riding on huge waves of the ocean that break down on the shore with gleeful cheer. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in, and who appears as, the tender sacred grass and foam.

नम॑ स्सि॒क॒त्या॑ य च प्र॒वा॒ह्या॑य च॒ ॥ १७ ॥

namāssikaṭyāya ca pravāhyāya ca. (17)

17. Salutation to the indweller in sand and in the flow of river.

We have all experienced the beautiful feel of the sand under our feet. There are different colours of sand (white, pink, black, ...), different sources of sand (river sand, sea sand, desert sand,...) and different textures of sand (fine sand, coarse sand, gravelly sand, ...). There are many beings like crabs that live in the sand. Salutations to Rudra as the sand, the creatures who live in sand and the indweller of sand.

God was indicated to be the indweller in large rivers, small rivulets and all fast and slow flowing rivers (śībhya, srotasya and śīghriya in 1.5.13,15). Here, He is again spoken of as the flow and the one who lives in the flowing waters. He is in the flow of time and the flow of energy. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in all that flows.

Namakam - Anuvāka I.9

नमः॑ इरि॒ण्याय॑ च प्रप॒थ्याय॑ च ॥ १ ॥

नमः॑ कि॒ञ्चि॒लाय॑ च क्षय॒णाय॑ च ॥ २ ॥

namá iriṇyāya ca prapāthyāya ca. (1)

namāḥ kiṁśilāya ca kṣayaṇāya ca. (2)

1, 2. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of barren lands and highways; the pebbled streets and residential areas.

There are vast tracks of barren lands (irinya) in many countries like Australia and Canada and in vast deserts in countries like China and Saudi Arabia. Most countries have highways (prapatha) criss-crossing their length and breadth. Lands which have pebbles, stones and rocks (kimśila) are difficult to cultivate and build on, whereas certain other lands are fertile and others ideal for living (kṣayana).

It was said that God/Rudra is the indweller of small lanes and large roads (śrutya and pathya – 1.7.7). He is also the indweller of the royal path or well-trodden path (rāja mārṅa - prapāthyā). A pebbled road or stone paved road could also be called 'kimśilā'. We watch the roads and the surroundings as we travel. Let us see God in all the roads and surroundings we travel through. A residential area is also called 'kṣayana'. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of barren land, deserts, stony lands and paths, the main roadways and all residential areas.

नमः॑ कप॒दिने॑ च पुल॒स्तये॑ च ॥ ३ ॥

namāḥ kapardiné ca pulastayé ca. (3)

3. Salutations to Rudra, the one with matted locks and the one ever present before all devotees.

Rudra was saluted as the one with matted locks earlier (kapardi 1.5.4). Pulasti is a beautiful name of God. God is ever present in front of all devotees. They not only feel His presence at all times but even see Him in all forms and in His special forms. When Saint Nāmadeva sang kīrtanas (devotional songs), Viththala Bhagavān would actually come and dance. Fortunate devotees like Janābai had this divine vision. God came and ate the food offerings of Ekanātha Mahārāj. Mīrabāī did not see an inert idol as she worshipped, but a living Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the idol. Salutation to Rudra as the one with matted locks, all devotees with matted locks and the compassionate God ever present before all devotees.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ भक्तानां पुरतस्तिष्ठतीति पुलस्तिः ।

नमो गोष्ठयाय च गृह्याय च ॥ ४ ॥

namo goṣṭhyāya ca grhyāya ca. (4)

4. Salutations to Rudra, the one who is present in a cowshed as well as in a house.

goṣṭhyāya namaḥ: The cowshed (gostha) protects the cows from rain and sun. Not only are cows considered sacred but so also the cowsheds. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's naming ceremony took place in the cowshed. Here cowshed represents shelters of all animals, like stables, hen houses, zoos and wild life sanctuaries. Salutations to Rudra present in all cows, cowsheds and shelters of all animals and their protector.

grhyāya namaḥ: 'Grha' is a house, but the home is where the heart is. So, a wife is also called grha as she makes the house a home.¹⁰³ God is the true home of all beings. Also, the zodiac signs are called 'grhas'. We need not fear uncondusive planetary influences (grha-dosa) as God lives in all houses. Salutations to Rudra, the home and refuge of all and the one housed in all the zodiac signs.

नमस्तल्प्याय च गेह्याय च ॥ ५ ॥

namastalpyāya ca gehyāya ca. (5)

5. Salutations to Rudra, who dwells in a bed and in a mansion.

talpyāya namaḥ: The comfort of a good bed is comforting, and sleep in it is refreshing and rejuvenating. God is the comforter, the comforting bed and the one who sleeps in it. God is the bedrock of our lives and God/Truth is the substratum even of our deep-sleep state. 'Talpya' also refers to God as Visnu who sleeps on the bed of the thousand-hooded serpent (Seṣa-śāyī). Salutations to Rudra, who is the bed and the one who sleeps in it.

gehyāya namaḥ: 'Grha' is all houses like a thatched hut, a boat house, an apartment and a bungalow. Geha is a big and rich man's house like a mansion, a castle and a palace. Salutations to Rudra who resides in palatial homes.

नमः काट्याय च गह्वरेष्ठाय च ॥ ६ ॥

namaḥ kāṭyāya ca gahvareṣṭhāya ca. (6)

6. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of inaccessible places and caves.

Earlier, God was saluted as the indweller of water in canals (kāṭyāya namaḥ - 1.7.8). Here kāṭa means places difficult to access like dense forests, thorny thickets, rough lands and places with sharp stones. Caves in the heights of the Himalayas are even more difficult to

¹⁰⁴ न गृहं गृहमित्याहुर्गृहिणी गृहमुच्यते ।

reach, leave alone live in (gahvarestha). Tapovanam is a place of pristine and divine beauty above the Gomukh glacier high up in the Himalayas, which is difficult to reach and almost impossible to live in. Swami Tapovanam, Puja Gurudev's Guru, lived in a cave at Tapovanam for long periods, practising meditation. God resides in the cave of our heart. The inscrutable Truth/Self is lodged inaccessibly in the cave of the intellect and can be realized through Self-knowledge.¹⁰⁵ Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of inaccessible places and caves and the Self in the cave of our hearts.

नमो ऽ ह्रदय्याय च निवेष्ट्याय च ॥ ७ ॥

namo hradayyāya ca niveṣṭyāya ca. (7)

7. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller of deep waters and dew drops.

God exists as deep waters in the rivers like Congo, in the depth of the oceans and the deep lakes and also as the rich marine life that lives in deep waters (hradayya). It is said that the mind of saints in meditation is like the deep still waters of a lake undisturbed by any waves of thoughts. God is all peace and with infinite depth (śānta gambhira). God dwells in the icy cold waters of rivers like the Ganga and lakes like the Manasarovara.

He also lives in the morning dew (nivespya) that wets the ground, the pearly dew drops ornatng plants and trees, the ice and snow that covers the ground and the snowflakes and frost of winters. Salutation to Rudra, the indweller of deep waters, cold waters, dew drops and snow.

नमः पां स्रव्याय च रजस्याय च ॥ ८ ॥

namaḥ pāṁsavyāya ca rajasyāya ca. (8)

8. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in tiny invisible matter and in invisible dust.

The Truth is smaller than the smallest and larger than the largest.¹⁰⁶ God is in everything small, tiny, invisible and insignificant. He is present in the sub-atomic particles, in atoms and molecules and miniscule dust particles in the air, water and on the ground. Nothing and no one is invisible and insignificant to Him. Atomic energy and nano-technology are some of ways that we have tapped God's infinite power. Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in tiny invisible matter and in the insignificant dust.

¹⁰⁵ तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गहवरेष्ठं पुराणम् ।

अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोको जहाति ॥ कठोपनिषद्-१.२.१२

¹⁰⁶ अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयान् । - कठोपनिषद्-१.२.२०

नम॑श्शु॒ष्क्या॑य च हरि॒त्या॑य च ॥ ९ ॥

namaśśuṣkyāya ca haritṛyāya ca. (9)

9. Salutations to Rudra present in everything dry and green.

God is in dry leaves, twigs, branches, logs, dry fruits and dried-up flowers (śuṣkyā) and also in green leaves and sap filled trees, juicy fruits and fresh flowers (haritṛyā). The flowers once offered to God are called 'nirmalya'. The ceremony of removal of the offered flowers is called 'nirmalya darśana' and is considered very auspicious. Nirmalya is considered as prasāda a holy gift. God is the sap of life and purifies and energizes everything, even in its absence, like in the dry flowers and leaves. Salutations to Rudra present in everything dry and green.

नमो॑ लो॒प्या॑य चो॒ल॒प्या॑य च ॥ १० ॥

namo lopyāya colapyāya ca. (10)

10. Salutations to Rudra who is present in grassless lands and grasslands.

A land where even grass cannot grow is called 'lopa'. It also means loss, disappearance, omission or cancellation. God is present in everything that gets omitted and everyone who gets cancelled.

Soft grass, spreading creepers and shrubs are called 'ulapa'. Many walk on soft green grass barefoot to improve their eyesight. Salutations to Rudra who is present in grassless lands and grasslands and everything that gets omitted and cancelled.

नम॑ ऊ॒र्व्या॑य च सु॒र्म्या॑य च ॥ ११ ॥

नमः॑ प॒र्ण्या॑य च पर्ण॑श॒द्या॑य च ॥ १२ ॥

nama ūrvyāya ca sūrmīyāya ca. (11)

namaḥ paṇyāya ca parṇaśadyāya ca. (12)

11. 12. Salutations to Rudra who is in (everything that comes from) the earth and the waves; and who is in (fresh) leaves and heaps of (dried) leaves.

The earth is called 'urvi'. God is present in all that comes from the earth like minerals, gems and all plant life. It was already said that God is present in waves ūrmīya (1.5.14). Now it is said again that God is present in beautiful waves (su-ūrmī). Except for stormy waves and tsunamis, to us, all waves are beautiful; but to surfers, some are extra beautiful.

God is in leaves (parṇa) and heaps of leaves (parṇaśadya) which become manure for all vegetation. So, next time you pass a heap of discarded dry leaves, pause to see God.

Sri Rudra Suktam

Salutations to Rudra, who is in everything that comes from this beautiful earth, lives in the beautiful wavy waters, in all leaves and heaps of leaves.

नमोऽपगुर्माणाय चाभिघ्नते च ॥ १३ ॥

namo paguramāṇāya cābhighnate ca. (13)

13. Salutations to Rudra with the raised weapon and the one who strikes and destroys.

A person with a finger on the trigger is ready to shoot. Disciplining (nigraha) is one of the five main functions of God. God with His raised weapon held hand (apaguramāna) indicates this function of disciplining, and His striking (abhignat) indicates His function of destruction (pralaya). He disciplines and destroys the evil. Also, He is ever alert and ready in giving us the results of our actions and gives them without delay. Śrī Kṛṣṇa ran towards Bhīṣmācārya in the battlefield with a raised chariot wheel in His hand, ready to strike him. However, when Bhīṣmācārya kept away his weapons, so did Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Salutations to Rudra with the raised weapon and one who strikes and destroys.

नम आखिखदते च प्रखिखदते च ॥ १४ ॥

nama ākhkhidate ca prakhkhidate ca. (14)

14. Salutations to Rudra, the giver of the results of our bad actions or sins as small and big troubles.

God gives us the results of our actions (karma phala) in accordance with our actions good or bad. We get small troubles (akhkhida) for little transgressions and we get into huge problems (prakarṣeṇa kheda) huge mistakes and sins. Hence when we get troubles we prakhkheda) due to should not ask, "Why me?" or "What have I done to deserve this?" Instead, we should think, "May I not repeat actions which brought this problem upon me" and "What can I learn from my mistakes." In fact, problems and sorrows make us alert to our omissions and commissions.

We feel bad and are pained when criticized or insulted. But Saint Kabiradāsa says that we should, at our own expense, build a house in our compound for our critics (keep them near us and thank them). We rarely listen to advice given by loved ones but pay extra care and take seriously everything that our critics say about us. They keep us alert, make us introspect and help us become better. Hence, they cleanse us for free!¹⁰⁷ It is said that one who is centred in God or established in the Truth, remains unaffected by problems, however big they are.¹⁰⁸ Some recognize God as the remover of problems, some as the protector from problems, the support during problems, some as the giver of problems and some as the divine blessings in problems. Salutations to Rudra, the giver of the results of our bad actions

¹⁰⁷ निन्दक नियरे राखिये आङ्गन कुटि छवाय ।

बिन पानी साबुन बिना निर्मल करे सुभाय ॥ - कबीर दोहा

¹⁰⁸ यस्मिन्निस्थतो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते। भगवद गीता-६.२२

as small and big troubles. God appears as thousands of forms of Rudras with specific functions. Five such types of Rudras who are dear to all deities (devatās) are extolled in the following five mantras.

नमो वः किरिकेभ्यो देवानां हृदयेभ्यो ॥ १५ ॥

नमो विकीर्णकेभ्यो ॥ १६ ॥

नमो विचिन्वत्केभ्यो ॥ १७ ॥

नमो अनिर्हतेभ्यो ॥ १८ ॥

नमो आमीवत्केभ्यः ॥ १९ ॥

namo vaḥ kirīkebhyo devānāṃ hṛdayebhyo . (15)

namo vikṣīṇakebhyo . (16)

namo vicinvatkebhyo . (17)

nama ānirhatebhyo . (18)

nama āmīvatkebhyāḥ . (19)

15-19. Salutations to Rudras who manifest as Kirikas, Vikṣīṇakas, Vicinvatkas, Anirhatas, Amivatkas, who are all dear to deities.

God as 'Kirikas' bestows wealth to devotees and destroys their sins at will.¹⁰⁹ The 'Vikṣīṇakas' who are indestructible (vigata kṣīṇa), destroy the sinners in many ways (vividham kṣinayatīti) but give untiringly to devotees so that they are never in want of anything. The 'Vicinvatkas' distinguish and identify who deserves what and in what measure and accordingly bestow the results as blessings to the good and discipline the evil. The 'Anirhatas' totally destroy the sins of the devotees making them eligible for Liberation.¹¹⁰ The 'Āmīvatkas' bestow all forms of wealth to the devotees material and also lasting spiritual wealth, thereby making them full and fulfilled. They do so by taking all types of forms, gross and subtle,¹¹¹ roaming around everywhere protecting the good and not allowing the evil to escape.

¹⁰⁹ किरन्ति भक्तेभ्यः धनानि, किरन्ति स्वेच्छया नश्यन्ति ।

¹¹⁰ आसमन्तात् निश्शेषेण हतं पापं यैः ।

¹¹¹ आसमन्तात् मीवन्ति स्थूलीभावं प्राप्नुवन्ति इति ।

Since these groups of Rudras serve God, they are in the hearts of all the deities. Those who are dear to God are also dear to the deities. Salutations to Rudra who appears as the Kirikas, Vikṣīṇakas, Vicinvatkas, Anirhatas and Amivatkas - all dear to deities

Anuvāka I.10

The first anuvāka was in essence to please God. Thereafter, from the 2nd to the 9th anuvākas, God was saluted as the Cosmic Form. He is the Lord of all (sarveśvara), the indweller of all (sarvāntaryāmī) and the very essence of all (sarvātmā). This anuvāka is an intense prayer for the safety and well-being of all (kuśala mangala).

द्रापे अन्धसस्पते दरिद्रन्नीललोहित ।
एषां पुरुषाणामेषां पशूनां माभेर्मासरो मो एषां किञ्चनाममत् ॥ १ ॥

drāṇe andhasaspate daridran nīlālohita,
eṣṣām puruṣāṇām eṣām paśūnām
mābhermāro mo eṣām kiñcānamamat (1)

1. O Drape! O Andhasaspate! O Daridran! O Nilalohita! May You not frighten our loved ones and cattle (wealth). Let them not suffer from ill health (and poverty).

Rudra is addressed by four meaningful names. God runs to protect His devotees, hence He is addressed as 'Drāṇe' (drā to run). Also, He is quick to give undesired results (kutsita phala), like hell to the sinners. He is the master and protector of all food (adha adhyate iti andhas annam), hence, addressed as Andhasaspate. Also, being the light of Consciousness beyond the darkness (andhas) of ignorance, He is Andhasaspati.

'Daridra' means poor, needy and distressed (drāto be poor). When Yudhisthira was asked, "Who is poor?", He replied, "One who is ever dissatisfied." ¹¹² Adi Sankarācārya says that one with endless cravings is truly poor. ¹¹³ Poverty is not a sign of spirituality, but simple living and high thinking is. How can the Lord of all wealth, the Master of the whole world and one who is full and Blissful, ever be called poor or needy or be distressed? God is addressed as 'Daridran' which here means one who does not hoard anything, as everything is His anyway. Śiva is seen to be a minimalist, often seen without clothes (digambara) or just a tiger skin (vyāghra-carmāmbara) and with His body smeared with ashes. He has no particular home (aniketa) and spends most of His time in meditation. Śiva is addressed as 'Nīlālohita' as His neck is blue and the rest of His body is seen with a red hue and also because as Ardhanārīśvara, His body is half blue (Śiva) and half red (Pārvati).

Prayer: Most of us are scared to death of either losing our loved ones and wealth or to see our loved ones in fear and in sorrow. O God! Please come quickly, see that they have plenty of food and do not suffer from poverty or ill health nor be fearful or die. May our wealth (cattle) too be similarly protected.

¹¹² को दरिद्रः, यः सदा असन्तुष्टः ।

¹¹³ को वा दरिद्री हि विशालतृष्णः । प्रश्नोत्तरी-५

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूश्शिवा विश्वाहभेषजी ।
 शिवा रुद्रस्य भेषजी तया नो मृड जीवसे ॥ २ ॥
 yā te rudra śivā tanūsśivā viśvāhabheṣaji
 śivā rudrasya bheṣajī tayā no mṛda jīvase (2)

2. O Rudra! May that auspicious form of Yours which is the medicine that cures all diseases and destroys the disease of worldly existence, make us happy and enable us to live a long life.

We have seen a similar prayer (anuvāka I.1) for Rudra to appear in His pleasing and auspicious form to remove the disease of poverty, illness and the like and also cure us of the disease of worldly existence, thereby bestowing long and happy life and Bliss of Liberation. Earlier, He was called a Bhiṣak (vaidya or doctor). Here, His auspicious form is considered as the medicine that cures (bheṣaja). Some medicines and tonics are taken daily and some, as and when we suffer from particular diseases. God is the medicine that removes the ills that plague us each day and every day.¹¹⁴ O God! May Your auspicious form be the ever-available life-restoring cure for all physical and mental diseases and the disease of samsara - worldly existence.

इमां रुद्राय तवसे कपर्दिने क्षयद्विराय प्रभरामहे मतिम् ।
 यथा नः शमसद्विपदे चतुष्पदे विश्वं पुष्टं ग्रामे अस्मिन्ननातुरम् ॥ ३ ॥

īmāṃrudrāya tavasé kapardinē
 kṣayadvirāya prabhārāmahe matim,
 yathā naḥ śamasaddvipade catuṣpade viśvaṃ
 puṣṭaṃ grāmé āsminnanāturam (3)

3. We specially offer this mental prayer to Rudra, who is ancient and strong, who is with matted locks and who weakens the enemies. May our family, animals and all in our village be happy, well nourished and free from afflictions.

One who is ancient and strong is called 'Tavas'. An alternate reading is 'tapase', meaning, one who is the embodiment of austerity (tapas). Śiva protects the waters of Ganga in His matted locks and is, therefore, called 'Kapardi'.¹¹⁵ He is the Guru who gives and protects the river of knowledge (Jñāna Gangā) and the lineage of knowledge (guru-śiṣya paramparā). Being mighty and strong, He weakens the enemies (kṣayadvīra). O Rudra, may we keep our mind always in the worship of and meditation on You, who are ancient and strong, who bears the Ganga and who weakens the enemy.

Sincere heartfelt prayers are always answered. With all sincerity we pray, may all human beings including our family (dvipada) and animals, including our cattle (catuṣpada), be happy and prosperous, and also, may all in our village (grame) be well nourished and free from afflictions (anaturam). In the well-being of others is our well-being, and therefore, the prayer

¹¹⁴ सर्वेषु अहस्सु रोगदारियादेः औषधवत् विनाशहेतुः तस्मात् विश्वाहभेषजी ।

¹¹⁵ के गङ्गाजलं पर्दयति पालयतीति कपर्दः ।

is for all who live in our neighbourhood, community, village, town or city. It is said that there where great devotees reside, there is prosperity, peace and the good people live fearlessly¹¹⁶ and there is no hunger and illness.¹¹⁷

मृडा नो रुद्रोत नो मयस्कधि क्षयद्वीराय नमसा विधेम ते ।
यच्छं च योश्च मनुरायजे पिता तदश्याम तव रुद्र प्रणीतौ ॥ ४ ॥

mṛḍā nō rudrota nō mayāskrdhi
kṣayadvīrāya namāsā vidhea te,
yaccharṇ ca yośca manurāyaje pitā
tadaśyāma tavā rudraṁ praṇītau (4)

4. O Rudra! Make us happy. Grant us the bliss of Liberation. To You, the destroyer of our sinful tendencies, we offer worship through salutation. O Rudra! By Your grace, may we too enjoy worldly pleasures and the bliss of Liberation that our father Manu enjoyed.

In the previous mantra 'kṣayadvīra' meant one who weakens our outer enemies. In this mantra it refers to one who weakens and destroys our sinful tendencies.

Every kalpa has a Manu who sets the rules of righteous living. We are called manuṣya (human beings) because of Manu, our ancestor. He is therefore, also called our 'pitā' or father. God as Brahma, the Creator, is also called our father (pitā). Brahma is also called 'Vidhi' as He is supposed to decide our life-span and results of actions in accordance with our actions. It is by God's grace that Manu and Brahmā enjoy worldly pleasures and the bliss of Liberation. When we follow the laws (dharma) set by them, by God's grace we too shall be happy and blissful.

The peace invocation of the Atharva Veda has a simple prayer, 'By Your grace may we live a healthy life and life-span as ordained by You, singing Your praise and serving You.'¹¹⁸

namasā vidhema te: We can worship God and serve Him in many ways like the ritualistic worship (pūjā), ritualistic fire worship (homa), by singing His glories (kirtana), repeating His name or mantra (japa), or serving all in the world as His worship (sevā). One other way is through prostrations which symbolizes humility, surrender and oneness with God. Some object to prostrating before people and idols of God. When the devotee sees God everywhere, He prostrates before the most insignificant object or even an inimical person. The entire 'Namakam' is this form of worship.

The following three mantras are famous prayers.

¹¹⁶ पृथिवी सस्यशालिनी, देशोऽयं क्षोभरहितः, ब्राह्मणाः सन्तु निर्भयाः।

¹¹⁷ रुद्राध्यायी वसेद्यत्र ग्रामे वा नगरेऽपि वा । न तत्र क्षुत्पिपासाद्या दुर्भिक्षव्याध्ययोऽपि च ॥

¹¹⁸ स्थिरेरनैस्तुष्टुवा गैसस्तनूभिः व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । - अथर्व वेद शान्ति पाठ

मानौ महान्तमुत मानौ अर्भकं मान् उक्षन्तमुत मानं उक्षितम् ।
मानौऽवधीः पितरं मोत मातरं प्रिया मानस्तनुवौ रुद्र रीरिषः ॥ ५॥

mā nō mahāntamuta mā nō arbhakaṁ
mā na ukṣāntam uta mā na ukṣitam,
mā nōvadhīh pitarāṁ mota mātaram priyā mā
nastanuvo rudra rīriṣah (5)

5. O Rudra! Please do not trouble and destroy our grandparents, children, youth, foetus in the womb, father, mother and loved ones.

Prayers can be in the form of an affirmative wish like 'Please do make us happy in this world and in the hereafter' (mrdā no rudrota no mayaskṛdhi - 1.10.4). In this and the next mantra, the prayer is in the form of a wish to refrain - 'Please do not kill' (mā no vadhīḥ). An ideal family would have grandparents, parents and children living in harmony, and happily under the same roof. In the past, people had large families with many children. This is seen here as child in the womb (ukṣita), infant and child (arbhaka), teenager and youngster (ukṣanta). Our children represent the future, our parents and grandparents the past and we, the present. We love others for our own sake.¹¹⁹ We love ourselves not for the sake of others, but unconditionally (priyā tanuvā). So, prayers for the welfare of others naturally includes prayers for our own wellbeing. O Rudra! May our past, present and future generations not be troubled by disease and death.

Everyone who is born, has to die. So, how can we pray for none to die? This means, may there not be any accidental or untimely death. May all die living their full life-span, with a healthy body and die a natural death. In Rāmarājya, the kingdom of Śrī Rāma, no parent ever saw the death of their child. This is a prayer not just for our family members but for all families.

मानस्तोके तनये मान् आयुषि मानो गोषु मानो अश्वेषु रीरिषः ।
वीरान्मानौ रुद्र भामितोऽवधीर्हविष्मन्तो नमसा विधेम ते ॥ ६॥

mā nastoke tanāye mā na āyusi mā nō goṣu mā nō aśvēṣu rīriṣah,
vīrānmā nō rudra bhāmīto vadhīr-haviṣmantō namasā vidhema te (6)

6. O Rudra! You who are angry with us (for having done things which should not be done and not doing things which should be done), please do not harm or destroy us, our children, grandchildren, cattle, horses and servants. We, who bear offerings, serve You with prostrations.

Interestingly, we do things that make others angry often knowingly - and then plead with them not to get angry and not to say or do something in anger towards us. Here too we pray,

¹¹⁹ आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति। बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद्-४.५६

"O Rudra! By not doing what we should be doing and doing things we should not be doing, we may have angered You. Despite Your anger (bhamita), please do not harm or destroy us, our children (toka) and grandchildren (tanaya), cattle (wealth), horses (vehicles).

The animal kingdom enriches us. The wild life is the Wealth of Kenya. The White Revolution of India, the largest dairy development programme, would not have been Possible without the cows. May there not be any outbreaks of diseases in humans, birds and animals. May all live a full life. span, especially the leaders, and brave sons of the soil (viran). The history of India would have been different if great men like Ādi Śaṅkarācārya and Swami Vivekananda had lived longer.

A deal is struck when both sides give something. We have not come empty-handed. With our arms full of offerings (haviṣmanta) and a heart full of love, we worship You. It is said that the anger of the great can be quietened by our sincere supplication or prostration.¹²⁰ Hence, we serve You with prostrations (namasā vidhema te).

आराते गोघ्न उत पूरुषघ्नने क्षयद्वीराय सुम्नमस्मे ते अस्तु ।

रक्षा च नो अधि च देव ब्रूयथा च नः शर्म यच्छद्विबर्हाः ॥ ७ ॥

ārāte goghna uta pūruṣaghne kṣayadvīrāya sumnamasme té astu,
rakṣā ca nō adhi ca deva brūhyathā ca naḥ śarmā yaccha dvibarhāḥ (7)

7. Please do keep Your form that kills our family, cattle and brave men far from us and Your pleasing form near us. Please protect us. O God! Please speak in our favour (before all deities). You are the bestower of both worldly and spiritual joy. Please bestow both on us.

The word 'arat' means both far and near. O Rudra! Please do keep Your form that kills our family (puruṣaghna), cattle (goghna) and brave men (kṣayadvira) far and Your pleasing form near us. Please protect us.

It was already said, "O God claim me as Yours and thereby take my side" (adhyavocat adhvaktā 1.1.6). We again pray, 'Please speak words in our favour (adhibrahi) before all deities'. What could be greater than a recommendation from God! When God and deities are favourable to us, we will be protected and happy; hence, the peace invocation May the famous Indra, the omniscient Sun-god, the affliction-killing Garuda and the Guru of gods, Bṛhaspati, be pleased with us.¹²¹

God is addressed as 'Dvibarhāḥ', one who increases both worldly and spiritual joy. O Rudra! Since You are the giver of both, please do bestow both on us (śarma yaccha nah).

The next mantra is both a prayer to our own mind and to Rudra.

¹²⁰ प्रणिपातप्रतिकारः संरम्भो हि महात्मनाम् ।

¹²¹ स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः । स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

- अथर्व वेद शान्ति पाठ

स्तुहि श्रुतं गर्तसदं युवानं मृगन्न भीममुपहृलुमुग्रम् ।
मृडा जरित्रे रुद्र स्तवानो अन्यन्ते अस्मन्नवपन्तु सेनाः ॥ ८ ॥

stuhi śṛutam gārtasadaṁ yuvanaṁ mṛganna bhīmam upahṛtnumuḡram,
mṛḍā jaritre rudra stavāno anyantē aśmannivapantu senāḥ (8)

8. O mind! Praise God who is famous, who resides in the cave of our hearts, who is always young and is fierce like a lion. O Rudra! Being thus praised, do make us, who live in this ever-perishing body, happy. With Your army (of virtues), do destroy our enemies (sins).

When we praise and pray to God, the Lord of the Universe outside, we often forget that He always resides in the cave of our heart (gartasadam).¹²²

We have to keep reminding our mind of His presence within us as our own Self, the witness Consciousness of all our thoughts and actions and the all loving and protective God. O mind! Do praise Rudra, the one who resides even within me, this most insignificant devotee.

If a young fierce pit bull attacks us, we are in danger, but if he is our pet dog, then he is a danger to an intruder. When we meditate and see God as the young, dynamic and fierce protector within us we feel safe and secure from our enemies. Also residing in this ever-perishing body, O Rudra, do make us happy and with Your army of virtues do destroy our inimical sins.

परिणो रुद्रस्य हेतिर्वृणक्तु परित्वेषस्य दुर्मतिरघायोः ।
अवस्थिरा मघवद्भयस्तनुष्व मीढ्वस्तोकाय तनयाय मृडय ॥ ९ ॥

parino ruḍrasyā hetirvṛṇaktu paritveṣasyā dur-matirāghāyoḥ,
avāsthirā maḡhavadbhyastanuṣva mīḍhvastokāya tanāyāya mṛḍaya (9)

9. O Rudra! May Your destructive weapons be kept away from us. Do keep Your mind which is angered by our sins and intent on attacking us, away from us. O Midhva! For us who worship You with offerings, please leave Your infallible weapons and anger and grant happiness to us, our children and grandchildren.

We get angry when others do not do what we want them to do or do wrong to us. God, 'so to speak, appears angry (tvisa) when we live a sinful life (agha-ayuh). We look ugly in anger; whereas God shines, even when angry (tviṣa diptau). Our 'durmati' (bad thought) is in thinking and doing wrong. God's 'durmati' is in destroying our evil thoughts and those who are evil. We find it very difficult to give up our anger totally. Since they are only appearances, God can withdraw His anger and angry form instantly. Our weapons fail and our thoughts are often ineffective. God's weapons (heti)¹²³ and thoughts are infallible (sthira).

¹²² गर्ते हृदयकुहरे सीदतीति ।

¹²³ हन्यन्ते अनया इति हेतिः आयुधमित्यर्थः ।

God's weapons are the forces of nature by which He controls and disciplines.¹²⁴ When they are calm, they are pleasant like a gentle breeze or the gurgling flow of the river. But they can take furious forms like tornados and floods. It is said that in Śrī Rāma's kingdom it rained only as much as needed, and the sun's heat was always pleasant. When the body temperature is normal all is fine, but when it rises even a little, we feel feverish. When our blood pressure or sugar levels fluctuate, rise too high or become too low, we are in deep trouble. Similarly, when the 'vāta', 'pitta' and 'kapha' in the body are in balance all is fine, but when there is 'prakopa' (aggravation or literally anger) in any of these, there is disease. Hence, the prayer, 'For us who worship (maghavadbhyah), please leave Your weapons and anger (parivrṇaktu) and grant us happiness (mṛdaya) to us and our progeny."

Are our worship, praise, prostrations and offerings to God a form of bribe, a bargaining chip or a deal maker? We must remember that everything is God and belongs to Him. So, He does not need our praise, prostrations or offerings. They are our ways of showing our faith, love, contrition, humility and surrender.

मीदुष्टम् शिवतम शिवो नस्सुमना भव ।
परमे वृक्ष आयुधन्निधाय कृत्तिं वसान्
आचरं पिनाकं बिभ्रदागहि ॥ १० ॥

miḍuṣṭama śivatama śivo nassumanā bhava,
parāme vṛkṣa ayūdhannidhāya kṛtīṁ
vasāṇa acāra pinākaṁ bibhṛadāgāhi (10)

10. O Midhuṣṭama! O Śivatama! Be peaceful and grant us auspiciousness. Do keep Your terrible weapons far away from us on top of trees and appear before us wearing only a tiger skin and holding Your bow as a decoration.

One who fulfils our desires is 'Midhvah' (I.10.9), but one who abundantly showers us with all we desire [dharma (merits), artha (wealth), kāma (pleasures) and mokṣa (Liberation)] is 'Midhustama'. Similarly, 'Siva' is one who is auspicious, whereas 'Śivatama' is one who is the highest auspiciousness. O Midhustama! O Śivatama! Be peaceful and grant us auspiciousness. The vata vrksha and aśvattha are auspicious, tall and widespread trees. Do keep Your terrible weapons far away from us, on top of those trees, and appear before us wearing only a tiger skin so You cannot hide any weapons. A devotee prayed to Śiva, "I am scared of snakes; so when You grant me Your vision, remove the large snake around Your neck. The smaller ones as Your armlets are fine as they look harmless and quite nice." Here too is a prayer to Rudra to keep away the arrows and other terrible weapons and carry only the beautiful bow as an ornamentation but ineffective as a weapon. The 'danda' (stick) carried by a Dandi Swami is not a weapon of violence but symbolizes God and His immense spiritual power, a weapon of dharma and peace (Brahma danda). We are not scared of empty threats but it can appear real to one who does not know. May Your bow be seen as a threat to our enemies and not to us.

¹²⁴ तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च । - भगवद् गीता-९.१९

विकिरिद् विलोहित नमस्ते अस्तु भगवः।
यास्ते सहस्रं श्रेतयो न्यमस्मन्निवपन्तु ताः ॥ ११ ॥

vikiridā vilōhitaṁ namāste astu bhagavaḥ
yāste sahasraṁ hēṭayānyamaśmannivāpant u tāḥ (11)

11. O Vikirida! O Vilohita! O Bhagavaḥ! Prostration unto You. Please destroy the enemies (in our mind) with Your innumerable weapons, but not us.

One who destroys that which harms us like sins, diseases and poverty is called 'Vikiridah'.¹²⁵ One who provides grains and wealth is also called 'Vikirida'. God is a special shade of red (viśeṣa lohita) and also one who is fair, without red colour (vigata lohita). He is endowed with all fortunes (śad-aiśvarya yukta). O Vikirida! O Vilohita! O Bhagava! Our prostrations to You.

Prayer: The uncontrolled mind is our main enemy and cause for our bondage and sorrow.¹²⁶ O Rudra! Please attack the enemies in our mind (anyān nivapantu) with Your innumerable weapons (te sahasra hetayah), but not us.

सहस्राणि सहस्रधा बाहुवोस्तव हेतयः ।
तासामीशानो भगवः पराचीना मुखा कृधि ॥ १२ ॥

saḥasrāṇi sahasradhā bahuvostavā hēṭayāḥ
tāsāmīśāno bhagavaḥ parācīnā mukhā kṛdhi (12)

12. O God! Your hands hold thousands of weapons which can be used in thousands of ways. Please point them elsewhere and not towards us, as You are the all capable Master of them.

saḥasrāṇi sahasradhā hēṭayah: Everything can become a weapon even a pin. There are innumerable types of weapons used in innumerable ways for thousands of reasons. God is the Master of all and has mastery over all. The last mantra of this section is a prayer for all weapons to be pointed away from us and all that is dear to us.

The sum total of this anuvāka is the same as the first anuvāka. A praise of Rudra as the omniscient, omnipotent Lord to show His peaceful auspicious form, not direct His destructive weapons towards us and direct them towards our outer and inner enemies, thereby granting us peace, protection and happiness. This same thought is echoed in the prayer 'May all be happy and healthy and may none see anything inauspicious and may none suffer'.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ विविधं किरन्ति हिंसन्ति विकिरयः, तान् द्यति खण्डयति इति विकिरिदः ।

¹²⁶ अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् । - भगवद् गीता-६.६

¹²⁷ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग्भवेत् ॥

Anuvāka I.11

The last anuvaka of the Namakam is a prayer and prostrations to Rudra who appears as thousands of Rudras, some of them mentioned earlier as Kirikas, Vikṣīṇakas, Vicinvatkas, Anirhatas and Amirvatkas (1.9.15 to 19).

A democracy like India has a Central Government and different State Governments, headed by the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers respectively, along with other elected members who head various ministries like Defence, Finance, Home, and so on. Each Ministry has different departments, like the Defence Ministry which has various branches such as the Army, Navy and Airforce, each with departments, sub-departments, sections, sub-sections, and so on, each with a head that overlooks many more people under them. The Indian Army alone has 1.4 million active personnel. One can imagine the total number of people working in various posts that keep the entire Indian Government running! Similarly, the Lord of the Universe, God, has thousands of groups of deities referred to here as Rudras which take care of this vast universe including our earth and all that happens here.

God governs the physical universe through various laws which we can loosely translate as Nature's Laws, each of which is headed by a deity. Just like the interconnection between different laws and departments in a country, there is an interconnectivity of the laws and the deities. Just as water and electricity is located in various places, the deities the Public Works Department that takes care of roads, (Rudras) are located all throughout the universe. However, we should not forget that God/Rudra as the Supreme Self/Truth and the Lord of the universe is one alone without a second. It is He alone that appears as all the deities, empowers them and governs through them. They do not exist independent or apart from Him.

Just as the government is happy with law abiding citizens who pay their taxes in time, God/deities are pleased by those who live a life of dharma. Those citizens who give voluntary and special help to the government are duly recognized and rewarded. Similarly, those who are seekers and devotees, those who are spiritual and religious practitioners and those who serve God with love and surrender to His Will are rewarded abundantly. A poor but meritorious student, unable to afford his tuition fees, finds his benefactor in a rich person. Likewise, at the subtler plane, the deities encourage and reward the deserving one in unobtrusive and subtle ways. Have we not experienced someone coming out of the blue to help us in a task or complete a project we found impossible to complete on our own! God has promised to take care of the needs of His devotees¹²⁸ and assured them that they shall never perish and will always be protected.¹²⁹

There are countless ways in which God blesses. Some Rudras are charged with disciplining and some in bolstering the seeker's efforts.

¹²⁸ तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् । - भगवद् गीता-९.२२

¹²⁹ न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति । - भगवद् गीता-९.३१

The next 10 mantras are a prayer to Rudras of various forms, located in various places, taking care of various functions, to not harm but protect us.

सहस्राणि सहस्रशो ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम् ।
तेषां सहस्रयोजनेऽवधन्वा नि तन्मसि ॥ १ ॥

अस्मिन्महत्यर्णवेऽन्तरिक्षे भवा अधि ॥ २ ॥

नीलग्रीवाशितिकण्ठाश्वा अधः क्षमाचराः ॥ ३ ॥

नीलग्रीवाशितिकण्ठा दिवः रुद्रा उपश्रिताः ॥ ४ ॥

ये वृक्षेषु सस्पिञ्जरा नीलग्रीवा विलोहिताः ॥ ५ ॥

ये भूतानामधिपतयो विशिखासः कपर्दिनः ॥ ६ ॥

ये अन्नेषु विविध्यन्ति पात्रेषु पिबतो जनान् ॥ ७ ॥

ये पथां पथिरक्षय ऐलबुदा यव्युधः ॥ ८ ॥

ये तीर्थानि प्रचरन्ति सुकावन्तो निषङ्गिणः ॥ ९ ॥

य एतावन्तश्च भूयांसश्च दिशो रुद्रा वितस्थिरे ।
तेषां सहस्रयोजनेऽवधन्वानि तन्मसि ॥ १० ॥

sahasrāṇi sahasraśo ye rudrā adhi bhūmyām
teṣām sahasrayojane' vadhanvani tanmasi (1)

asminmahatyarnave'ntarikṣe bhavā adhi (2)

nilagrīvāśśitikanthāśśarvā adhah kṣamācarāḥ (3)

nilagrīvāśśitikanthā divam rudrā upaśritāḥ (4)

ye vṛkṣeṣu śaspiñjarā nīligrīvā vilōhitāḥ (5)

ye bhūtānām adhipatayo viśikhāsaḥ kapardināḥ (6)

ye annesu vividhyānti pātrēsupibātojanān (7)

ye pathām pathirakṣaya ailabṛdā yavyudhaḥ (8)

ye tīrthāni prācarānti sṛkāvānto niṣāngināḥ (9)

ya eṭāvāntaśca bhūyāṁsaśca diśo rūdrā vitasthīre
teṣāṁsahasrayojanē vāḍhanvāni tanmasi (10)

1-10. Thousands of Rudras of thousands of types reside on earth. Through our worship, we unstring Your bows and keep them a thousand yojana away from us. Those Rudras, who are located in the great ocean and in the sky; who are blue and white necked, moving about in realms below the earth as lords; who are blue and white necked and in the realms higher than the earth; who are coloured like tender grass, having blue necks and of deep red colour located on trees; who are the masters of ghosts and goblins with no hair on head and with matted locks; who reside in food, in the vessels that store food, in water and water carrying Dessels; who are protectors for all paths; who protect by providing nourishing food; who fight sinners and protect us; who move about in pilgrim places with sharp weapons and swords in hand; and countless than them, pervading in all the directions, leave may all these Rudras, mentioned uptill now and more numerous their bows at a distance of a thousand yojanas.

tesam sahasrayojaneva dhanvāni tanmasi: This is the from second to the ninth mantra) of this anuvāka. In the first common refrain for these 10 mantras, (to be understood and the tenth anuvāka we prayed to Rudra and requested Him to disarm and put away His weapons far away. Here is the same prayer to the thousands of Rudras. 'Please unstring Your bows and keep them a thousand yojana away.' (1 yojana equals approximately 8 miles or 12.8 km).

It is interesting to note that right from the first anuvāka of the Namakam, the prayer has never been for God/Rudra/deities to stay away from us but only a request to appear peaceful and auspicious and that their weapons may protect us and not harm us. The stones with the name of God (Rama) floated on the oceanic water to build the bridge to Lanka. When Śrī Rāma put a stone on the water, it sank. Śrī Hanuman explained, "How can anyone God forsaken fare well? They will surely drown in the ocean of samsara -be it a stone or a person." Luckily for us God never forsakes anyone. God is ever present and His presence is always experienced by the devotees.

Human laws may be fallible, but God's laws are infallible. One who obeys His laws. need never fear. This refrain really means 'May we live a life of dharma which will not warrant a use of God/deities weapons to harm us and may we not unnecessarily be troubled.'

A question may arise are these deities/Rudras visible or only invisible sentient forces? They are generally invisible but can and do take forms both gross and subtle. Hence, they are described as blue-necked, white-necked, with various types of tufts (vicitra śikhā), without tufts bald (vigata śikhā), golden yellow (saspiñjara), special red (viśeṣa lohita) and fair (vigata lohita). It should be noted that the Rudras have the same description as God or Rudra. This again shows that it is God alone that appears as thousands of Rudras. It also indicates the identification of those who serve God with God. Just as the genetic code of a person is generic (shows what family and race he belongs to) and also individual (unique to that person), each Rudra devatā belongs to the genre of Rudra but has a particular persona and function.

These Rudras/deities are located and protect us, on land (adhi bhūmyām), in the interspace (bhuva loka - adhi antarikṣa), in the realms lower to the earth (adhah kṣamācarāḥ), in the realms higher than the earth (heavens divam upāśritāḥ). This shows that Rudras/deities are spread all over the universe.

On earth, they are on trees (vrkṣeṣu – representing all plant life), protecting them and the creatures that live in and off them. They also live within our bodies protecting our gross and subtle body (bhūtānām adhipati). Viruses and bacteria can both harm and protect us. The Master of ghosts and goblins which trouble us could also be called bhūtānām adhipati - Bhūtādhipati'.

Rudras reside even in food (annesu), in the vessels in which we store food or the food packaging (pātreṣu) and even in water and vessels which carry water (patresu pibataḥ). Half the world population is either malnourished or perishes because of lack of food, and a fair population is sick because of overeating or eating and drinking unhealthy. "Please keep away all the harmful food and drinks from us, even though that is what we love." Rudras protect all those who follow the different religious and spiritual paths and the paths themselves (pathām pathirakṣaya) with abundant followers and teachers. We know that many sects have perished because there are no followers or right teachers or have lost relevance.

Rudras protect us from following the wrong path and are a bridge to the path of righteousness¹³⁰ and hence are our friends on all our paths to God (mārgabandhu). Rudras are the help that we get from strangers in our travel or as emergency responders in remote areas that we get lost in.

Rudras protect by providing nourishing food in abundance (ailabṛdāḥ).¹³¹ Abundance of food can also make us lazy and indulgent.

Rudras fight sinners (yavyudhah) and thereby protect us.¹³² We are sometimes unaware that people associated with us may be involved in sinful actions. We, by association, inadvertently get involved in wrong actions. God protects us by taking them away or taking us away from them.

Pilgrim places abound with holy people. May Rudras roam around with weapons (tīrthāni pracaranti) and scare away the bad elements who reside in holy places. Imagine the effort taken by the government, the police, service providers, benefactors and holy people who make the Kumbha Mela an unimaginably and divine experience for us.

The thousands of Rudras mentioned till the ninth mantra are only a small part of the thousand others. The army of Rudra is unimaginably large and widespread. May they all protect us and never harm us.

¹³⁰ धर्मसेतुपालकं त्वधर्ममार्गनाशकम् । - कालभैरव अष्टकम्-५

¹³¹ इरा अन्नम्, इरानां समूहः विभर्ति इति ऐलबृदः ।

¹³² युः पपिष्ठः शत्रुः वा, युभिः युध्यन्तीति यव्युधः ।

A modern man will think 'Why do I need God or His army's protection? I am young, strong, rich and influential. I am quite capable of protecting myself. My house has a very good security system and also everything is insured. I also have an underground bunker in case of a nuclear blast.' Are we really able to take care of ourselves? Is it not nature's laws and their infallible working that takes care of even our breathing, perceiving, digesting and thinking? Realizing the glory of God and His army, we can only Prostrate again and again.

नमो रुद्रेभ्यो ये पृथिव्यां येऽन्तरिक्षे ये दिवि येषां
मन्नं वातौ वर्षमिषवस्तेभ्यो दश प्राचीर्दश
दक्षिणा दश प्रतीचीदशोदीचीर्दशोर्वास्तेभ्यो नमस्ते
नो मृडयन्तु ते यं द्वेष्टि नो यश्च नो द्वेष्टि तं वो जम्भे दधामि ॥ ११ ॥

namo rṣudrebhyo ye pṛthivyāṁ
yēntarikṣe ye divi yeṣāmannarṇ vātō
varṣamiṣavastebhyo daśa prācīrdaśa
dakṣiṇā daśa pratīcīrdaśodīcīr-daśordhvāstebhyo
namaste nō mṛdayantu te yaṁ dvismo yaścā
nō dveṣṭi tam vo jambhē dadhāmi (11)

11. Salutation to Rudras who exist on earth for whom food is their weapon; who exist in interspace for whom air is their weapon and who exist in heavens for whom rains are their weapons. Salutation unto those Rudras with the ten fingers facing east, south, west, north and upwards. May they make us happy. We offer unto Your open mouth those whom we dislike and those who dislike us (May they be eaten or be destroyed by You).

namo rudrebhyo ye pṛthivyāṁ yeṣāṁ-annam īṣavaḥ: Prostration to Rudras who exist on earth for whom food is their weapon. How can food be a weapon? As already mentioned before, eating the wrong type of food, over eating, eating food bought with black money or stolen wealth, eating stolen food or lack of food are ways that food can harm or destroy us. Food-borne illnesses like food poisoning and due to chemicals used in growing and preserving food and diseases like cholera and typhoid adversely affect many. As already mentioned, those who eat food without sharing - are selfish or who do not give credit to others in what they get, eat sin.¹³³

namo rudrebhya ye antarikṣe yeṣāṁ vāta isavaḥ: Prostration to Rudras who exist in interspace for whom air is their weapon. causes joint The aggravation of 'vata' (gas) in the body pains, brittle bones and constipation, and blockage of vata can even cause strokes. The pranamaya kosa (vital air sheath) is linked to antariksa, and doing prāṇāyāma helps to keep vāta in balance. There are also the killer typhoons and wind storms which leave devastation on their path. Air borne diseases like chicken pox and influenza have infected many.

¹³³ भुञ्जते ते त्वयं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात्। - भगवद् गीता-३१३

namo rudrebhya ye divi yeṣām varṣam iṣavaḥ: Prostrations to Rudras who exist in heavens for whom rains are their weapons. The famines caused by draughts and excessive rains and floods are both destructive. We know that 70% of our body is made of water. The imbalance of water in the body can cause many problems, and water borne diseases like polio and malaria have infected millions over the centuries.

Food, water and air are life sustainers, but they can become life destroyers. This mantra is a prayer for ecological balance and plea for people to have the sense not to disturb the fine balance in nature. Instead of symptomatic solutions, we need to address the root cause by changing the way we think and live. The results of wrong thinking and wrong living by humans like global warming, are already being experienced.

daśa prācīr-daśa dakṣiṇā daśa pratīcīr-daśodicir-daśorcivās-tebhyo namaste: We prostrate with folded hands (with our ten fingers - daśa). This symbolizes surrender with the oneness of thought, word and deed. It shows that we recognise God's greatness and His presence everywhere (east, south, west, north and upwards) and praise and worship Him with prostrations.

Prayer: At the end of the day all we want is to be happy in life. So, the final prayer of this anuvāka and of the Namakam is to make us happy. People and things we dislike and who dislike us cause sorrow. O God! May they be destroyed (eaten) by You.

People committing crimes and sins have scant regard for righteous people or righteous ways (dharma). The noble ones do not themselves punish the wicked or hate them. They leave them in the care of God to vanquish them. Vibhīṣaṇa advised Rāvaṇa to return back Sītāji whom he had kidnapped. Rāvaṇa not only disregarded his advice but kicked him out of the court and exiled him. Vibhīṣaṇa took refuge in Śrī Rāma who, after killing Rāvana, coronated Vibhīṣaṇa as the King of Lanka, thereby restoring peace and harmony.

The Namakam has eleven anuvākas, but the following mantras are usually chanted along with Namakam. The next is the very famous Mṛtyuñjaya Mantra.

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम् ।
ॐ उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ॥

tryāmbakaṁ yajāmahe sugandhiṁ puṣṭi-vardhānam
urvārukaṁ ivā bandhanānmṛtyormūksiyā māmṛtāt.

We worship the three-eyed God who is fragrant and who nourishes all. Just like a ripe cucumber (which gets released from the creeper), release me from death, but not from immortality.

The Mṛtyunjaya Mantra is found in all the four Vedas. It is chanted by millions over the centuries and continues to be one of the most famous and chanted mantras. This mantra was revealed to Sage Mrkandu, who initiated his son Mārkaṇḍeya to it. As the story goes Yamarāja (death) could not snatch him, as he chanted the mantra and clung tight to the Śiva

Linga that he worshipped. Another story is that this mantra was revealed to Śukrācārya as Sañjīvanī Vidyā (the knowledge of resurrection).

It is also called the Mahāmṛtyuñjaya Mantra due to its greatness. This mantra is used as a protection from illness, to ward off untimely death and adverse planetary effects, like kāla-sarpa-doṣa and for peace and purity of mind. It is chanted by the person himself - with serious conditions like cancer - or by others for him.

tryambakam: As already mentioned, the two eyes of Siva symbolize justice and compassion and the third, the wisdom needed to balance the two. The eye is the gateway to the soul of a person. The look of a dullard is dull and of one who is brilliant, is bright. A man who wanted a loan without having any surety, was told by the stern bank manager that he would get the loan if he identified which of his two eyes was artificial. The man correctly said it was his left eye as he had no compassion even in his right eye! God's eyes are full of love for His devotee. His look appears stern when we do wrong, but we should know that He is always just, wise and compassionate.

'Ambakam' also means father or the Lord. He is the Lord of all the three factors like the three qualities (sattva, rajas, tamas), the three worlds (bhūh, bhuvah, suvah), the three gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa), the three states (waking, dream and deep sleep) and the three goddesses (Ambas - Sarasvati, Lakṣmi, Pārvati).

The sun and the moon are God's two eyes and He has fire as his third eye by which He burns ignorance and ignorance-born desires (Kāmadeva). He also burns the entire universe at the time of dissolution and our individual world of illusions or notion of reality in the world.

yajāmahe (we worship): Worship through this mantra takes different forms and meanings. Some just like to listen to it on their ring tone, to be switched off and cut off in-between. Some perform fire rituals like the Mṛtyuñjaya Homa or Ayuṣya Homa for longevity, and some worship the idol or picture (pūja) chanting the mantra while offering flowers and bilva leaves, especially all night during Śivarātri. Some repeat the mantra verbally or mentally (japa). Some meditate on the subtle meaning of the mantra. They then realize God as the Self within which is beyond the three qualities, three bodies, three states and three periods of time (gunatrayātītaḥ dehatrayātītaḥ avasthātrayātītaḥ kālatrayātītaḥ).

sugandhim (fragrant): Some put perfume and some catch the fragrance from their surroundings. Śiva is by nature fragrant. It is this fragrance that gives fragrance to others. He is the essence of all fragrance. Also, there is the fragrance of His countless glories (suyaśa) which spreads far and wide. For example, He is an embodiment of compassion (karuṇāvatāra) and is easily pleased (āśutoṣa). Mārkaṇḍeya held on to Śiva with steadfast faith knowing that God is very compassionate.

puṣṭivardhanam: God does not merely sustain the world but nourishes all, even the plant world.¹³⁴ He nourishes the devotion of the devotees, enriches the seekers with virtues, like faith, devotion and dispassion, needed for Realization.¹³⁵ The food eaten in a restaurant may be tasty, but the food cooked and fed by the mother is suffused with love. Such food is truly nourishing. God's love is the greatest nourishment for the body and soul (bhāvanā poṣaṇam). He grants knowledge of the Truth to those who worship Him¹³⁶ (jñāna poṣaṇam).

urvārukam-iva bandhanāt mṛtyor-mukṣīya, ma-amṛtāt: Do free me from death effortlessly, but not from immortality. Everyone who is born shall perish. That is the unalterable law of the world. But we do not pray, 'May my death be painless, and effortless'. People pray for miraculous cures for people suffering from terminal diseases. No one even thinks that maybe death is a good thing. When the person dies, they question the efficacy of prayers and the ability of God. Our prayer did reach God and He ended the suffering of the individual by releasing him from a diseased body. It is better to discard a much torn and patched garment and get a new one. The sentient individual has done this umpteen times, effortlessly.¹³⁷

Man suffers more from fear of a thing than the thing itself. O God! Please release me from the fear of disease and death. Suffering is bondage. O God! Release me from all suffering. Self-knowledge removes all suffering.¹³⁸ O God, grant me Self-knowledge by which I can end suffering and attain immortality.¹³⁹

Inadvertance regarding our own true nature is death.¹⁴⁰ Please grant us Liberation. A mature fruit falls off the branch effortlessly. May you grant us spiritual maturity and thereby attain Liberation effortlessly. For God everything is effortless. O God! Please release us from death with your effortless effort. To be something other than ourselves takes effort. Immortality is our true nature, and to be in our true nature is effortless.

O God! May I ever abide in my immortal Self effortlessly, and free me from my false identification with the mortal not-Self. We therefore pray "Lead me from death to immortality".¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः।- भगवद् गीता-१५.१३

¹³⁵ तदात्मनि निरते य उपनिषत्स धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु । साम वेद शान्ति पाठ

¹³⁶ ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते । भगवद् गीता-१०.१०

¹³⁷ वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि । तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही
॥ भगवद् गीता-२.२२

¹³⁸ तरति शोकमात्मवित् । - छान्दोग्य उपनिषद्-७.१.३

¹³⁹ विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् । - केनोपनिषद्-२.४

¹⁴⁰ प्रमादो वै मृत्युः । (प्रमादं वै मृत्युमहं ब्रवीमि । सनत्सुजातीयम्-१.४)

¹⁴¹ मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय । - वृहदारण्यक उपनिषद्-१.३.२८

यो रुद्रो अग्नौ यो अप्सु य ओषधीषु यो रुद्रो

विश्वा॒ भुव॑ना वि॒वेश॒ तस्मै॑ रु॒द्राय॒ नमो॑ अस्तु ।

yo r̥udro āgnau yo āpsu ya osādhīṣu yo
r̥udro viśvā bhuvaṇā vīveśa tasmai rudrāya namo astu.

Salutation to that Rudra who is in fire, in waters, in herbs and who has pervaded the whole world.

Salutation to Rudra who is omnipresent. He is the heat in fire, the sapidity of water and the curative power in herbs. He is the Existence in all existing objects, the life in all beings and the very Self of all.

तमु॑ष्टुहि॒ यः स्वि॒षुस्सु॒धन्वा॒ यो वि॒श्वस्य॑ क्षयति॒ भेष॑जस्य॑ । यक्ष्वा॑म॒हे सौम॑नसाय॑ रु॒द्रं नमो॑भिर्दे॒वमसु॑रं दुवस्य॑

I

tamuṣṭuhi yaḥ sviṣussudhanvā yo viśvāsyā kṣayāti bheṣajasya. yakṣvāmāhe saūmanasāya
rudraṁ namōbhirdevam asuraṁ duvasya.

(O mind!) Do praise Him who has beautiful arrows and heavenly bow and who is the abode of all medicines. We worship with salutations that Rudra who is the divine, the life breath and who is adorable, for a pure mind.

The first part is addressed to all our minds. Let us together praise Rudra who has all the beautiful weapons that protect and destroy and has all the medicines (viśvasya bheṣaja) which can cure us of every illness that can befall us. Interestingly in Indian languages, the one medicine that cures all illnesses is called 'Rāmabana' - the bow of Śrī Rāma (ramasya bāṇa) or Śrī Rāma (God) alone is the weapon that destroys all ills (rāmaiva bāṇa). It is always infallible.

Rudra appears as both the mighty deities (devam) and demons (asuram), the divine (devam) and the ungodly (a-sura). A happy mind is peaceful, a peaceful mind is happy and a pure mind is both peaceful and happy. So, we pray to Rudra and worship Him with prostrations (namobhiḥ) for a pure, happy and peaceful mind. Also, one who revels in the form of our prāṇa (life breath) is called asura (asuṣu ramate). Rudra is the life (devam asuram) and the divine Consciousness in us.

This is a very beautiful mantra. It portrays the glory of God that divinises and blesses everything that comes in contact with Him.

अ॒यं मे॑ ह॒स्तो॒ भग॑वान॒यं मे॑ भग॑वत्तरः ।

अ॒यं मे॑ ॐ वि॒श्वभे॑ ॐ षजो॒ऽय २ शि॒वाभि॑मर्शनः ।

ayam me hasto bhagavāṇaṁ me bhagavattaraḥ
ayaṁ me viśvabhēṣajōyaṁ śivābhimarśanaḥ.

This hand of mine is fortunate and the other hand is even more fortunate. By the divine contact of God (through worship), this hand of mine can cure all ills.

These hands of mine are indeed fortunate (ayam me hasto bhagavan). One hand is fortunate and the other hand (right hand for the right-handed and left for the left-handed) is even more fortunate (ayam me bhagavattarah). Each morning we pray, 'I look at my hands wherein resides Lakṣmī (ability to create wealth), Sarasvatī (gain knowledge and right understanding) and Govinda (to do dharma and gain divinity).'¹⁴² This reminds me of a popular song of my childhood. 'O child what is in your fist? In it lies your own fate and even our future (since children are our future)'.¹⁴³

Hands represent self-effort (puruṣārtha) and hard work. A fist symbolizes power and strength, a slap in the hand is a way of discipline, a handyman is one who can do every small task, and a mighty armed person can accomplish mighty tasks. The fingers of our

hand are separated and not webbed; because of this we have fine motor skills which open up innumerable possibilities. To watch the fingers of a master pianist or the hands of a percussionist, a cook, a sculptor or a craftsman at work, is a joy. The King of Heaven, Indra, is the presiding deity of our hands. With His divine blessings, we can become divine. Our hands indeed are divine means with divine abilities (ayam me

hasto bhagavān). We can use these hands to do good, serve others, worship God and attain God.¹⁴⁴

Some can do magical tricks with their hands (hatha cālākī), and some have magic in their hands. Some have the healing touch, some the soothing touch, some the thrilling touch and some the divine touch.

By the very touch of the idol (Śiva linga) in worship, our hands become more fortunate (bhagavattarah). By this divine touch (śiva-abhimaṣaṇa), the hands have the healing touch to cure all ills (viśva-bheṣaja). How great is God, how great is the worship, and how blessed is the worshipper who comes in contact with Him through worship! Adi Śaṅkarācārya says, 'The very divine glance of one who meditates on You (O Divine Mother), as one who rains nectar from every limb, makes one who is afflicted with fever (any illness) happy.'¹⁴⁵ Indeed, one who is in contact with the Truth (one with the Truth/God), effortlessly attains Bliss.¹⁴⁶ Such a Realized Master who is in touch with Truth/God is indeed worshipful¹⁴⁷ and contact with them purifies and makes us divine.

¹⁴² कराग्रे वसते लक्ष्मी करमूले सरस्वती । करमध्ये तु गोविन्दः प्रभाते करदर्शनम् ॥

¹⁴³ नन्हें मुन्ने बच्चे तेरी मुट्ठी मे क्या है। मुट्ठी मे है तकदीर हमारी ॥

¹⁴⁴ नर करे करनी तो नर ही नारायण हो।

¹⁴⁵ ज्वरप्लुष्टान् दृष्ट्वा सुखयति सुधाधारसिरया। सौन्दर्यलहरी-२०

¹⁴⁶ सुखेन ब्रह्मासंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते। भगवद् गीता-६.२८

ये ते स॒हस्र॑म॒युतं॑ पा॒शा मृ॒त्यो म॒र्त्याय॑ ह॒न्त॑वे ।
तान् य॒ज्ञस्य॑ मा॒यया॑ सर्वा॒नव॑यजामहे ।

ye te sahasrāmayutaṁ pāśā mṛtyo martyāya hantāve.
tān yajñasya māyayā sarvān avāyajāmahe.

O Death! May all those thousands and ten thousands of nooses by which a mortal can die, be removed by the strength of our good deeds.

Rudra is addressed here as 'Mṛtyu' - death or time, and all living beings as 'martya' - mortals who die in time. Gaṇeśa holds a pāśa (noose/rope) to remove obstacles and Yama (Death) uses the pāśa (noose) to take away the sentient being (jīva) from this body at the time of death.

Śiva has countless nooses which represents countless ways by which a person can die. Someone can slip in the bathroom and die or someone just dies in his sleep. Millions died in covid and thousands die in floods. Some get struck by lightening and some by a car. O Rudra, You are the veritable Death. Do keep your countless modes of death away from me as I have worshipped you. May you be pleased with my worship.¹⁴⁸ It is our good deeds that protect us in this life and guide us to a better future hereafter.¹⁴⁹ We, therefore, pray - O mind, (at the time of death) may I remember all the good that has been done by me.¹⁵⁰

O God! May those meritorious deeds of worship be means to keep away untimely painful or terrible death. It should be noted that the prayer is not to keep away the death but to keep away the terrible means of death represented here by pāśa. May we too, like Naciketā, face death and through Self-knowledge become immortal.

मृ॒त्यवे॒ स्वाहा॑ मृ॒त्यवे॒ स्वाहा॑ ।
ओं नमो॑ भगवते रु॒द्राय॑ विष्णवे मृ॒त्युर्मे॑ पा॒हि ॥

mṛtyave svāhā mṛtyave svāha.
om namo bhagavate rudrāya viṣṇave mṛtyurme pāhi.

Unto Death this oblation. Unto Death this oblation. Salutation to the all-pervading God Rudra. Do protect me from death.

We offer this oblation to Death. We offer all our wrong doings (pāpa), sorrows (śoka), delusions (moha) and ignorance (avidyā). What else can we offer to God who appears as time/death? We can make an offering of time well spent in doing good deeds. We can make an offering of graceful aging and mature thinking and a final surrender to death without resistance, regrets or complaints.

We see death everywhere, but we also see life everywhere. O Rudra! O Death! O all-pervading Viṣṇu! We

salute You. Do protect us from the jaws of death. May time not adversely affect us.

प्राणानां ग्रन्थिरसि रुद्रो मां विशान्तकः ।
तेनान्नेनाप्यायस्व ॥

prānānām granthirasi rudro mā viśāntakaḥ,
tenānnenapyāyasva.

You (Rudra) are the knot that ties the vital forces (to the body, senses and mind). You, who can put an end to my sorrows and life, do enter in me. Do nourish and protect me with the food that I have eaten. May auspiciousness always prevail. Om. alld

Rudra is the one who keeps the body and soul together. He gives, and sustains life, as the knot (granthi) that unites or ties the prānas (life, vital force or jīva) to the mind, senses and body. O Rudra, You are also the one who can put an end to life (antaka). Please enter in me (mā āviśa) as life giver and sustainer. With the food that I eat (annena) as a result of the offering (prasada-rupeṇa), may You be pleased, and may You protect and nourish me always (āpyāyasva).

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
om santih santiḥ śāntih.

May there be no obstacles from unseen forces, surroundings and from within. May peace prevail in the gross, subtle and causal world.

With this ends the Namakam of Sri Rudra Sūktam.

¹⁴⁸ मया कृत आराधनेन भगवान् सर्वात्मकः प्रीयताम् ।

¹⁴⁹ धर्मो मित्रं मृतस्य च ।

¹⁵⁰ ॐ ऋतो स्मर कृतं स्मर । ईशावास्योपनिषद्-१७

Śrī Rudra Sūktam Camakam

Camakam

Rudra is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. Recognizing the greatness of Rudra, the Sage in the Namakam worships Him through prostrations and prays for His blessings. When asked in what form he seeks blessings, the Sage presents a huge list of requests, each ending with 'ca me (grant this) also to me', hence this section is called Camakam. Each request is to be connected to the word kalpatām (meaning grant) which appears in the 10th anuvāka. For example, vājaśca me kalpatām - grant me food. This section too has eleven sub-sections or anuvākas.

Human desires are endless. Like fuel to fire, the more they are fulfilled, the more we want. Like pulling out a tissue from a box, when one is fulfilled, another pops out. Knowing this, why does the Sage wish for hundreds of things?

All desires emerge from a sense of incompleteness. For example, even a glutton does not want food when his stomach is full - at least at that time! Does the Sage too feel a sense of incompleteness? Certainly not!

The Sage has realized his oneness with the Truth/God. He is full and fulfilled. He has achieved the ultimate goal of life and there is no more seeking. When you belong to all, all belongs to you. Being one with God, everything is already attained. Having identified with God/Truth, the Sage prays not for himself, but for the well-being of the world. He desires things not for his fulfilment, but for us who are unfulfilled. Also, coming from a pure mind His desires get fulfilled.¹⁵¹ When we too pray to God with devotion, our wishes for ourselves and others get fulfilled Hence the chanting, worship and prayer to God through the Camakam. It is indeed our exhaustive wish list and a one-stop shopping list prayerfully presented to God.

The question often arises 'Should we ask God for anything?' 'Does God not give anyway?' It is true that God gives, but it is also said, 'Ask, and you shall receive'. Since wanting and asking is second nature to us, it is better to ask God, and depend on Him to fulfill our wishes, as He deems fit. Also, nothing on the list in the Camakam is negative or harmful. In fact, everything that is asked for will only result in our well-being. Should we not then wish, ask and pray for our prosperity and well-being?

Praying for oneself is good, but praying for others is better as it is less selfish. Since it is not always easy to pray exclusively for others, let us pray for all, including ourselves. Hence in the prayers in Camakam, even though it is said 'grant me' (ca me) we shall pray, 'O God, grant us.'

ॐ अग्नाविष्णू सृजोषसेमावर्धन्तु वां गिरः । द्युम्नैवांजेभिरागतम् ।

om agnāviṣṇṇu sṛjoṣasema-vārdhantu vāṃ girāḥ. dyumnair-vājēbhīr-āgātām.

¹⁵¹ यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान्।

तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामान् । - मुण्डकोपनिषद्-३१.१०

O Agni and Viṣṇu! May Your combined force be pleased with us. By these words of praise about You, may You both grow and our speech prosper. Please come with wealth and food.

This mantra is addressed to God as the deities 'Agni' and 'Viṣṇu'. 'Amongst the twelve sons of Aditi (Adityas), I am Viṣṇu (who incarnated as Vāmana)¹⁵², says Śrī Kṛṣṇa. May the divine forces not be at cross purposes but mutually compatible and their combined force be pleased with us (sajoṣau/sajoṣasā). Agni (Fire-god) presides over our speech and Viṣṇu over legs or locomotion.¹⁵³ May our words and actions be aligned. Speech is the most powerful organ of action. May our praises and Your blessings enrich and increase the power of my speech. Do come before us (agatam) with wealth (dyumnaih) and food (vājebhiḥ). It is indeed through the right employment of our speech and actions that we can earn an abundance of wealth.

¹⁵² आदित्यानामहं विष्णुः। भगवद् गीता-१०.२१

¹⁵³ बाचो देवता वह्निः । पादयोर्विष्णुः। तत्त्व बोधः-२०

Anuvāka II.1

वाज॑श्च मे॒ प्रस॒वश्च॑ मे॒ प्रय॑तिश्च मे॒ प्रसि॑तिश्च मे॒ धी॑तिश्च मे॒ क्रतु॑श्च मे॒ स्वर॑श्च मे॒ लोक॑श्च मे॒ श्राव॑श्च मे॒
श्रु॑तिश्च मे॒ ज्यो॑तिश्च मे॒ सुव॑श्च मे॒ प्रा॒णश्च॑ मे॒ऽपा॒ नश्च॑ से॒ व्या॒नश्च॑ मे॒ऽसु॑श्च मे॒ चि॒तं च॑ म॒ आधी॑तं च मे॒ वाक्कं॑
मे॒ मन॑श्च मे॒ चक्षु॑श्च मे॒ श्रोत्रं॑ च मे॒ दक्ष॑श्च मे॒ बलं॑ च म॒ ओज॑श्च मे॒ सह॑श्च म॒ आयु॑श्च मे॒ जरा॑ च॒ म आ॒त्मा च॑
मे॒ तनू॑श्च मे॒ शर्म॑ च मे॒ वर्म॑ च मे॒ऽङ्गानि॑ च मे॒ऽस्थानि॑ च मे॒ पर॒ङ्ग॑णि च मे॒ शरी॑राणि च मे॒ ॥ १ ॥

vājaśca me prasavaśca me prayatiśca me prasitiśca me dhītiśca me kratuśca me svarāśca
me ślokaśca me śrāvaśca me śrutiśca me jyotiśca me suvāśca me prāṇaśca me mēpānaśca me
vyānaśca me suśca me cittaṁ ca ma ādhītaṁ ca me vākcā me manāśca me cakṣuśca me
śrotram ca me dakṣaśca me balam ca ma ojaśca me sahaśca ma āyusca me jarā ca ma
ātmā ca me tanūśca me śarmā ca me varmā ca meṅgāni ca meṣṭhani ca me parūṅgṇi ca
me Śarīraṇi ca me. (1)

1. (Please also grant me) food, the permission to enjoy food, purity of food, enthusiasm to enjoy food, ability to digest the food, ritualistic sacrifice (for food), knowledge of svaras, ability to compose and chant hymns, ability to listen, ability to listen with discrimination, light of knowledge, heaven, (strong vital functions of) prana, apāna, vyāna and samāna, memory, knowledge of various subjects, fluent speech, pure mind, sharp eye, keen ear, skill (in performing duties), physical and mental strength, vitality, forbearance, long life, productive old age, noble individuality, healthy body, peace, protection, strong limbs, healthy bones, healthy joints and healthy organs.

vājaśca, prasavaśca, prayatiśca, prasitiśca, dhītiśca, kratuśca me: The first six on the wish list are concerning food, since food is our basic need, vital for our survival. 'All beings are born from food, subsist on food and merge into food (become food for other beings and become the soil from which food/crops grow). Hence food should be worshipped as God.'¹⁵⁴

It was already said, 'Salutations to the one who is the Master and protector of food' (annānām patayenamah-1.2.4). O God, grant us plenty of food (vāja/annam). Do approve and also grant us permission to enjoy food and donate food (prasava-anujñā). A beggar also gets food. O God! Grant us ownership of food so we can eat and give at will (prasava-svāmitva). Also, may the food be pure (prayati śuddhi) - bought with righteous earning (dhana śuddhi), lovingly cooked in a clean place and is wholesome, nourishing and balanced. When there is a delectable breakfast, the smell of freshly made masala dosas wafts into the classroom, the tastebuds are kindled, and mouth is watered, then the hungry students wait for the class to get over and scramble towards the Annaksetra (dining hall). O God! Grant us hunger, healthy appetite and an interest and enthusiasm to enjoy food (prasiti-utsuktā). As we age, both our appetite and ability to digest decreases. O God! May

¹⁵⁴ अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । अन्नाद्धचेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । अन्नेन जातानि जीवन्ति । अन्नं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्-३.२.१-४

our digestive fires be active (sudīpta jatharāgni). Do grant us a good capacity to digest and assimilate the food. It is said that performance of sacrifices (kratu) brings rains we eat. which result in good crops or food.¹⁵⁵ This has actually been experienced by many. Chinmayaranya (Andhra Pradesh, India) performed many Parjanya Yajñas, and Chinmaya Gardens (Tamil Nadu, India) performed Koṭi Nāma Japa Yajñas which invariably resulted in heavy rains. It also means that selfless actions and the choiceless performance of our duties without likes and dislikes (yajña bhāva) results in rains of abundance (food and wealth). May we perform such sacrifices and dedicated actions.

svaraśca me: As mentioned earlier the Veda mantras are chanted with three intonations (svaras) udatta (high), anudatta (low) and svarita (normal). The seven notes of music (sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha and ni) are also called svaras as they delight the heart (svayam rañjayati). The singer prays for the purity of the notes.¹⁵⁶ When the singer touches the right notes, it thrills the music lover, or when beautiful melodies are sung, it melts the heart of the listener, and there is a spontaneous applause from the audience. It is said that life without svara (music) is indeed dry.¹⁵⁷ Vowels (svaras) are self-shining (svayam rājate) - meaning they can be pronounced without consonants, but consonants cannot be pronounced without vowels. O God! May our lives be filled with Vedic chants, music and beautiful melodies, and may we have knowledge of svaras.

ślokaśca me: It was earlier said salutations to the praise worthy, the essence of all verses (ślokyāya namaḥ - 1.6.8). May we praise God and compose and chant hymns in His praise.

śrāvaśca, śrutiśca me: Listening is an art. May we have the ability to listen with attention and empathy (śrāva). Some have a hypnotic voice and some a soothing voice. May we have a sweet speech and a melodious singing and chanting voice which is pleasant and attractive to hear. Some listen without thinking. May we have the ability to listen with discernment (viveka pūrvaka śravaṇa - śruti).

jyotiśca me: Light symbolizes knowledge. May our intellect be bright and brilliant and the light of knowledge always shine within. 'Do lead me from darkness to light.'¹⁵⁸

suvaśca me: Heaven (suvah/svarga) is joy untouched by sorrow. May we be in seventh heaven, attain divine happiness right here on earth and also attain heaven hereafter.

prāṇaśca, apānaśca, vyānaśca, suśca me: The five vital forces which govern the five physiological functions are prāṇa (breathing), apāna (excretion), vyāna (circulation), udāna (reversal movements including thinking) and samāna (digestion and assimilation). May all our vital functions be strong and balanced. cittam ca, ādhītam ca me: Memory is 'cittam', and

¹⁵⁵ अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।

यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः । - भगवद् गीता-३.१४

¹⁵⁶ सूर निरागस हो... lyrics by Subodh Bhawe

¹⁵⁷ स्वर के बिना जीवन सूना ।

¹⁵⁸ तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय । - बृहदारण्यक-उपनिषद्-१.३.२८

knowledge of various subjects and all that is learnt is 'ādhitam'. The individual is a sum total of his experiences, some of them stored as memories. May we have a good memory, remember all that is important, remember our obligations and duties, and most importantly, may we remember God. We forget lessons we are taught but always remember the lessons we have learnt. May we deeply understand all that we study of various subjects, and may it be bright and brilliant - available when we need it.¹⁵⁹

vākca, manaśca, cakṣuśca, śrotram ca me: May our speech be fluent and our minds be pure. Eyes and ears are the main senses through which we perceive. May they be sharp and clear.

dakṣaśca me: May we be skillful and not only be efficient but also proficient in all that we do. May we have the skill to perform our duties without getting caught in their snare.¹⁶⁰

balam ca, ojaśca me: May we be physically and mentally strong and fit. May we have a strong character and spiritual strength vital for gaining Self-knowledge.¹⁶¹ May we be full of energy and vitality and be energized by the essence of the seven dhātus (plasma, blood, flesh, fat, bone, bone marrow and reproductive fluid).

sahaśca me: May we have the ability to forbear cheerfully the small pinpricks of life both physical and mental - without complaining, worrying, lamenting or blaming. May we have the ability to face opposition or inimical forces with fortitude and defeat them.

āyusca, jarā ca me: It was already said, 'Salutations to Rudra who is the wise and elderly' (varṣīyase ca vṛddhāya namaḥ 1.5.9-10). Does anyone wish for old age? Yes - the one who has a very short life. May we live a long life and a healthy and productive old age. May we age gracefully.

ātmā ca me: May we have a noble individuality (sāttvika ahankara) and realize our own true nature (śuddha ātmā) in this life itself.

tanuśca, śarma ca, varma ca, angāni ca, asthāni ca, parūmṣi ca, śarīrāṇi ca me: Most of us live at the grossest level and our body and everything concerning it is important and occupies most of our thoughts. The word 'tanvi' which comes from 'tanu' (body) means slender and beautiful. O God, may we have a healthy, slender, beautiful and attractive body, proportionate and strong limbs (angāni), strong and healthy bones (asthani), joints (parūmṣi) and healthy organs (śarīrāṇi). May the body not create problems but give us peace (śarma) and may it be well protected (varma).

¹⁵⁹ तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु । - यजुर वेद शान्ति पाठ

¹⁶⁰ योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् । - भगवद् गीता-२.५०

¹⁶¹ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः । मुण्डकोपनिषद्-३.२.४

Anuvāka II.2

ज्येष्ठद्यं॑ च म॒ आधिप॑त्यं च मे म॒न्युश्च॑ मे॒ भाम॑श्च मे॒ऽम॑श्च मे॒ऽम्भ॑श्च मे जे॒मा च॑ मे म॒हिमा च॑ मे व॒रिमा च॑
मे प्र॒थिमा च॑ मे व॒ष्म॑ च मे द्राघु॒या च॑ मे वृ॒द्धं च॑ मे वृ॒द्धिश्च॑ मे स॒त्यं च॑ मे श्रु॒द्धा च॑ मे जग॑च्च मे॒ धनं॑ च मे
व॒शश्च॑ मे त्वि॒षिश्च॑ मे क्री॒डा च॑ मे मोद॑श्च मे जा॒तं च॑ मे जनि॑ष्यमाणं च मे सु॒क्तं च॑ मे सु॒कृतं॑ च मे वि॒त्तं च॑ मे
वे॒द्यं च॑ मे भू॒तं च॑ मे भ॒विष्य॑च्च मे सु॒गं च॑ मे सु॒पथं॑ च म॒ ऋ॒द्धं च॑ म॒ ऋ॒द्धिश्च॑ मे क्लृ॒प्तं च॑ मे क्लृ॒प्तिश्च॑ मे
म॒तिश्च॑ मे सु॒म॒तिश्च॑ मे ॥ २ ॥

jyaiṣṭhyam ca ma ādhipatyam ca me manyuśca me bhāmaśca mēmaśca me mbhaśca me
jemā ca me mahimā ca me varimā ca me prathima ca me varṣmā ca me drāghuyā ca me
vṛddham ca me vṛddhiśca me satyam ca me śraddhā ca me jagacca me dhanam ca me
vaśaśca me tviṣiśca me kṛdā ca me modāśca me jātam ca me janīṣyamāṇam ca me sūktam
ca me suktam ca me vittam ca me vedyam ca me bhūtam ca me bhaviṣyaccā me sugam ca
me supatham ca ma ṛadham ca ma ṛadhiśca me klptam ca me klptiśca me maṭiśca me
sumatiśca me. (2)

2. (Please also grant me) greatness, power, righteous anger and its righteous expression, immeasurability, pure water, winning spirit, success, worshipfulness, foremost position, children and grandchildren and their unbroken lineage, increasing wealth, growing values and virtues, truthfulness, unswerving faith, wealth of land and cattle, wealth of money and gold, self-control and independence, lustre of the body, indoor and outdoor sports, joy, protection of the already born and the yet to be born, well-spoken words, merit, wealth of the past, wealth that will come in future, inheritance from ancestors, unasked for future inheritance, easily accessible place, pure and divine path, meritorious results of spiritual practices done in the past, meritorious results of spiritual practices yet to be done, wherewithal and ability (to make things happen), ability to discern between right and wrong and the nobility to do the right.

jyaiṣṭhyam ca, ādhipatyam ca me: It was earlier said, 'Salutations to Rudra, who was great in terms of age, position and qualities' (jyeṣṭhāya namaḥ 1.6.1). May we too be great in all ways. Some hold high positions but have no executive powers. Some are the eldest in the family, but have no control of the family or its fortunes. Some are good but powerless. O God, may we also be powerful and in control (ādhipatya-svāmitva).

manyuśca, bhāmaśca me: The Namakam started with prostrations to Rudra and His anger (om namaste rudra manyave 1.1.1). Anger for petty, selfish reasons is not good, but righteous anger is fine. It springs out of someone hurting one's own self-respect and unrighteous behaviour of others. We see the expression and cold behaviour of others and infer that they are angry with us. Anger within is termed 'manyu'. When it is expressed through words and deeds it is called 'bhāma'. O God! Grant us righteous anger and may its expression also be right and righteous. May we not lose control and get swept away in anger and cross limits of good behaviour (krudhyataḥ dharmam atikrāmati).

amaśca me: Some people are predictable and known entities. May we remain unknown and immeasurable, especially to our enemies (ameya). Also, may we be humble (amāna).

ambhaśca me: Wars have been fought over water sources. Due to climate change, water sources have dried, rainfall is unpredictable and there is shortage of water. The water available is often brackish and at times polluted and contaminated. O God! May we have plenty of sweet and pure water.

jemā ca, mahima ca, varimā ca, prathimā ca me: 'A quitter never wins and a winner never quits' - Napoleon Hill. O God, may we have the winning spirit (jema) and the means to succeed. Some who win are unable to enjoy their success and the name, fame, power and wealth it brings. May we also enjoy the fruits of our success (mahima). Some succeed through unrighteous means. May our success bring greatness. The truly great, like Mahatma Gandhi, are worshipped (varimā) and remembered for ages. May the success and greatness make us foremost (prathima) and an ideal for others to follow. May we gain prosperity (a home and land) as a result of our success (prathima).

varṣmā ca, drāghuyā ca me: May our lineage in terms of children and grandchildren (varṣma) continue unbroken (drāghuyā). Knowledge, culture and skill traditions in India are ancient. May the knowledge lineage (guru-sisya-parampara) continue unbroken for long.

vṛddham ca, vṛddhiśca me: All change is not growth and all growth is not progress. All progress is not development and all development is not unfoldment. O God! May our wealth grow (vṛddham), may the family and society progress in the right direction, may the country develop, and may we unfold and blossom within with values and virtues (vṛddhi).

satyam ca, śraddhā ca, jagat ca, dhanam ca vaśaśca me: O God! May we be truthful in thought, word and deed (yathartha vākyam). May our faith in ourselves, God, Scriptures and Guru be strong, trust in the inherent goodness of others be unshaken, and also may we have unswerving faith in the existence of life and worlds hereafter (śraddha astikya buddhi). May we have the wealth of money and gold (dhanam) and the wealth of land and cattle (jagat). One who does not have self-control loses all the wealth he has. Also, one who is dependent on others can never be happy, even if he has everything.¹⁶² Many people would love to give in charity or gift their loved ones but are not permitted even when they have means. O God! May we be self-controlled and independent (vaśam) in enjoying and donating all we have.

tvīṣiśca me: Some are lustrous even without make up (śarīra kānti). The body and face of a spiritual Master glows due to inner peace and divine virtues. Ramalinga Swami's (Vallalar) body was noted to be of a golden hue and translucent as a result of his pure divine life and union with God, the supreme Truth. May our body be lustrous and our mind be enlightened.

¹⁶² सर्व परवशं दुःखं सर्व आत्मवशं सुखम् ।

krīdā ca, modaśca me: All work and no play makes us dull and bored and therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa advises appropriate meditator.¹⁶³ Exercises and entertainment, even for a workouts could become tedious, but playing games (krīdā) serves as exercise, provides entertainment and makes us happy (moda). The Realized Master who sports and revels in the pure Self is

in Bliss.¹⁶⁴ O God! May there be healthy and entertaining indoor and outdoor sports in our life

(krīdā). May fun and laughter, joy and cheer pervade our life and may we attain our Blissful Self.

jātam ca, janiṣyamānam ca me: May we sustain those who are already born (jātam) and those who are yet to be born (janiṣyamānam). May we retain and enjoy what is already with us and enjoy all that is yet to come to us. May good come from what we have and what we will get in future.

sūktam ca, sukr̥taṁ ca me: Vedic hymns are called 'sūktam' like the Sri Rudra Sūktam. Also, that which is well spoken (su-uktam) is called 'sūktam'. May we chant, study and reflect on these Vedic hymns and also be well-spoken. The result of the chanting of these hymns is merits (punya). May we receive merits as a result of our meritorious deeds (su-kṛtam).

vittam ca, vedyam ca, bhūtam ca, bhaviṣyat ca me: Money cannot buy happiness, but it does buy comfort and pleasures. Also, money earned by one's sweat and toil is precious, and things bought by hard earned money are valued.¹⁶⁵ May we enjoy our well-earned wealth of the past (vittam) and the wealth we will get in the future (vedyam). One person remarked, "I got the old-fashioned way. I inherited it!" Inherited my money wealth too can cause endless conflicts. The will of the uncle read, "To my expectant nephew, I wish, 'Good luck'." May we enjoy our inheritance from our ancestors (bhūtam) without any dispute, and also all future inheritance that comes unasked to us (bhaviṣyat).

sugam ca, supatham ca me: An easily accessible place is called 'sugam' (sukhena gamyate). Some people are easily approachable. We feel like going to places where known people stay and where people love and welcome us. We like the company of people we get along with and enjoy with. O God! May You grant us such places and company. Also, may our journey be comfortable, the paths be good and safe and the means be pure and divine (supatham).

ṛddham ca, ṛddhiśca me: An abundance of wealth or results of the spiritual and religious vows (anuṣṭhita karma phala) is called 'ṛddham', O God! Do grant us a fat bank balance, large quantity of blue-chip stocks, and the like, and also the meritorious results of our spiritual practices that we have done and are yet to do (ṛddhim).

¹⁶³ युक्ताहारविहारस्य ... योगो भवति दुःखहा। भगवद् गीता-६.१७२

¹⁶⁴ आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावान्। मुण्डकोपनिषद्-३१.४

¹⁶⁵ यल्लभसे निजकर्मोपात्तं वित्तं तेन विनोदय चित्तम्। भज गोविन्दम्-२

kiptam ca, klptiśca me: Some have things by which they can achieve, but no ability to do so. Others have the ability, but not the wherewithal. O God, grant us both skill and intelligence (kṛpti - yukti sāmāthyā, buddhi samāthyā) and the wherewithal and the preparedness to make it happen (klpta -dravya samāthyā).

matiśca, sumatiśca me: Some can give maximum sorrow in the minimum time and others the maximum happiness all their lives. O God! Do grant us the ability to discern between right and wrong (mati) and the nobility to do the right (sumati). Also grant us the ability to make right decisions (mati) and even tough ones when needed (sumati).

Anuvāka II.3

The following is the most popular anuvāka of the Camakam and chanted as an independent prayer before the Namakam and of course, as part of the Camakam.

शं च मे मयश्च मे प्रियं च मेऽनुकामश्च मे कामश्च मे सौमनसश्च मे भद्रं च मे श्रेयश्च मे वस्यश्च मे यशश्च
मे भगश्च मे द्रविणं च मे यन्ता च मे धर्ता च मे क्षेमश्च मे धृतिश्च मे विश्वं च मे महश्च मे सविच्च मे ज्ञात्रं
च मे सूश्च मे प्रसूश्च मे सीरं च मे लयश्च मे ऋतं च मेऽमृतं च मेऽयक्ष्मं च मेऽनामयच्च मे जीवातुश्च मे
दीर्घायुत्वं च मेऽनमित्रं च मेऽभयं च मे सु गं च मे शयनं च मे सुषा च मे सुदिनं च मे ॥ ३ ॥

śaṁ ca me mayāśca me priyaṁ ca me nukāmaśca me kāmāśca me saumanasaśca me
bhādam ca me śreyaśca me vasyāśca me yaśaśca me bhagaśca me draviṇaṁ ca me yāntā
ca me dhartā ca me kṣemaśca me dhṛtiśca me viśvaṁ ca me mahaśca me saṁvicca me
jñātraṁ ca me sūśca me prasūśca me sīraṁ ca me layaśca ma ṛtaṁ ca me amṛtaṁ ca me
ayakṣmaṁ ca me nāmayacca me jīvātuśca me dīrghāyutvaṁ ca me namitraṁ ca me bhāyaṁ
ca me sugaṁ ca me śayānam ca me sūṣā ca me sūdinaṁ ca me. (3)

3. (Please also grant me) worldly pleasure, heavenly joy, dear cheerful company, auspiciousness, well being, hearth and home, Brings and people, conducive things and people, desired objects, fame, fortune, wealth, great ideals to guide, supporters, protection of all that we have, patience, conducive world, worshipfulness, knowledge and understanding of the scriptures, ability to teach and inspire others, respect from children, respect from servants, farming instruments, ability to deal with obstacles in our work, intellectual honesty, immortality, protection from all major diseases and minor illnesses, medicines to prevent illness, healthy body and a long life, none inimical to us, fearlessness, best behaviour, good sleep and bed, good morning and a fulfilling day.

śam ca, mayaśca me: It was said, 'Salutations to Rudra who bestows worldly pleasures, heavenly joys and even the bliss of Realization' (śaṅkarāya ca mayaskarāya namaḥ - 1.8.10). O God, do grant us such pleasures, joys and Bliss.

priyam ca, anukāmaśca, kāmāśca, saumanasaśca me: Things and people who are dear and by their very remembrance we become happy, are called 'priya'. Those things and people who are conducive to us are called 'anukāma' (anukūla padārtha). All desired objects and also the attainment of heaven are referred here as 'kāma'. The pleasant and cheerful company is called 'saumana'. Some are miserable even in the midst of everything. We prayed to Rudra to be kind and pleased with us (sumanā bhava - I.1.11). May we gain all these and also a kind, pure and happy mind with which we can enjoy them.

bhadram ca śreyaśca me: May all that is auspicious (bhadrā) come to us. If we do auspicious things and speak auspicious words, we will see and hear auspiciousness.¹⁶⁶ Sweets may not be for the good of a diabetic person and fried stuff for one on a diet, but

¹⁶⁶ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः। भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिः। अथर्व वेद शान्ति पाठ

good health is good for all. May there be the well-being of all (śreya) here and hereafter.

vasyaśca me: Salutations to Rudra, the indweller in our simple homes (grhyāya namaḥ 1.9.4) and mansions (gehyāya namaḥ -1.9.5). Do grant us hearth and home (vasya) where we can live happily.

yaśaśca, bhagaśca, draviṇam ca me: Fortunate (bhagavān) are those who are wealthy (draviṇa) and still have a good name (yaśa). May we always be lucky, wealthy and famous for all the right reasons.

yantā ca, dhartā ca me: Self-discipline is the best, but it does not always work. Children without parental control are misbehaved. May there always be great teachers and ideals who guide us and under whose control we live our life (yantā). May the guidance of the scriptures and the wise control what we do and should not do.¹⁶⁷ May we have parents, elders, teachers and well-wishers who support, nourish and protect us (dharta). Inomniste

kṣemaśca me: Śrī Kṛṣṇa has promised to give all that is needed (yoga) and take care of all that we have (kṣema), of the devotees who think of Him always and are ever united with Him.¹⁶⁸ One person remarked, "Marriages may be made

responsibility." That is in heaven, but maintaining it is our tough! Building a house has its difficulties, but once built, to maintain it in good condition is a lifelong project! O God! Please do take care of all that we have.

dhṛtiśca me: Impatience can make you a patient. Someone prayed, "O God! Give me patience. Now!" Another boss told his employee, "I have one nerve left, and you are getting on it!" Patience is a virtue needed in all walks of life - raising children, maintaining relations with our own frailties, in facing the tough challenges in our life and in our spiritual practices, especially during meditation. O God! Grant me patience, now and always.

viśvam ca me: It is impossible for everything and everyone to be conducive to us. But if we understand that the so-called unconducive elements of our life were also needed in making us what we are and achieving what we did, then the whole world and everything and everyone is seen as conducive (sarvasya ānukūlyam viśvam). O God! Make everything conducive to achieve our goals, and also, grant us the vision to see everything as conducive.

mahaśca me: May greatness (maha-pūjā) come to us and worshipful people be in our life. May we worship God through rituals (pūjā) and by service to all.

Samvicca, jñātram ca, sūśca, prasūśca me: It is the experience of millions that the knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures (samvit) has helped them in facing life,.

¹⁶⁷ तस्मात् शास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ । ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि । भगवद् गीता-१६.२४

¹⁶⁸ अनन्याशिचिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते । तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ - भगवद् गीता-९.२२

¹⁶⁹ जगत ईशधीयुक्तत्सेवनम् । अष्टमूर्तिमृददेवपूजनम् ॥ उपदेश सार:-५

transformed them, given them peace and solace and answered their fundamental questions regarding God, the creation and themselves. Some are born teachers. A good teacher explains well; but the best teacher also inspires and transforms us. The best Guru puts us in touch with the Guru, God and the Self within - our ever-present lifelong teachers. O God! May we study, understand and realize the knowledge of the Scriptures and have the ability to teach and inspire others (jñātram).

Those who live in close proximity to us also see us at our worst. Hence, to teach and inspire our spouses, children (sū) and servants (prasū) is difficult. May we command their respect so that they listen to us.

sīram ca, layaśca me: A bad workman may blame his tools for his mistakes, but the right tools and their quality is important for any achievement. This is the age of machines, instruments and gadgets, and we have become dependent on them. The city goes into a chaos if there is an electricity outage. International trade is affected if the internet is down for a day, and some have panic attacks when they lose their mobile phones or if their laptop crashes. O God, may we have good instruments of our trade - represented here by farming instruments (sīram). May they work well and may we have the ability to deal with obstacles in our work (laya).

ṛtaṁ ca, amṛtaṁ ca me: Religious rites and rituals and spiritual practices (rtam) make our minds pure and peaceful (amṛtam). O God! Do grant us the will and ability to perform them and experience the result thereof. Do grant us intellectual honesty (stam) and immortality (amrtam).

ayakṣmam ca, anāmayam ca, jīvātuśca, dīrghāyutvam ca me: There are serious diseases like cancer, AIDS and tuberculosis, and there are the seasonal colds and fever or bruises and burns. May we be protected from and free from all major diseases (ayakṣma) and minor illnesses (anāmaya), and may no harm come to our body. May we have the right medicines and tonics to prevent illness (jīvātu) and maintain a healthy body throughout a long life (dīrghāyutva).

anamitram ca me: Wherever we go there are always some who are friendly, some not so friendly, some indifferent, some whom we depend on and some who depend on us.¹⁷⁰ It is also said that 'if I have friends like you, why would I need an enemy?' Friends come and go in life, but a friendly person always has friends. O God! May we have true friends and friendliness towards all even those who are unfriendly to us, and may none be inimical to us or around us (anamitra). A rare person like Yudhisthira, even though a king, had no one whose enemies and was therefore, called Ajātaśatru enemy is not born (does not exist).

abhayam ca me: We are plagued by hundreds of fears. May we be fearless. All fears arise out of a sense of duality. May we realize our non-dual nature and be truly fearless.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ पञ्च त्वानुगमिष्यन्ति यत्र यत्र गमिष्यसि । मित्राण्यमित्रा मध्यस्था उपजीव्योपजीविनः ॥ - विदुर नीती-६४

¹⁷¹ अभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते । - तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्-२.७.११

sugam ca me: We are all ideals for someone. Those who are leaders or celebrities, are more so. People do not follow what the ideals and leaders say but follow or imitate their behaviour.¹⁷² It is well said that 'What you are speaks so loud, that I do not hear what you speak'. Hence our behaviour matters to us and others. O God! May we always be on the best of our behaviour (sugam - sadvartanam), such that we can be ideals and an inspiration to others.

śayanam ca me: It was said, prostrations to Rudra who sleeps (Sayānebhyaḥ namaḥ - 1.3.13) and who is the indweller of the bed and bedding (talpyāya namaḥ - 1.9.5). It is said that a clear conscience is the best pillow and one who has completed his duties sleeps well. Without a good sleep, we feel tired, drained and strained. O God, grant us a good sleep on a comfortable bed and bedding (sayana). May our sleep become a spiritual practice and the pillow be Your holy feet, where we rest in peace.

sūṣā ca me: 'Well begun is half done' - Aristotle. Waking up early (uṣā) is important and should become a beautiful start (su-uṣā) to a lovely day (sudinam). Some say, "Good morning God" and others, "Good God! Morning!" Early morning is meant for prayers, meditation, worship, exercising and cleansing the body and mind. O God! Grant us a good morning.

sudinam ca me: May we spend the rest of our day in diligently performing our duties, serving others, enjoying with family and friends and being in the company of noble souls. May our days be truly beautiful and fulfilling (su dinam).

¹⁷² यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठः तत्तदेवेतरो जनः। भगवद् गीता-३.२१

Anuvāka II.4

The following anuvāka is again a prayer for food and wealth in various forms and measures.

ऊर्कं मे सूनृतां च मे पयश्च मे रसश्च मे घृतं च मे मधुं च मे सग्धिश्च मे सपीतिश्च मे कृषिश्च मे
वृष्टिश्च मे जैत्रं च मे औद्भिद्यं च मे रुयिश्च मे रायश्च मे पुष्टं च मे पुष्टिश्च मे विभुं च मे प्रभुं च मे बहुं च
मे भूयश्च मे पूर्णं च मे पूर्णतरं च मेऽक्षितिश्च मे कूयवाश्च मेऽन्नं च मेऽक्षुच्च मे व्रीहयश्च मे यवाश्च मे
माषाश्च मे तिलाश्च मे मुद्गाश्च मे खल्वाश्च मे गोधूमाश्च मे मसुराश्च मे प्रियङ्गवश्च मेऽणवश्च मे
श्यामाकाश्च मे नीवाराश्च मे ॥ ४ ॥

ūrkcā me sūnṛtā ca me payāśca me rasāśca me ghr̥taṁ ca me madhū ca me sagdhiśca me
sapitiśca me kṛṣiśca me vṛṣṭiśca me jaitraṁ ca me audbhidyaṁ ca me rūyīścā me rāyaśca
me puṣṭam̐ ca me puṣṭiśca me vibhu ca me prabhu ca me bahu ca me bhūyaśca me
pūrṇaṁ ca me pūrṇatāraṁ ca mēkṣitiśca me kūyavāśca me nnaṁ ca mēkṣūcca me
vrīhayaśca me yavāśca me māsāśca me tilāśca me mudgāśca me khalvāśca me
godhūmāśca me maśuraśca me priyaṅgavaśca me ṇavaśca me śyāmākāśca me nīvārāśca
me. (4)

4. (Please also grant me) good wholesome food, sweet and pleasant words, milk, the cream of milk, clarified butter, honey, people with whom we could enjoy our food and drinks, crop, good timely rain, fertile land, sprout from the ground, wealth from underground and from underwater, growing abundance of wealth, good health, (the seven words from vibhu to akṣiti) progressive increase of foodgrains (the second indicating more than the first, and so on and the seventh indicating the most), cheaper quality barley, cooked rice, food that removes the disease of hunger, paddy, barley, black gram (urad), sesame seeds (till), green gram (mùng dal), chick peas (chana), wheat, red lentil (masūr dal), foxtail millet, very small and course type of rice, barnyard millet (sama) and amarnath gram (rajgira).

ūrkcā me: A feast, special food or a dinner at a restaurant is enjoyable once in a while. However, a typical normal regular home cooked meal (sāmānya anna) is not only healthy but also very satisfying. O God! Grant us good wholesome regular food.

sūnṛtā ca me: May our speech be sweet and pleasant and may we hear pleasant words from others. May we be lovingly fed with sweet words.

payaśca, rasaśca, ghr̥taṁ ca, madhu ca me: May our normal food consist of milk (paya), curds, buttermilk and sweets made of milk (pāyasa), the cream of milk (rasa) and sweets made from it (rasa malāi, ...), clarified butter (ghr̥tam) and food made with it, honey (madhu) and food sweetened with it. We offer pañcāmṛta to God consisting of milk, curds, clarified butter, honey and sugar, which is very tasty (amṛta). O God, grant us abundance of these. May our food be an offering to You, and may we receive it as prasāda from You.

sagdhiśca, sapītiśca me: To eat alone is no fun. Also, a family that eats together, prays together and plays together, stays together. In India, the day we have guests (friends and

relatives, those with prior invitation or those that come unexpected) is considered special and holy, as we are taught to consider guests as God.¹⁷³ O God! May we enjoy our food and drinks with others.

kr̥ṣīśca, vr̥ṣṭīśca, jaitram ca, audbhidyam ca me: May we have farms full of crops (kr̥ṣi), good timely rains (vr̥ṣti), fertile land (jaitram) and sprouts from the ground (audbhidyam) like flowering plants, fruit bearing trees, vegetables, herbs, shrubs and creepers. May the earth be beautified and bountiful with crops and vegetation.¹⁷⁴

rayīśca, rāyaśca, puṣṭam ca, puṣṭim ca me: 'Rayi' (gold) here symbolizes all the minerals that are mined from the earth. Our earth is not just beautiful outside but has minerals, rare metals, and precious stones hidden within it. For centuries, we have been mining gold and coal and even day to day necessities like crude oil (black gold) and rock salt. Gemstones and precious stones like pearls and diamonds have adorned us since ancient times. 'Rayi' is also referred to as all wealth (like gold) got from underground (sthala sampatti) and 'rāya' is all wealth (like pearls) from underwater (jala sampatti). O God, may our lives be enriched by gold and precious stones. May these natural resources not get exhausted, but be replenished.

May they be available in growing abundance (pustam). Of what use is wealth without health. May our health be nourished by our good deeds. hard work and wealth (pusti).

vibhu ca, prabhu ca, bahu ca, bhūyaśca purnam ca, pūrṇataram ca akṣītiśca me: The seven words from 'vibhu' to 'akṣīti' are a prayer for an increasing degree of the 14 types of food and grains mentioned hereafter. The Sages take a vow to produce more and more food so that all guests are fed and none is refused food.¹⁷⁵ In Kerala, a brass vessel (nelpara), filled to the brim with paddy and coconut flower is a symbol of abundance and prosperity. It is kept in homes and offered to God in gratitude after a good harvest. O God, may there be unlimited food and grains in our homes.

kūyavāśca, annam ca, akṣucca, vr̥ihayaśca, yavāśca, māśāśca, tilāśca, mudgāśca, khalvāśca, godhūmāśca, masurāśca, priyangavaśca aṇavaśca, śyāmākāśca, nīvārāśca me: May food remove the disease of hunger (aksut) which troubles us several times a day. Grains are not eaten raw, but are cooked with garnishing and spices. Cooked food, especially cooked rice is usually called 'annam'. The variety of food grains and pulses listed here shows us the richness of India in terms of its farm products, even in Vedic times, 5000 BCE. O Rudra! Do enrich our food with all the nourishing grains from the farmland (śyāmāka) and from the forests (nīvāra). The rich can afford the high-quality grains like the basmati rice and the poor the cheaper rice and barley (kūyava). O God! Do give food to all so that none sleep hungry.

¹⁷³ अतिथिदेवो भव । - तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्-१.२०.५

¹⁷⁴ पृथिवी सस्यशालिनी ।

¹⁷⁵ अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत । तद्वतम् ।

न कञ्चन बसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत । तद्वतम् । तस्माद्यया कया च विधया बहवन्नं प्राप्नुयात् । -- तैत्तिरीय-उपनिषद्-३९-१०

Anuvāka II.5

अश्मा॑ च मे॒ मृत्तिका॑ च मे॒ गिरय॑श्च मे॒ पर्वता॑श्च मे॒ सिकता॑श्च मे॒ वन॒ स्पत॑यश्च मे॒ हिर॑ण्यं च॒ मेऽय॑श्च मे॒
सीसं॑ च मे॒ त्रपु॑श्च मे॒ श्यामं॑ च॒ मे लो॒हं च॑ मे॒ऽग्नि॑श्च मे॒ आप॑श्च मे॒ वीरु॑धश्च मे॒ ओष॑धयश्च मे॒ कृष्ट॑प॒च्यं च॑
मे॒ऽकृष्ट॑प॒च्यं च॑ मे॒ ग्राम्या॑श्च मे॒ प॒शव॑ आ॒रुण्या॑श्च॒ य॒जेन॑ कल्पन्तां॒ वित्तं॑ च॒ मे॒ वित्ति॑श्च मे॒ भूतं॑ च॒ मे॒ भूति॑श्च
मे॒ वसु॑ च मे॒ वस॒तिश्च॑ मे॒ कर्म॑ च मे॒ शक्ति॑श्च॒ मेऽर्थ॑श्च मे॒ ए॒मश्च॑ मे॒ इति॑श्च मे॒ गति॑श्च मे॒ ॥ ५ ॥

aśmā ca me mṛttikā ca me girayaśca me parvatāśca me sikatāśca me vanaspatayaśca me
hirānyam ca me yāśca me sīsam ca me trapuśca me śyāmaṁ ca me lohaṁ ca me gniśca
ma apāśca me vīrudhaśca ma oṣadhayaśca me kṛṣṭapacyaṁ ca me kṛṣṭapacyaṁ ca me
grāmyāśca me paśavā āruṇyāśca yajñēna kalpantāṁ vittaṁ ca me vittiśca me bhūtaṁ ca
me bhūtiśca me vasu ca me vasatiśca me karmā ca me saktiśca me rthāśca ma emaśca ma
itiśca me gatiśca me. (5)

5. (Please also grant me) stone, mud, hillocks, mountains, sand, the entire plant kingdom, gold, iron, lead, tin, copper, bronze, fire, water, plants having weak stem, medicinal plants, crop and vegetables grown by agriculture and farming and those that grow on their own in forests, animals in rural areas, towns and cities or in forests, all we pray for as a result of the performance of fire worship, inherited wealth from past and the future, affluence and lordship for me and my future generations, wealth of the house, a house, religious and spiritual practices, strength and wherewithal to perform them, happiness from their performance, means to attain desired things and fulfilment of the goal.

aśmā ca mṛttikā ca, girayaśca, parvatāśca, sikatāśca me: Stone (aśmā), mud (mṛttikā) and sand (sikatā) are needed for construction of houses and soil for farming. Mountains (parvatā) and hillocks (giraya) not only add beauty but support ecosystems. Everything in nature has its purpose, supports life and is important for us as humans. O God! Do make all these available to us.

vanaspatayaśca me: The entire plant kingdom is referred to as 'vanaspati'. It also refers to Rudra who appears as the deity who presides over the forests (vanānām pataye namah - 1.2.8). The plant kingdom can survive without us, but we cannot survive without it. Deforestation in the name of development is causing global ecological problems. O God! Give us all the plants needed, may we take care of them, and may the deity of forests be pleased with us and protect us.

hiranyam ca, ayaśca, sisam ca, trapuśca, śyāmam ca, loham ca me: It was already said, 'May we get all that can be mined from the earth like gold (rayiśca me - II.4). Here, the different metals like copper (śyāma) and tin (trapu) and the alloys made from them like bronze (loham) are prayed for. Almost all vessels used in rituals are made either from bronze or copper. The health benefits of eating from bronze vessels and drinking water stored in copper vessels is quite well known. All the metals mentioned here are also used in the preparation of Ayurvedic medicines. From ancient times, iron (ayas) was used for making weapons, shields and armour. Iron is also used for many industrial purposes besides construction. O God! Do grant us all these metals and enrich our lives.

agniśca, āpaśca me: The heat and light nature of the fire element (agni) is used in all walks of life. It keeps our homes lighted, it keeps us warm in winters, is used for cooking, and all rituals are performed in the presence of a lighted lamp. The vital importance of water (apa) need not be elaborated upon. O God! May fire enlighten our lives and abundance of water enliven us.

virudhaśca, oṣadhayaśca, kṛṣṭapacyam ca, akrṣṭapacyam ca me: Plants having weak stems which climb or cover using support are called 'virudha'. They may be vines (valli) or creepers (latā). Medicinal plants are called 'oṣadhi', since they die once they mature. Crops and vegetables grown by agriculture and farming are called 'kṛṣṭapacya' and those that grow on their own in forests are called 'akṛṣṭapacya'. O God! Please grant all these and may they enrich, nourish and protect our lives. In the earlier anuvāka (II.4), grains grown on farms (śyāmāka) and those that grow in the forest (nīvāra) was prayed for.

grāmyāśca, paśava āraṇyāśca me: Not only do we depend on the plant kingdom but also on the animal kingdom for our survival. May all animals, be they in rural areas (grāmya), towns and cities or in forests (aranya), be protected by us and may they prosper and make us prosper.

yajñena kalpantām: This phrase should be added with each thing we pray for. May all we pray for be granted to us as a result of the performance of fire worship (yajña), actions done with the spirit of sacrifice (yajña bhāva) or good selfless actions for the welfare of society (yajña karma).

vittam ca, vittīśca me: In the second anuvāka of Camakam, it was already prayed - may we enjoy abundance of wealth from our inheritance and earnings of the past and the future (vittam ca me vedyam ca me). The same is prayed for again.

bhūtam ca, bhūtiśca me: We often see power, wealth, sovereignty and greatness in one generation and not the other. May affluence and lordship be granted to us and all our future generations.

vasu ca, vasatiśca me: 'Vasati' here means a house and 'vasu' the wealth of the house which in the ancient days meant cattle. May we be prosperous and also our homes be filled with prosperity.

karma ca, śaktiśca, arthaśca, emaśca me: Not everyone is fortunate enough to be exposed to religious and spiritual practices (karma), leave alone perform them. O God! Grant us the knowledge, will, strength (sakti) and wherewithal (artha) needed to perform them daily and regularly and on special occasions. May our resolve to perform them be fulfilled (artha-sankalpa siddhi) and may it result in peace, purity and happiness (ema).

itiśca, gatiśca me: God! Do grant us the means to attain desired things (iti ista prāpti sādhana) and the attainment of the desired things (gati ista prāpti). We use the phrase 'atha' to 'iti' to mean from the start (atha) to the end (iti). May all we start be successfully completed. Lord of death is called 'Iti' as death brings an end to life. O God, may we die fulfilling the goal (gati) of our lives.

The highest that we can desire is God/Truth. He cannot be attained by any efforts on our part, however many and for however long they may be. The infinite cannot be gained by finite actions or efforts. God can be attained through single-pointed devotion, and Truth can be attained through knowledge; both gained only through the grace of God and Guru. O God, You indeed are the final goal (gati), and with Your attainment alone will all our desires end (iti). O Rudra, do shower Your grace on us to attain God and the Truth.

Anuvāka II.6

This anuvāka is very enchanting to chant and listen to.

अग्निश्च॑ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ सोम॑श्च म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ सवि॑ता च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ सर॑स्वती च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ पूषा॑ च॒ म॒
इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ बृह॑स्पतिश्च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ मि॒त्रश्च॑ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ वरु॑णश्च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ त्वष्टा॑ च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒
धा॒ता च॑ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ विष्णु॑श्च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ऽश्विनौ॑ च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ मरु॑तश्च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ विश्वे॑ च॒ मे॒
दे॒वा इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ पृथि॑वी च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ऽन्तरि॑क्षं च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ द्यौश्च॑ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ दि॒शश्च॑ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒
मूर्धा॑ च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ प्र॒जाप॑तिश्च॒ म॒ इन्द्र॑श्च मे॒ ॥ ६ ॥

agnīśca mā indrāśca me somāśca mā indrāśca me savitā ca mā indrāśca me sarasvatī ca
mā indrāśca me pūṣā ca mā indrāśca me bṛhaspatiśca mā indrāśca me mitraśca ma
indrāśca me varuṇaśca ma indrāśca me tvaṣṭā ca ma indrāśca me dhātā ca ma indrāśca me
viṣṇuśca ma indrāśca me śvinau ca mā indrāśca me marutāśca mā indrāśca me viśve ca
me devā indrāśca me pṛthivī ca mā indrāśca me ntarikṣam ca mā indrāśca me dyauśca mā
indrāśca me diśaśca mā indrāśca me mūrdhā ca mā indrāśca me prajāpatiśca mā indrāśca
me. (6)

6. May the deities Agni, Soma, Savita, Sarasvati, Paśa, Brhaspati, Mitra, Varuna, Tvaṣṭā, Dhātā, Viṣṇu, Aśvini Kumāras, Marut ganas, Viśvedevas, Prthivi, Antariksa, Dyau, Diśa, Mūrdha and Prajapati, along with Indra, be pleased with me.

indraśca me: The name of Indra, the powerful King of Heaven is added to the name of each presiding deity. We pray to God that each of them be pleased and shower their blessings along with Indra. There are many meanings to this.

The ruler or the government gets a share of all we earn in terms of taxes. Both the State Government and the Central Government get a share of the taxes. Similarly, the King of Heaven, Indra, has a share in all that we offer to the presiding deities.

Our chances of getting a job are greatly enhanced if our application is accompanied by a recommendation of a very influential person in a very high post. Our immunity is enhanced by a booster dose along with the mandatory vaccine as seen in the case of the corona virus. Also, besides normal food, our health and wellness is enhanced through vitamin supplements. Om is chanted with mantras that we repeat to enhance their power and efficacy. Similarly, prayer to the mighty Indra along with prayer to other deities is a great value add, a booster and a high recommendation for the answer to our prayer.

It is also said in the Kenopaniṣad story that Agni, Vāyu and Indra excel the other deities as they could get closer to God.¹⁷⁶ Indra excelled both Agni and Vayu as He got closest to God.¹⁷⁷ Proximity to God empowers us and makes us excel Parvati Herself appeared before

Indra as his Guru and gave him knowledge of the Truth, and therefore, he became a Realized One and excelled.¹⁷⁸

Indra in the context of this anuvāka can be understood also as Rudra/God. The deities by themselves are powerless without God. The story of Kenopaniṣad is well known. Agni (fire) could not burn, nor could Vayu (air) blow a tiny blade of dried grass without the power of God. In the battle between Śrī Rāma's and Rāvana's army, all those who took the blessings of Śrī Rāma, came back victorious on that day. Lakṣmana too got defeated by Indrajit, the powerful son of Rāvana. But Indrajit was vanquished on the day Lakṣmaṇa was blessed by Śrī Rāma. The mighty Hanuman, when empowered by Śrī Rāma and the constant remembrance of His divine name, could cross over the ocean, burn Laṅkā and teach the mighty Rāvaṇa a lesson. It is God's power that empowers all. Hence God's name as Indra is added to each deity. May God and the deities be pleased with us.

The supreme Truth (Brahman) is also called Indra as it is the witness Consciousness of everything inert (idam draṣṭā iti indrah). The Truth manifests as the individual being and thereafter realizes its infinite nature as 'This (Truth) I am' (idam adarśam iti) and is therefore called 'Idandra' or 'Indra'.¹⁷⁹

The Truth is of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss and the substratum of all. Nothing and no one can exist without it. To draw our attention to this, Indra, the Truth is mentioned with each of the deity.

agniśca, somaśca, savitāca, sarasvatīca, pūṣāca, bṛhaspatiśca, mitraśca, varunaśca, tvaṣṭā ca, dhātā ca, viṣṇuśca, aśvinau ca, marutaśca, viśve ca, devā ca, prthivī ca, antarikṣam ca, dyauśca, diśaśca, mūrdhā ca, prajāpatiśca: At the macro level, these deities preside over the elemental forces and laws of nature. At the individual level, they preside over our senses, physiological and mental functions.

Agni (fire) is one of the five elemental forces, considered as the mouth of gods, as offerings to all deities are given via fire worship. Agni presides over the south-east direction and also over our speech. Therefore, we have the phrases, 'hot discussion' and 'fiery speech'. **Soma** (moon) is one of the Navagrahas, nourishes the plant life, presides over north-east direction. Also Soma, the moon, presides over the mind, and hence, a mental patient is called a 'lunatic'. **Savita** is one of the twelve Adityas, and presides over light and speed. Sun is called

¹⁷⁶ तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्शुः । - केनोपनिषद्-४.२

¹⁷⁷ तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान् स होनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्श । - केनोपनिषद्-४.३

¹⁷⁸ स होनत्प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति । केनोपनिषद्-४.३

¹⁷⁹ एतमेव पुरुषं ब्रह्म ततममपश्यदिदमदर्शमिति । तस्मादिदन्द्रो नामेदन्द्रो ह वै नाम । - ऐतरेय-उपनिषद्-१.३.१३, १४

Savita before sunrise and Sūrya from sunrise to sunset. Sūrya presides over the sense organ of vision (eyes). **Sarasvati**, the consort of Brahma, the goddess of knowledge, also presides over our speech. **Pūṣā** is one of the Adityas, presides over all meetings (marriages) and travel. **Br̥haspati**, the Guru of deities, one of the Navagrahas, presides over sacred wisdom and rites. Mitra literally means a friend. He is one of the Adityas and presides over light, treatises and bonds. Varuṇa, also an Aditya, presides over the water element Aditya, also called Viśvakarmā, is the divine architect and presides over all construction, machines, tools and instruments. Dhātā, an Aditya, presides over our health and wealth.

Viṣṇu, one of the Adityas, also one of the Trimūrtis, is in charge of sustenance of the universe and presides over locomotion (legs). The beautiful twins, Aśvini Kumāras, are divine healers and preside over the sense organ of smell (nose). Forty-nine in number, the Marut-ganas preside over the wind and storms and the major and minor vital airs (prāṇas and upaprāṇas) responsible for the physiological functioning of the body. Viśvedevas are a group of ten deities; they protect all human beings. All deities together are also called Viśvedevas. Pṛthivī, the presiding deity of the earth element also governs the annamaya koṣa or gross body. Antarikṣa, the presiding deity of space element, governs the interspace. 'Dyau' is the presiding deity of heaven. Diśa also referred to as Dikpālas are the presiding deities of all directions and preside over the sense organ of hearing (ears). Murdhā, meaning the top of the head, refers to the presiding deity of upward direction. Prajāpati, also referred to as Brahmā, presides over creation of the world and beings, and holds the central place in our homes. and the sense organ of taste. Tvaṣṭā, an

O God! May all these deities along with Indra be pleased with us and protect and nourish us. The peace invocation briefly expresses this same sentiment. 'May the famous Indra, the all-knowing Pūṣā, Garuda, the remover of diseases and Br̥haspati, the Guru of gods, be pleased with us.'¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः। स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः। स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः। स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ।

- अथर्व वेद शान्ति पाठ

Anuvāka II.7

The following three sections are highly cryptic with technical words related to rituals of the Karma Kānda section of the Vedas. Such rituals are rarely, if ever, performed these days. It is, therefore, difficult for us to truly understand what they mean. However, the import is that - may we have all the knowledge, skill, ability and wherewithal needed to conduct rituals successfully. This prayer is still valid as we do perform much more simpler rituals and prayers.

अ॒गंश्च॑ मे र॒श्मिश्च॑ मेऽदा॑भ्यश्च॒ मेऽधि॑पतिश्च॒ म उपा॑गंश्च॒ मेऽन्तर्या॑मश्च॒ म ऐन्द्र॑वायवश्च॒ मे मैत्रा॑वरुणश्च॒ म
आ॒श्वि॒नश्च॑ मे प्र॒तिप्र॑स्थानश्च॒ मे शु॒क्रश्च॑ मे म॒न्थी च॑ म आ॒ग्रय॑णश्च॒ मे वै॒श्वदे॑वश्च॒ मे ध्रु॒वश्च॑ मे वै॒श्वान॑रश्च॒
म ऋ॒तु॒ग्रा॒हाश्च॑ मेऽति॒ग्रा॒ह्याश्च॑ म ऐन्द्रा॑ग्नश्च॒ मे वै॒श्वदे॑वश्च॒ मे मरु॑त्व॒तीया॑श्च॒ मे मा॒हेन्द्र॑श्च॒ म आ॒दि॒त्यश्च॑ मे
सा॒वि॒त्रश्च॑ मे सा॒रस्व॑तश्च॒ मे पौ॒ष्णश्च॑ मे पा॒त्नीव॑ तश्च॒ मे हा॒रि॒यो॒ज॒नश्च॑ मे ॥ ७ ॥

agṛṁśuścā me raśmiścā me dābhyaścā me dhīpatiśca ma upāgṁśuścā me ntaryāmaścā ma
aindravāyavaścā me maitravaruṇaścā ma āśvinaścā me pratiprāsthānaścā me śukraścā me
manthī cā ma āgrayaṇaścā me vaiśvadevaścā me dhruvaścā me vaiśvānaraścā ma
stugraḥāścā me tigrāhyāścā ma aindrāgnaścā me vaiśvadevaścā me marutvatīyāścā me
mahendraścā ma ādityaścā me savitraścā me sarasvataścā me pauṣṇaścā me pātnīvataścā
me hariyojanaścā me. (7)

7. (Please do grant me) the vessels amsu, raśmi, adābhya, adhipati, upāmsu, antaryāma, aindravāyava, maitra-varuṇa, āśvina, pratiprasthāna, śukra, manthi, āgrayana, vaiśvadeva, dhruva, vaiśvānara, rtugraha, atigrahya, aindrāgna, vaiśvadeva, marutvatiya, mahendra, aditya, savitra, sarasvata, pauṣṇa, patnīvata and hariyojana.

This section describes the various vessels in which soma rasa (juice from the soma plant) for each deity was offered. The different shaped wooden vessels (pātra) for soma rasa are called 'graha' (grhṇāti somarasam iti grahah). Hence, 'graha' word is to be understood with each of the words. For example, amsugraha, raśmigrāha, adābhyagraha, and so on. Also, 'āditya-graha' is a vessel which is used for soma rasa offered to the deity Aditya with specific mantras in different rituals. Similarly, 'aindravāyava-graha' for Indra and Vāyu, 'maitra-varuna' for Mitra and Varuna, 'āśvina' for Aśvini Kumaras, 'aindrāgna' for Indra and Agni, 'vaiśvadeva' for Viśvedevas, 'marutvatīya' for Marut gaṇas, 'mahendra' for the great Indra, 'savitra' for Savitā, 'sārasvata' for Sarasvati, 'pauṣṇa' for Pūṣa, 'pātnīvata' for Patnivata and 'hāriyojana' for Hariyojana. The vessel for curd was considered special and hence called 'adhipati' (jyeṣṭha vā eṣa-yad-grahanānām). O God! Bestow on me all the vessels, knowledge and will to perform rituals and spiritual practices.

Anuvāka II.8

इध्मश्च॑ मे ब॒र्हिश्च॑ मे वेदि॑श्च मे धिष्णि॑याश्च मे सुच॑श्च मे चम॒साश्च॑ मे ग्रावा॑णश्च मे स्वर॑वश्च म
उप॒र॒वाश्च॑ मेऽधि॒षव॑णे च मे दोणक॒ल॒शश्च॑ मे वाय॒व्यानि॑ च मे पू॒त॒भृच्च॑ म आध॒व॒नीय॑श्च म आग्नी॑घ्नं च मे
हवि॒र्धानं॑ च मे गृ॒हाश्च॑ मे सद॑श्च मे पुरो॒डाशा॑श्च मे पच॒ताश्च मेऽव॒भृथ॑श्च मे स्वगाका॒रश्च॑ मे ॥ ८ ॥

idhmaśca me barhiśca me vediśca me dhiṣṇiyāśca me srucaśca me camasāśca me
grāvāṇaśca me svaravaśca ma uparavāśca me dhiṣavaṇe ca me droṇakalaśaśca me
vāyavyāni ca me pūtabhṛcca ma ādhavanīyāśca ma āgnīdhraṁ ca me havīrdhanaṁ ca me
grhāśca me sadaśca me purodaśāśca me pacatāśca me vabhṛthaśca me svagākāraśca me.

(8)

8. (Please also grant me) fuel for yajña, darbha grass, the place in which offerings are made, the place where the priest sits, ladle with which clarified butter is poured into fire, wooden ladle for offering soma rasa, mortar to grind soma creeper, wooden knives, holes in the havirdhana by which soma rasa is squeezed, wooden slats to get juice from soma creeper, wooden vessel to collect soma rasa, wooden and mud vessel for pouring soma rasa into havirdhana, mud vessel for keeping soma rasa, mud vessel to store purified soma rasa, specific place in homa kunda where the fire is lit, place where offerings are made, place where wives of priests stay, place from where priests chant, offerings made from rice, place where offering is cooked, special bath after the completion of yajña and specific mantras for invoking specific deities.

This section describes materials needed to enable us to perform the fire worship (yajña). The words are highly technical and can be understood fully only to those who have studied and performed such rituals. The wood or fuel for performing the yajña is called 'idhma' or 'samidha'. The 'darbha grass' is called 'barhi'. The place in which the offerings are made is called a 'vedi' or 'homa kunda'. The place where the priest 'hotas' sit is called 'dhiṣṇiya'. The ladle with which the clarified butter is poured into the fire is called 'sruca' or 'sruk'. The wooden ladle used for offering the soma rasa is called 'camasa'. The mortar used to grind the soma creeper is called 'grāvāṇa'. The wooden knives are called 'svaravaḥ'. The holes in the 'havirdhāna' by which the soma rasa is squeezed is called 'uparava'. The wooden slats made from the udumbara tree (fig tree) used for getting the juice from the soma creeper is called 'adhiṣavana'. The wooden vessel used to collect the soma rasa is called 'drona-kalaśa'. The wooden and mud vessels used for pouring the soma rasa into the 'havirdhāna' is called 'vāyavya'. The mud vessel used for keeping soma rasa is called 'pūtabhṛt'. The mud vessel used to store the purified soma rasa is called 'adhavanīya'. The specific place in the homa kunda where the fire is lit is called 'agnidhra'. The place where the offerings (havi) are placed is called 'havirdhana'. The wives of the priests and the place they stayed were called 'graha'. The place from where the priests (udgātā) chant is called 'sada'. Offerings made from rice is called 'purodāśa'. In highly traditional homes and temples, the common kitchen is not used for preparing the food offered to God and for yajñas. The place where the offerings were cooked is called 'pacata'. The special bath after the completion of the yajña is called 'avabhṛtha'. Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda would take busloads of people for a dip in a river or pond as 'avabhṛtha snāna' on completion of his Jñāna Yajñas. The specific mantras

chanted for invoking the specific deities are called 'svagākāra'. O God! By Your grace, may we get all that is needed for successfully performing rituals and spiritual practices.

From the last two anuvākas, one can see the importance given to details in the preparation and the performance of a ritual, especially the importance of the soma rasa and its offering in a ritual.

Anuvāka II.9

The terminology in the following section too is technical and specific to the fire ritual (yajña), but its meaning can be understood in a broader sense also.

अग्निश्च मे घर्मश्च मेऽर्कश्च मे सूर्यश्च मे प्राणश्च मेऽश्वमेधश्च मे पृथिवी च मेऽदितिश्च मे दितिश्च मे
द्यौश्च मे शक्वरीरङ्गलयो दिशश्च मे यजेन कल्पन्तामृक्क मे सामं च मे स्तोमश्च मे यजुश्च मे दीक्षा च मे
तपश्च म ऋतुश्च मे व्रतं च मेऽहोरात्रयौर्वृष्टया बृहद्रथन्तरे च मे यजेन कल्पेताम् ॥ ९ ॥

agnīśca me gharmaśca me' rkaśca me sūryaśca me prāṇaśca me śvamedhaśca me pṛthivī
ca me ditiśca me ditiśca me dyauśca me śakvarir-aṅgulayo diśaśca me yajñena kalpantām-
ṛkca me sāmā ca me stomaśca me yajuśca me dīkṣā ca me tapāśca ma ṛtuśca me vrataṁ
ca me horātrayōr-vṛṣṭyā bṛhad-rathantare ca me yajñena kalpetām. (9)

9. Please also grant me the fire by which the preliminary ceremony is performed, ability to successfully perform Arkayāga, Sūryayāga and Prāṇayāga, Aśvamedha Yajña, the blessings of Mother Earth, Mother Aditi and Mother Diti, and the all pervading directions like the fingers of the Cosmic Form. May my religious and spiritual practices please You and all be conducive to me. Please also grant me (the knowledge of) Rk, Yajuh and Sama mantras and other hymns, initiation, austerities, conducive seasons and time (to perform rituals and spiritual practices), vows and resolves, good rains day and night (resulting in prosperity) and powers of Brhat Sama and Rathantara Sama mantras.

agnīśca, gharmaśca me: The arrangement and the preparation of the sacred fire-place (homa kunda) is called 'cayana-samskāra'. The fire by which this preparation is done is referred to as 'agni' in this anuvāka. The preliminary ceremony to the Soma Yajña is referred to as 'gharma' or 'pravargya'. Preparation for the main sixteen-step worship (sodaśopacāra pūjā) is called 'pūrva pūjā', in which we light the lamp, purify the place and materials to be offered, and so on. Similarly, 'Agni' and 'gharma' could symbolize all preparatory steps to the main ritual. O God! Grant me all that we need to prepare for rituals.

arkaśca, sūryaśca: Here, these words refer to the fire rituals performed for 'Arka/Indra' and Sūrya called 'Arkayāga' (Indrayāga) and 'Sūryayāga' respectively. O God, grant me the ability to successfully perform these rituals and attain their results.

prāṇaśca me: Fire ritual performed for prāṇa is called Prāṇa Yaga. Traditionally, we perform a Prāṇa Yajña each time we eat food. Food is offered to the digestive fire (jatharāgni) with the words prāṇāya svāhā, apānāya svāhā, and so on. Thus, the simple act of eating too becomes a worship of God who is the life-giving and life-sustaining Prāṇa. O God, may we successfully perform the Prana Yajña.

aśvamedhaśca me: This famous Yajña was performed by a king to celebrate his victory over other kings. By the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Yudhisthira performed three successful Aśvamedha Yajñas and became a 'cakravarti'. O God! Grant me world-wide victory.

pr̥thivī ca, aditiśca, ditiśca me: Aditi and Diti were the wives of Sage Kaśyapa and the mothers of the Adityas (deities) and Daityas (demons) respectively. O God! May these three powerful mothers - Mother Earth, Mother Aditi and Mother Diti be pleased with me as also their powerful offsprings.

śakvarir-angulayah diśaśca me: Our body does not extend beyond our fingers or nose. The Cosmic Form of God is all pervasive. His fingers (śakvarir-angulayah) are widespread and cover every direction (diśa). His limbs form the entire universe. O God! Do grant us Your infinite and all-embracing grace from all directions.

yajñena kalpatām: O God! May our religious rituals and spiritual practices please You and all deities be conducive to us.

rkca, sāma ca, stomaśca, yajuśca me: 'Stoma' means a hymn. Technically it refers to a particular form of chanting of the hymns of Sama. The three forms of mantras of the Vedas are prose (Rk), poetry (Yajuh) and song (Sāma). Veda mantras are not considered mere words but the very breath of God. O God! May the Veda mantras bless us, enrich and empower us, and grant us knowledge.

dīkṣā ca me: The 'initiation' ceremony is called 'dīkṣā'. This ceremony or process is that which bestows spiritual knowledge and destroys bondages of action and sins that obscure this knowledge.¹⁸¹ O God, grant me 'initiation' into spiritual life.

Mantra dīkṣā opens up the power of the mantra and suffuses the mantra with the power of the Guru who initiates. The initiation into the order of monkhood is called 'sannyāsa dīkṣā'. In this anuvāka, dīkṣā refers to the initiation rite performed at the beginning of any ritual in order to consecrate the yajamān (sacrificer/patron).

tapaśca me: There is a saying, 'No pain, no gain'. Austerities performed in order to conserve our physical and mental strength, in the form of vows (vratas) is called 'tapas'. Fasting and the like, increase our strength and endurance and make us fit for higher achievements. The priests and the patrons had to do austerities in order to make them fit to perform the rituals. Concentration of the mind is the highest austerity¹⁸² and probably the most difficult, and realization of the Self is the ultimate 'tapas'. O God, give us the strength to perform austerities and do empower us through them.

rtuśca me: Even though the success of any action or attainment of the goal depends primarily on the fitness of the person, external aids, conducive time and place also play a contributing role.¹⁸³ May the seasons and the time be conducive for us to perform rituals and spiritual practices.

¹⁸¹ दीयते विमलं ज्ञानं क्षीयते कर्म बन्धनम् ।

¹⁸² ऐकाग्र्यं परमं तपः ।

¹⁸³ अधिकारिणमाशास्ते फलसिद्धिर्विशेषतः । उपाया देशकालाद्याः सन्त्यस्मिन्सहकारिणः ॥ - विवेकचूडामणि-१४

vrataṁ ca me: The vows taken upon oneself in order to improve ourselves and empower ourselves are called 'vrata'. We resolve to do a lot, but manage to do little. Some are strong willed and stick to their resolves. O God, do give me the strength to keep my vows and resolves and enjoy their results.

aho-rātrayor-vṛṣṭyā: Rains give us crops, grains, prosperity and means by which we can perform rituals and good acts. May there be good rains - night and day - which result in prosperity.

brhad-rathantare ca me: Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that 'amongst the four Vedas, Sama Veda is my special glory (vibhūti)¹⁸⁴ and 'amongst the Sama mantras, Brhat Sāma mantra is my very special glory.¹⁸⁵ It is a beautiful praise of God. Rathantara Sama mantras are in praise of Śiva. They have the power to revive. Sage Vasistha restored Indra to consciousness through this mantra (Mahābhārata Śānti Parva-281.21). O God, may the powerful Sama mantras bestow their powers to us.

The Camakam shows us that the ancient Sages not only had an in-depth knowledge of all the rituals but they had also performed them for the benefit of all. They did not outsource and ask someone else to do them like in the present day, but performed them with reverential surrender.

¹⁸⁴ वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि । भगवद् गीता-१०.२२

¹⁸⁵ बृहत्साम तथा साम्नाम् । भगवद् गीता-१०.३५

Anuvāka II.10

The following anuvāka can be divided in two. The first part until 'dhenuśca me' is a prayer to grant us the wealth of cows and bulls, and the second part is a prayer to strengthen our body and mind.

गर्भाश्च मे वृत्साश्च मे त्र्यविश्च मे त्र्यवी च मे दित्यवाट् च मे दित्यौही च मे पञ्चाविश्च मे पञ्चावी च मे
त्रिवृत्सश्च मे त्रिवृत्सा च मे तुर्यवाट् च मे तुर्यौही च मे षष्ठवाट् च मे षष्ठौही च म उक्षा च मे वृशा च म
ऋषभश्च मे वेहच्य मेऽनड्वाच्च मे धेनुश्च म आयुर्यजेन कल्पतां प्राणो यजेन कल्पतामपानो यजेन कल्पतां
व्यानो यजेन कल्पतां चक्षुर्यजेन कल्पतां श्रोत्रं यजेन कल्पतां मनो यजेन कल्पतां वाग्यजेन
कल्पतामात्मा यजेन कल्पतां यज्ञो यजेन कल्पताम् ॥ १० ॥

garbhāśca me vṛtsāśca me tryaviśca me tryāvī ca me dityavāṭ ca me dityauhī ca me
pañcāviśca me pañcāvi ca me trivatsā ca me trivatsā ca me ca me turyavāṭ ca me turyauhī
ca me paṣṭhavaṭ ca me paṣṭhauhī ca ma ukṣā ca me vaśā ca ma ṛṣabhaśca me vḛhacca
mē naḍvañca me dhenuśca ma ayūr-yajñenā kalpatāṁ prāṇo yajñenā kalpatām-apāno
yajñenā kalpatāṁ vyāno yajñenā kalpatāṁ cakṣur-yajñenā kalpatāṁ śrotraṁ yajñenā
kalpatāṁ manō yajñenā kalpatāṁ vāg-yajñenā kalpatām-ātmā yajñenā kalpatāṁ yajño
yajñena kalpatām. (10)

10. (Please also grant me) a cow foetus in womb, a new born calf, a one and a half year male calf, a one and a half year female calf, a two year old male calf, a two year old female calf, a two and a half year old male calf, a two and a half year old female calf, a three year old male calf, a three year old female calf, a four year old bull, a four year old cow, a five year old bull, a five year old cow, a full grown bull capable of siring, an old or barren cow, an aging bull, a cow miscarrying from unseasonal pregnancy, a cart pulling bullock and a cow that has just delivered a calf or a milch cow. May our religious rituals and spiritual practices please God, so that by God's grace, our body, vital airs (prāna, apāna, samāna), sense organs of perception and action and the mind function well. May our prayers please You. May we attain God/Truth. May the rituals and spiritual practices we perform in future also be fruitful.

Indians consider cows as sacred. Killing a cow, leave alone eating it, is considered as a great sin. It is believed that the 33 crore deities reside in the cow, and that God incarnates to protect the cows and noble people (brāhmīns). The love shown by the cow towards the new-born calf (vatsa) is epitomized as motherly love (vātsalya). The cow is considered a universal mother figure, the mother of deities, important in the performance of all rituals and verily a pilgrimage.¹⁸⁶ Even seeing a cow is considered holy (śubha darśana) and taking care of them a meritorious act (satkārya). Cows were given as daksinā (gifts) to priests on the completion of rituals, One who could not afford to give a cow, instead gave materials available with them like jaggery which was called guda-dhenu. Giving cows in charity (godāna) is considered as a great meritorious act.

¹⁸⁶ त्वं माता सर्वदेवानां त्वं च यज्ञस्य कारणम् । त्वं तीर्थं सर्वतीर्थानां नमस्तेऽस्तु सदानघे ॥ - स्कन्दपुराणम्

The pañcagavya made from the dung (gomaya), urine (gomūtra), milk, yogurt and clarified butter (ghi) is used in rituals; it increases soil fertility and has medicinal properties. No wonder, the Sages prayed for cows and bulls.

The prayer of the Sage is for cows and bulls from when they are in the womb till they are old and barren. Just as we prayed for our family to have grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren, here is a prayer, 'O God, may our cowsheds be full of cows and bulls of all ages. May they live their full life-span happily in our care.' It is to be noted that cows and bulls were not slaughtered even when they had stopped giving calves and were too old to work in the farms. Just as spouses live happily together, may the cows and bulls live happily in our farmlands along with their calves. May they be protected and may they confer prosperity to us.

āyur, prāṇaḥ, apāṇaḥ, vyāṇaḥ, cakṣuḥ, śrotram, mano, vāg, ātmā yajñena kalpatām:

All of these were already asked for in the first anuvāka of the Camakam. O God! We pray again, may our religious rituals, spiritual practices and prayers please You, so that by Your grace, our life span, body, vital airs, senses organs of perception and action and the mind function well (svakāryakṣama). Not only the rituals we perform now be fruitful, but also those we perform in future (yajño yajñena kalpatām). May Your blessings make us better people and enable us to serve the society and to attain God/Truth. The Mission statement of the Chinmaya Mission expresses a similar sentiment. It states - To provide to individuals from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society.'

There are many wrong notions concerning Hindus and their philosophy. Some say that they glorify poverty (condemn riches), are pessimistic (consider the world as pain-ridden) and are other-worldly (speak only of heaven and liberation from worldly life). However, the goal of all worship of God through rituals or prayers, through prostrations or praises, was for the attainment of worldly prosperity (abhyudaya) and spiritual unfoldment (niḥśreyas). The prayers were for peace, prosperity and happiness here (in this life) and for creating a better hereafter (in the life that followed). This is amply reflected in the entire Sri Rudra Sūktam. The Sages themselves were happy, cheerful and selflessly loving souls who sported through life unaffected by personal deprivation, and yet they selflessly prayed for everything, including sports and entertainment (krīdā ca me), for the well-being of others. One may well ask: Could a philosophy and its practice, followed since antiquity, be still alive and sustain such a prosperous land upto modern times, if it were pessimistic and negative? Could this culture have stood the test of time unlike every known ancient culture and civilization (like the Egyptian, Greek and Roman), if it was not relevant?

Anuvāka II.11

This anuvāka is very interesting and unique. Here, the Sage seeks blessings in a coded language of numbers.

एका॑ च मे तिस्र॑श्च मे॒ पञ्च॑ च मे॒ सप्त॑ च मे॒ नव॑ च म॒ एका॑दश च मे॒ त्रयो॑दश च मे॒ पञ्च॑दश च मे॒ सप्त॑दश च
मे॒ नव॑दश च म॒ एक॑विंशतिश्च मे॒ त्रयो॑विंशतिश्च मे॒ पञ्च॑विंशतिश्च मे॒ सप्त॑विंशतिश्च मे॒ नव॑विंशतिश्च
म॒ एक॑त्रिंशच्च मे॒ त्रय॑स्त्रिंशच्च मे॒ चत॑स्रश्च मे॒ षट्॑ च मे॒ द्वा॑दश च मे॒ षोड॑श च मे॒ विंश॑तिश्च मे॒
चतु॑र्विंशतिश्च मे॒ षट्॑विंशतिश्च मे॒ द्वा॑त्रिंशच्च मे॒ षट्॑त्रिंशतिश्च मे॒ चत्वारि॑ंशच्च मे॒ चतु॑श्चत्वारिंशच्च
मे॒ षट्॑चत्वारिंशच्च मे॒ वाज॑श्च प्रस॒वश्चा॑पि॒जश्च॑ क्रतु॑श्च सु॒वश्च॑ मूर्धा॑ च॒ व्यश्नि॑यश्च-आन्त्याय॑ -
नश्चान्त्य॑श्च भौ॒वन॑श्च भु॒वन्॑श्चाधि॒पति॑श्च ॥ ११ ॥

ekā ca me tīsraśca me pañcā ca me sapta cā me navā ca ma ekādaśa ca me trayōdaśa ca
me pañcadaśa ca me saptadaśa ca me navādaśa ca ma ekāvigr̥ṣatīśca me
trayōvigr̥ṣatīśca me pañcavigr̥ṣatīśca me saptavigr̥ṣatīśca me navavigr̥ṣatīśca ma
ekātrigr̥ṣacca me trayāstrigr̥ṣacca me catāraśca me ṣṭau cā me dvādaśa ca me ṣodaśa ca
me vigr̥ṣatīścā me catūrvigr̥ṣatīśca me ṣṭāvigr̥ṣatīśca me dvātrigr̥ṣacca me
ṣaṭtrigr̥ṣacca me catvarigr̥ṣaccā me catuṣcatvāgr̥ṣacca me stācatvāgr̥ṣacca me
vājaśca prasavaścāpijaśca kratuśca suvaśca mūrdhā ca yaśniyaścāntyāyanaścāntyaśca
bhauvanaśca bhuvanaścādhipatiśca. (11)

11. May the following numbers be favourable to me - one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, nineteen, twenty-one, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-seven, twenty-nine, thirty-one, thirty-three, four, eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty, twenty-four, twenty-eight, thirty-two, thirty-six, forty, forty-four and forty-eight. Please grant me food, its production and more and more of its production; auspicious resolves, means to reach heaven and heaven; Realization of the Truth; everything from beginning to end and thereafter; all that exists in the whole world; and the whole world and please protect me. May all that I desire be for the well being of all including me.

Indian Mathematics: Not only were the Sages well-versed with Mathematics, but it formed a part of the study of the Vedas included in the study of the limb of the Veda (Vedāṅga) called Jyotiṣa. The Vedic hymns contained many invocations and prayers with coded numbers. For example, the hymn at the end of 'Anna-homa', chanted before, during and after sunrise, invokes the power of the number ten, and its squares, cubes, etc., from hundred to a trillion [svasti śata (10^2), svasti sahasra (10^3) ... svasti madhya (10^{20}), svasti anta (10^{11}) - Yajurveda]. Such coded series of numbers gave insights into creation and its functioning. For example, the famous Fibonacci series and the golden mean derived from it, is seen in DNA molecules, number of petals in flowers, in shells, hurricanes and spiral galaxies. It has been used by designers, scientists and artists over centuries, to produce their master creations, like Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

ekā ca me tisraśca me pañca me navavigṃśatiśca ma ekatrigiśacca me trayastrigṃśacca me catasraśca me stau ca me dyādaśa ca me catvārigṃśacca me me: The catuścatvārigṃśacca me'ṣṭācatvārigṃśacca numbers enumerated here seem to be a combination of odd numbers, followed by multiples of four. These numbers are not random but have a mathematical logic.

The odd numbers 1 to 33 are got by subtracting the square of consequent numbers from 0 to 17 ($1^2-0^2=1$, $2^2-1^2=3$, $4^2-3^2=7$, $5^2-4^2=9$, $6^2-5^2=11$, $7^2-6^2=13$, $8^2-7^2=15$, $9^2-8^2=17$, $10^2-9^2=19$, $11^2-10^2=21$, $12^2-11^2=23$, $13^2-12^2=25$, $14^2-13^2=27$, $15^2-14^2=29$, $16^2-15^2=31$, $17^2-16^2=33$).

The numbers 4 to 48, given in the mantra, are the sum of the sequential odd numbers from 1 to 25 (bold and underlined) of the previous series ($1 + 3 = \underline{4}$, $3 + 5 = \underline{8}$, $5 + 7 = \underline{12}$, $7 + 9 = \underline{16}$, $9 + 11 = \underline{20}$, $11 + 13 = \underline{24}$, $13 + 15 = \underline{28}$, $15 + 17 = \underline{32}$, $17 + 19 = \underline{36}$, $19 + 21 = \underline{40}$, $21 + 23 = \underline{44}$, $23 + 25 = \underline{48}$)

Numbers in Indian scriptures represent multiple aspects of creation. Some of them are enumerated here.

One (eka) - Truth (Brahma), God (Íśvara), Māyā/Prakṛti...

Three (tisra) three gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas), three bodies (gross, subtle and causal), Trinity [Brahma (Creator), Viṣṇu (Sustainer), Maheśa (Destroyer)], three periods of time (past, present and future) ...

Four (catur) - four human goals (puruṣārthas - dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa), four stages of life (āśramas brahmacharya, grhastha, vānaprastha, sannyāsa), four categories of people (varṇas - brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra), four Vedas (Rg, Yajur, Sama, Atharva)

Five (pañca) - five elements (space, air, fire, water and earth), five senses organs of perception (ability to hear, feel, see, smell and taste) ...

Seven (sapta) - seven Sages (Saptarṣis - Atri, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Jamadagni, Kaśyapa, Vasistha, Viśvāmitra), Saptamātṛkas, Saptasvaras, Saptalokas, Saptadvīpas

Eight (asta) - eight limbs of Yoga (Aṣṭāṅga Yoga - yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi), eight super-natural powers (aṣṭa siddhi animā, garimā, mahimā, laghimā, prāpti, prākāmya, īśitva, vaśitva), eight-fold Prakṛti (bhū, āpa, anala, vāyu, kham, manah, buddhi, ahaṅkāra)

Nine (nava) - nine grahas (Nava-grahas - Soma, Mangala, Budha, Guru, Sukra, Śani, Ravi, Rāhu, Ketu), nine-fold devotion (Navavidhā Bhakti smaraṇam, pāda sevnam, arcanam, vandanam, dāsyam, śravaṇam, kīrtanam, sakhyam, ātma-nivedanam), nine jewel (nava-ratnas), nine tastes (nava-rasas), nine Durgas (nava-durgas)

These numbers could also signify how from the one Truth, this varied creation of threes, fives, sevens, and so on have come into being. Each of these numbers have a mystical meaning as well, which is realized through deep study and meditation. O God! Grant us all

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that is symbolized by these numbers, may all symbolized by these numbers empower us and be conducive to us.

vājaśca, prasavaśca, apijaśca me: It was earlier said that may our food increase in degrees from vibhu to akṣiti (vibhu, prabhu, bahu, bhūya, pūrṇa, pūrṇatara and akṣiti - Camakam 4). We once more pray may there be plenty of food (vāja), its production (prasava) and still more and more of its production (apija).

kratuśca, suvaśca, mūrdhā ca me: May we make auspicious resolves (kratu) and perform auspicious acts like yajñas (kratu). The means is often called the goal. For example, 'pada' is the step to reach the 'pada' the goal. Similarly here, 'suva', meaning heaven, is referred to as the means to reach mūrdhā heaven. May divine means bring divine joys. May we enjoy the means that take us to heavenly joy and heavens.

vyaśniyaśca, āntyāyanaśca, antyaśca: Space is all-pervading and everything exists in space. 'Vyaśniya' means all that is born and lives in space (viśeṣeṇa aśnoti vyāpnoti iti). That which is born at the end is called 'āntyāyana'. It means that which manifests first after the dissolution of the universe. The Taittiriya Upaniṣad says space is the first element ātmana ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ created from the Truth/Self. Elsewhere it is said that Hiranyagarbha is the first manifestation. That which remains after the destruction of creation is called 'antya'. These three words beautifully indicate the Truth as the space of Consciousness (cidākāśa) from which everything is born, in which everything exists and appears and into which everything merges. May God grant the Realization of that Truth as our own Self and also grant us everything from beginning to end and thereafter.

bhauvanaśca, bhuvanaśca adhipatiśca me: May God grant us all that exists in the fourteen realms of existence and may all who live in these realms be pleased with us (bhauvana). May God who is the indweller in all realms of experience be pleased with us (bhauvana). May God who is the nature of this world (bhuvana-jagadātmaka) be happy with us. Being in all and appearing as all, may God, the Lord and protector of all bless and protect me (adhithāya rakṣayati iti adhipati).

ca me: The Sages are generous in asking and God is generous in giving. We too can add to this bucket list what we desire. May all that we desire like the list of Camakam be for the well-being of all including ourselves.

The chanting of the Camakam concludes with a beautiful mantra.

इडा देवहूर्मनुर्यजनीबृहस्पतिरुक्थामदानि शग्ंषद्विश्वे देवाः सूक्तवाचः पृथिवीमातृर्मा मां हिंसीर्मधुं मनिष्ये
मधुं जनिष्ये मधुं वक्ष्यामि मधुं वदिष्यामि मधुं मतीं देवेभ्यो वाचमुद्यासगं शुश्रूषेण्यां मनुष्येभ्यस्तं मां देवा
अवन्तु शोभायै पितरोऽनुमदन्तु ॥

idā devaḥūr-manūr-yajñānīr-brhaspatīr-ukthāmadāni śagmsiṣaḍ viśvedevāḥ sūktavācaḥ
pṛthivīmātar-mā mā higr̥nsīr-madhū maniṣye madhū janiṣye madhū vakṣyāmi madhū
vadiṣyāmi madhūmatīr̥ devebhyo vācam-udyāsagr̥m̐ śuśrūṣenyam̐ manuṣyēbhyas-taṁ mā
devā āvantu śobhāyai pītaro nūmadantu.

Kāmadhenu revealed the hymns by which the deities are invoked. Manu was the priest. Bṛhaspati chanted the pleasing mantras. May the universal deities and Mother Earth, praised in the hymns, not harm me. I will think sweet thoughts; I will do noble actions which result in sweet results; I will speak sweetly; I will speak sweet words; I will speak sweet words which will please the deities; I will speak sweet words to those who wish to listen. May the deities illumine me and protect me. May the ancestors be pleased with me and bless me.

idā devahūh: Kāmadhenu (idā) is the wish-fulfilling cow in heaven. She also lived in Sage Vasistha's hermitage providing everything for the regular rituals, and for supporting the large number of disciples and guests. Sage Vasistha was a Realized Master, a selfless Karma Yogi and a devotee of God. All wishes are fulfilled and everything is attained by sweet and noble thoughts, words and deeds, which are like Kāmadhenu.

The deities (devahūh) are invoked by hymns (idā). The knowledge of the Truth (idā or Brahnavidyā) makes the presence of deities evident.

manur-yajñanīh: Manu is the priest who performs the fire ritual (yajñam nayati yajñanīh). Manu also symbolizes Brahnavidyā mantras (mahāvākyas) that lead us to the Truth (yajño vai viṣnuh). Also, Manu, the expounder of dharma, expounds the means to perform rituals and live a righteous life.

bṛhaspati ukthāmadāni śamsiṣat: Bṛhaspati chanted the pleasing mantras. Bṛhaspati, the Guru of deities, symbolizes God as the witness of all actions, who sings the praises of the Yajña spirit in the performance of all noble actions. Śrī Kṛṣṇa too says, 'Perform actions as Yajña or else the actions will bind and bring sorrow.'¹⁸⁷

viśvedevā sūktavācaḥ pṛthivi mātāḥ mā mā himsīh: The deities speak sweet words (sūktavāca). Here, God is addressed as the universal deities who are praised in hymns (sūktavācaḥ viśvedevāḥ) and as Mother Earth (pṛthivi-mātāḥ). Do protect us. May we not be harmed. May the yajña karma (rituals and all good actions) result in Your blessings as protection against all harm.

May the adhidaivika forces (viśvedevās) and the adhibhautika forces surrounding us (pṛthivi) be conducive to us and not trouble us. May Mother Earth take loving care of us, nourish us and bestow her bountiful riches on us.

The following part of this anuvāka till the end is also part of a santi mantra or peace invocation prayer.

madhu manisye, madhu janisye, madhu vakṣyāmi, madhu vadisyāmi: Everything about God is sweet. His lips, face, eyes, smile and laughter, heart and walk. He is verily the Lord and embodiment of sweetness.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, when we think of Him, worship Him, speak to Him, speak about Him and listen about Him, it will be sweet and delightful. May our speech

¹⁸⁷ यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः । तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ - भगवद् गीता ३.९

¹⁸⁸ अधरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरं नयनं मधुरं हसितं मधुरम् । हृदयं मधुरं गमनं मधुरं मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुरम् ॥ मधुराष्टकम्-
१

be pleasant, may our words be kind, may our thoughts be compassionate, and may our countenance be cheerful and our actions bring delightful results.

madhumatīm devebhyaḥ vācam udyāsam: Besides the above, may prayers, chantings, hymns, meditation, repetition of God's name, reading, study and reflections of Scriptures and the like, please God. May the power of our speech be enhanced and our words be truthful, validated and appropriate. May my thoughts, words and actions be sweet and please God.

This reminds us of a prayer for all-round happiness and sweetness in life. 'May the winds blow gently carrying sweet fragrance, may the rivers flow with abundant and sweet waters, may the herbs be sweet and curative. May the nights and days be pleasant and sweet. May the soil be nourishing and sweet. May our father the heavens, bless us with joy and sweetness. May the plant life be conducive and sweet. May the brilliant sun shed vitalizing and sweet light on us. May the sacred cows bless us with sweet milk.'¹⁸⁹ How can we not think sweet thoughts, speak sweet words and do sweet acts, when we are surrounded by sweetness?

suśrūṣenyāṁ manuṣyebhyaḥ: May we speak sweet words to those willing to listen. May we not waste our precious energy and words by speaking to those not open to listening. The phrase 'bhairṣ ke samne bhāgavata' (expounding the great scripture Bhagavata before a buffalo) expresses this sentiment well. May we teach the great words of the Scriptures to eager seekers.

tam mā devā avantu śobhāyai: May the deities illumine us and sweeten my words. May God as the deities protect us.

pitarah anumadantu: Our ancestors are pleased by our success, character, good behaviour, good actions, happiness, fond remembrance and carrying forward the family values and culture. May our parents and forefathers be pleased with us and bless us. This sentiment is beautifully expressed by Sage Narada - The ancestors rejoice, the deities dance in joy and the earth feels protected and glows in happiness where great devotees live.¹⁹⁰

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।
om santih santih santih.

¹⁸⁹ मधु वाता ऋतायते मधु क्षरन्ति सिन्धवः । माध्वीनः सन्त्वोषधीः । मधु नक्तमुतोषसो मधुमत्पार्थिवं रजः । मधु चौरस्तु नः पिता । मधुमान्नो वनस्पतिर्मधुमां अस्तु सूर्यः । माध्वीगां वो भवन्तु नः । बृहदारण्यक-उपनिषद्-६.३६

¹⁹⁰ मोदन्ते पितरो नृत्यन्ति देवताः सनाथा चेयं भूर्भवति । नारद भक्ति सूत्र-७१

May peace prevail in the unseen forces in our surroundings and within us.

By the blessings of Rudra Bhagavan and the grace of Pujya Gurudev, may we always worship God and sing His praises, reflect and meditate on His true nature, realize Him as the Self in all and see all as His divine manifestation. May we always pray for the well-being of all.

ॐ तत् सत् रुद्रार्पणम् अस्तु ।
om tat sat rudrārpaṇam astu.

लघुन्यासः

ॐ नमो भगवते रुद्राय ।

ॐ अथात्मानं शिवात्मानम् श्रीरुद्ररूपं ध्यायेत् ॥ शुद्धस्फटिकसङ्काशं त्रिनेत्रं पञ्चवक्रकम् । गङ्गाधरं दशभुजं
सर्वाभरणभूषितम् ॥ नीलग्रीवं शशाङ्काङ्क नागयज्ञोपवीतिनम् । व्याघ्रचर्मोत्तरीयं च वरेण्यमभयप्रदम् ॥
कमण्डल्वक्षसूत्राणां धारिणं शूलपाणिनम् । ज्वलन्तं पिङ्गलजटा-शिखामुद्योतधारिणम् ॥ वृषस्कन्धसमारूढं
उमादेहार्धधारिणम् । अमृतेनाप्लुतं शान्तं दिव्यभोगसमन्वितम् ॥ दिग्देवतासमा-युक्तं सुरासुरनमस्कृतम् ।
नित्यं च शाश्वतं शुद्धं ध्रुवमक्षरमव्ययम् ॥ सर्वव्यापिनमीशानं रुद्रं वै विश्वरूपिणम् । एवं ध्यात्वा
द्विजस्सम्यक् ततो यजनमारभेत् ॥

अथातो रुद्रस्नानार्चनाभिषेकविधिं व्याख्यास्यामः । आदित एव तीर्थे स्नात्वा उदेत्य शुचिः प्रयतो ब्रह्मचारी
शुक्लवासा देवाभिमुखः स्थित्वा आत्मनि देवताः स्थापयेत् ॥

प्रजनने ब्रह्मा तिष्ठतु । पादयोर्विष्णुस्तिष्ठतु । हस्तयोर्हरस्तिष्ठतु । बाहवोरिन्द्रस्तिष्ठतु । जठरेऽग्निस्तिष्ठतु
। हृदये शिवस्तिष्ठतु । कण्ठे वस-वस्तिष्ठन्तु । वज्रे सरस्वती तिष्ठतु । नासिकयोर्वायुस्तिष्ठतु । नयनयो-
श्चन्द्रादित्यौ तिष्ठेताम् । कर्णयोरश्विनौ तिष्ठेताम् । ललाटे रुद्रास्तिष्ठन्तु । मूर्ध्यादित्यास्तिष्ठन्तु । शिरसि
महादेवस्तिष्ठतु । शिखायां वामदेवस्तिष्ठतु । पृष्ठे पिनाकी तिष्ठतु । पुरतः शूली तिष्ठतु । पार्श्वयोः
शिवाशङ्करौ तिष्ठेताम् । सर्वतो वायुस्तिष्ठतु । ततो बहिः सर्वतोऽग्निर्ध्वालामालापरिवृतस्तिष्ठतु । सर्वेष्वङ्गेषु
सर्वा देवता यथास्थानं तिष्ठन्तु । सर्वान् महाजनान् रक्षन्तु । मागू रक्षन्तु ॥

अग्निर्मे वाचि श्रितः । वाग्धृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । वायुर्मे प्राणे श्रितः । प्राणो हृदये ।
हृदयं आ मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । सूर्यो मे चक्षुषि श्रितः । चक्षुर्हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं
ब्रह्मणि । चन्द्रमा मे मनसि श्रितः । मनो हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । दिशो मे श्रोत्रे श्रिताः ।
श्रोत्रं हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । आपो मे रेतसि श्रिताः । रेतो हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते
। अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । पृथिवी मे शरीरे श्रिता । शरीरं हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । ओषधिवन-
स्पतयो मे लोमसु श्रिताः । लोमानि हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । इन्द्रो मे बले श्रितः । बलं
हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । पर्जन्यो मे मूर्ध्नि श्रितः । मूर्धा हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते ।
अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । ईशानो मे मन्यौ श्रितः । मन्युहृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । आत्मा मे
आत्मनि श्रितः । आत्मा हृदये । हृदयं मयि । अहममृते । अमृतं ब्रह्मणि । पुनर्म आत्मा पुनरायु रागात् । पुनः
प्राणः पुनराकृतमागात् । वैश्वानरो रश्मिभिर्वावृधानः । अन्तस्तिष्ठत्वमृतस्य गोपाः ॥

अस्य श्री रुद्राध्यायप्रश्नमहामन्त्रस्य अघोर ऋषिः, अनुष्टुप्छन्दः, सङ्कर्षणमूर्तिस्वरूपो योऽसावादित्यः
परमपुरुषः स एष रुद्रो देवता । नमः शिवायेति बीजम् । शिवतरायेति शक्तिः । महादेवायेति कीलकम् । श्री
साम्बसदाशिवप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थे जपे विनियोगः ॥

ॐ अग्निहोत्रात्मने अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । दर्शपूर्णमासात्मने तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । चातुर्मास्यात्मने मध्यमाभ्यां
नमः । निरुदपशुबन्धात्मने अनामिकाभ्यां नमः । ज्योतिष्टोमात्मने कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः । सर्वक्रत्वात्मने
करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः । अग्निहोत्रात्मने हृदयाय नमः । दर्शपूर्णमासात्मने शिरसे स्वाहा । चातुर्मास्यात्मने
शिखायै वषट् । निरुदपशुबन्धात्मने कवचाय हुम् । ज्योतिष्टोमात्मने नेत्रत्रयाय वौषट् । सर्वक्रत्वात्मने
अस्त्राय फट् । भूर्भुवस्सुवरोमिति दिग्बन्धः ।

ध्यानम्

आपाताळनभः स्थलान्तभुवनब्रह्माण्डमाविस्फुरत्
ज्योतिः स्फाटिकलिङ्गमौळिविलसत्पूर्णन्दुवान्तामृतैः ।
अस्तोकाप्लुतमेकमीशमनिशं रुद्रानुवाकाञ्जपन्
ध्यायेदीप्सितसिद्ध्ये ध्रुवपदं विप्रोऽभिषिञ्चेच्छिवम् ॥
ब्रह्माण्डव्याप्तदेहा भसितहिमरुचा भासमाना भुजङ्गैः
कण्ठे कालाः कपर्दाकलितशशिकलाश्चण्डकोदण्डहस्ताः ।
त्र्यक्षा रुद्राक्षमालाः प्रकटितविभवाः शाम्भवा मूर्तिभेदा रुद्राः
श्रीरुद्रसूक्तप्रकटितविभवा नः प्रयच्छन्तु सौख्यम् ॥

ॐ गणानां त्वा गणपतिं हवामहे क्विं कवीनामुपमश्रवस्तमम् । ज्येष्ठराजं ब्रह्मणां ब्रह्मणस्पत आ नः
शृण्वन्नुतिभिस्सीद सादनम् ॥ महागणपतये नमः ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

श्रीरुद्रसूक्तम्

ओं नमो भगवते रुद्राय ।

नमस्ते रुद्र मन्यव उतो त इषवे नमः । नमस्ते अस्तु धन्वने बाहुभ्यामुत ते नमः ॥ या त इषुः
शिवतमा शिवं बभूव तेधनुः । शिवा शर्व्या यातव तयानो रुद्र मृडय ॥ या ते रुद्र शिवा
तनूरघोरापापकाशिनी । तया नस्तनुवा शन्तमया गिरिशन्ताऽभिचाहि ॥ यामिष गिरिशंतु हस्ते
बिभर्व्यस्तवे । शिवा गिरित्र तां कुरु माहिंसीः पुरुषं जगत् ॥ शिवेन वचसा त्वा गिरिशाच्छा वदामसि ।
यथा नः सर्वमिज्जगदयक्ष्मगंसुमना असत् ॥ अद्यवोचदधिवक्ता प्रथमो दैव्योभिषक् । अहीश्च
सर्वोऽम्भयन्सर्वेश्च यातुधान्यः ॥ असौ यस्तामो अरुण उत बभूः सुमङ्गलः । ये चे मागरुद्रा अभितौ
दिक्षु श्रिताः सहस्रशो वै षागः हेड ईमहे ॥ असौ योऽवसपति नीलग्रीवो विलोहितः । उत्तैन गोपा
अदृशन्नदृशन्नुदहार्यः । उत्तैन विश्वा भूतानि स दृष्टो मृडयाति नः ॥ नमो अस्तु नीलग्रीवाय
सहस्राक्षाय मीढुषे । अथो ये अस्य सत्त्वानोऽहं तेभ्यो ऽकरं नमः ॥ प्रमश्च धन्वन्स्त्वमुभयोरानियो
ज्याम् । याश्च ते हस्त इषवः पराता भगवो वप ॥ अवतत्य धनुस्त्वगः सहस्राक्ष शतेषुधे । निशीय
शल्यानं मुखा शिवो नः सुमना भव ॥ विज्यं धनुः कपर्दिनो विशल्यो बाणवाङ् उत । अनेशन्नस्येषव
आभुरस्य निषङ्गथः ॥ या ते हेतिर्मोदुष्टम् हस्ते बभूव ते धनुः । तयास्मान् विश्वतस्त्वम यक्ष्मया
परिभुज ॥ नमस्ते अस्त्वायुधा यानातताय धृष्णवे । उभाभ्यामुत ते नमो बाहुभ्यां तव धन्वने ॥
परि ते धन्वनो हेतिरस्मान् वृणक्तु विश्वतः । अथो य इषुधिस्तवारे अस्मन्निधेहि तम् ॥१॥

नमस्ते अस्तु भगवन्विश्वेश्वराय महादेवाय त्र्यम्बकाय त्रिपुरान्तकाय त्रिकालाग्निकालाय
कालाग्निरुद्राय नीलकण्ठाय मृत्युञ्जयाय सर्वेश्वराय सदाशिवाय श्रीमन्महादेवाय नमः ॥

नमो हिरण्यबाहवे सेनान्ये दिशां च पतये नमः ॥ नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशेभ्यः पशूनां पतये नमः ॥ नमः
सुस्पर्जराय त्विषीमते पथीनांपतये नमः ॥ नमो बभ्रुशाय विव्याधिनेऽन्ननाना पतये नमः ॥ नमो
हरिकेशायोपवीतिने पुष्टानां पतये नमः ॥ नमो भवस्य हेत्यै जगतां पतये नमः ॥ नमो रुद्रायातताविने
क्षेत्राणां पतयेनमः ॥ नमः सूतायाहन्त्याय वनानां पतये नमः ॥ नमो रोहिताय स्थपतये वृक्षाणां पतये
नमः ॥ नमो मन्त्रिणे वाणिजाय कक्षाणां पतये नमः ॥ नमो भुवंतये वारिवस्कृतायोषधीनां पतये नमः
॥ नमो उच्चैर्घोषायाऽऽक्रन्दयते पत्तीनां पतये नमः ॥ नमः कृत्स्नवीताय धावते सत्त्वानां पतये नमः ॥
॥२॥

नमः सहमानाय निव्याधिन आव्याधिनीनां पतये नमः ॥ नमः ककुभाय निषङ्गिणे स्तेनानां पतये नमः
॥ नमो निषङ्गिणे इषुधिमते तस्कराणां पतये नमः ॥ नमो वञ्चते परिवञ्चते स्तायूनां पतये नमः ॥

नमो निचेरवे परिचरायारण्यानां पतये नमः ॥ नमः सृकाविभ्यो जिघांसभ्यो मुष्णतां पतये नमः ॥
नमोऽसिमद्भ्यो नक्तं चरभ्यः प्रकृन्तानां पतये नमः ॥ नम उष्णीषिणे गिरिचराय कुलुञ्चानां पतये
नमः ॥ नम इषुमद्भ्यो धन्वाविभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नम आतन्वानेभ्यः प्रतिदधानेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नम
आयच्छद्भ्यो विसृजद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमोऽस्सद्भ्यो विद्यद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नम आसीनेभ्यः
शयानेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमः स्वपद्भ्यो जायद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमस्तिष्ठद्भ्यो धावद्भ्यश्च वो
नमः ॥ नमः सुभाभ्यः सुभापतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो अश्वेभ्योऽश्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥३॥

नम आल्याधिननांभ्यो विविध्यन्तीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नम उगणाभ्यस्तृगं हृतीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो
गुत्सेभ्यो गुत्सपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो व्रातेभ्यो व्रातपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो गृणेभ्यो
गृणपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो विरूपेभ्यो विश्वरूपेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो महद्भ्यः क्षुल्लकेभ्यश्च वो
नमः ॥ नमो रथिभ्योऽरथेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो रथेभ्यो रथपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमः सेनांभ्यः
सेनान्निभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमः क्षत्तृभ्यः संग्रहीतृभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमस्तक्ष्भ्यो रथकारेभ्यश्च वो
नमः ॥ नमः कुलालेभ्यः कुमारिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमः पुञ्जिष्टेभ्यो निषा देभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमः
इषुकृद्भ्यो धन्वकृद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ नमो मृगभ्यः श्वनिभ्यश्च वयो नमः ॥ नमः श्वभ्यः
श्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥४॥

नमो भवाय च रुद्राय च नमश्शर्वाय च पशुपतये च नमो नीलग्रीवाय च शित्तिकण्ठाय च नमः कपर्दिने
च व्युप्तकेशाय च नमस्सहस्राक्षाय च शतधन्वने च नमो गिरिशाय च शिपिविष्टाय च नमो
मीढुष्टमाय चेषुमते च नमो ह्रस्वाय च वामनाय च नमो बृहते च वर्षीयसे च नमो वृद्धाय च
संवृध्वने च नमो अग्रियाय च प्रथमाय च नम आशवे चाजिराय च नमश्शीघ्रियाय च शीभ्याय च नम
ऊर्म्याय चावस्वन्याय च नमस्स्रोतस्याय च द्वीप्याय च ॥५॥

नमो ज्येष्ठाय च कनिष्ठाय च नम पूर्वजाय चापरजाय च नमो मध्यमाय चापगल्भाय च नमो
जघन्याय च बुद्धिन्याय च नमस्सोभ्याय च प्रतिसुर्याय च नमो याम्याय च क्षेम्याय च नम उर्वर्याय
च खल्याय च नमश्श्लोक्याय चाऽवसान्याय च नमो वन्याय च कक्ष्याय च नमश्श्रवाय च प्रतिश्रवाय
च नम आशुषेणाय चाशुरथाय च नमश्शूराय चावभिन्दते च नमो वर्मिणे च वरूथिने च नम बिल्मिने
च कवचिने च नमश्श्रुताय च श्रुतसेनाय च ॥ ६ ॥

नमो दुन्दुभ्याय चाहनन्याय च नमो धृष्णवे च प्रमुशाय च नमो दूताय च प्रहिताय च नमो निषङ्गिणे
चेषुधिमते च नमस्तीक्ष्णेषवे चायुधिने च नमस्स्वायुधाय च सुधन्वने च नमस्सुत्याय च पथ्याय च
नमः काट्याय च नीप्याय च नमस्सूद्याय च सरस्याय च नमो नाद्याय च वैशन्ताय च नमः
कूप्याय चावट्याय च नमो वर्ष्याय चावर्ष्याय च नमो मेध्याय च विद्युत्याय च नम ईधियाय
चातप्याय च नमो वात्याय च रेष्मियाय च नमो वास्तव्याय च वास्तुपाय च ॥ ७ ॥

नमस्सोमाय च रु द्राय च नमस्तामाय चारुणाय च नमश्शङ्गाय च पशुपतये च नम उग्राय च भीमाय च नमो अग्रेवधाय च दूरेवधाय च नमो हन्त्रे च हनीयसे च नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशेभ्यो नमस्ताराय नमश्शम्भवे च मयोभवे च नमश्शङ्कराय च मयस्कराय च नमरिशवाय च शिवतराय च नमस्तीर्थ्याय च कल्याय च नमः पार्याय चावार्याय च नमः प्रतरणाय चोत्तरणाय च नम आतार्याय चालाद्याय च नम शशष्पाय च फेन्याय च नम स्सिकत्या य च प्रवाह्याय च ॥ ८ ॥

नम इरिण्याय च प्रपथ्याय च नमः किं शिलाय च क्षयणाय च नमः कपर्दिने च पुलस्तये च नमो गोष्ठ्याय च गृह्याय च नमस्तल्प्याय च गेह्याय च नमः काट्याय च गह्वरेष्ठाय च नमो ं हृदय्याय च निवेष्ट्याय च नमः पां स्रव्याय च रजस्याय च नमश्शुष्क्याय च हरित्याय च नमो लोप्याय चोलप्याय च नम ऊर्व्याय च सूम्याय च नमः पण्णाय च पर्णशद्याय च नमोऽपगुरमाणाय चाभिघ्नते च नम आखिखदते च प्रखिखदते च । नमो वः किरिकेभ्यो देवानां हृदयेभ्यो नमो विक्षीणकेभ्यो नमो विचिन्वत्केभ्यो नम अनिर्हतेभ्यो नम आमीवत्केभ्यः ॥ ९ ॥

द्रापे अन्धसस्पते दरिद्रन्नीललोहित । एषां पुरुषाणामेषां पशूनां माभेर्माऽरो मो एषां किञ्च नाममत् ॥ या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूश्शिवा विश्वाहभेषजी । शिवा रुद्रस्य भेषजी तया नो मृड जीवसे ॥ इमां रुद्राय त्वसे कपर्दिने ं क्षयद्विराय प्रभरामहे मतिम् । यथा नः शमसद्विपदे चतुष्पदे विश्वं पुष्टं ग्रामे अस्मिन्ननातुरम् ॥ मुडा नो रुद्रोत नो मयस्कधि क्षयद्वीराय नमसा विधेम ते । यच्छं च योश्च मनुरायजे पिता तदश्याम् तव रुद्र प्रणीतौ ॥ मा नो महान्तमुत मा नो अर्भकं मा न उक्षन्तमुत मा न उक्षितम् । मा नोऽवधीः पितरं मोत मातरं प्रिया मा नस्तनुवो रुद्र रीरिषः ॥ मा नस्तोके तनये मा न आयुषि मा नो गोषु मा नो अश्वेषु रीरिषः । वीरान्मा नो रुद्र भामितोऽवधीर्हविष्मन्तो नमसा विधेम ते ॥ आराते गोघ्न उत पूरुषघ्ने क्षयद्वीराय सुम्नमस्मे ते अस्तु । रक्षा च नो अधि च देव ब्रूयथा च नः शर्म यच्छद्विबर्हाः ॥ स्तुहि श्रुतं गर्तसदं युवानं मुगन्न भीममुपहलुमुग्रम् । मुडा जरित्रे रुद्र स्तवानो अन्यन्ते अस्मन्नवपन्तु सेनाः ॥ परिणो रुद्रस्य हेतिवृणक्तु परित्वेषस्य दुर्मतिरघायोः । अवस्थिरा मघवदभयस्तनुष्व मीढ्वस्तोकाय तनयाय मृडय ॥ मीढुष्टम् शिवतम शिवो नस्सुमना भव । परमे वृक्ष आयुधन्निधाय कृत्तिं वसान् आचर पिनाकं बिभ्रदागहि ॥ विकिरिद विलोहित नमस्ते अस्तु भगवः । यास्ते सहस्रं ं श्वेतयोन्यमस्मन्नवपन्तु ताः ॥ सहस्राणि सहस्रधा बाह्वोस्तव हेतयः । तासामीशानो भगवः पराचीना मुखा कृधि ॥ १० ॥

सहस्राणि सहस्रशो ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम् । तेषां सहस्रयोजनेऽवधन्वा नि तन्मसि ॥ अस्मिन्महत्यर्णवेऽन्तरिक्षे भवा अधि ॥ नीलग्रीवाशितिकण्ठाश्शर्वा अधः क्षमाचराः ॥

नीलग्रीवाशितिकण्ठा दिवः रुद्रा उपश्रिताः ॥ ये वृक्षेषु सस्पर्जरा नीलग्रीवा विलाहिताः ॥ ये भूतानामधिपतयो विशिखासः कपर्दिनः ॥ ये अन्नेषु विविध्यन्ति पात्रेषु पिबतो जनान् ॥ ये पथां पथिरक्षय ऐलबृदा यव्युधः ॥ ये तीर्थानि प्रचरन्ति सुकावन्तो निषङ्गिणः ॥ य एतावन्तश्च भूयांसश्च दिशो रुद्रा वितस्थिरे । तेषां सहस्रयोजनेऽवधन्वानि तन्मसि ॥ नमो रुद्रेभ्यो ये पृथिव्यां येऽन्तरिक्षे ये दिवि येषां मन्नं वातो वर्षमिषवस्तेभ्यो दश प्राचीर्दश दक्षिणा दश प्रतीचीदशोदीचीर्दशोर्वास्तेभ्यो नमस्ते नो मृडयन्तु ते यं द्वाष्मो यश्च नो द्वाष्टि तं वो जम्भे दधामि ॥ ११ ॥

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम् । उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ॥ यो रुद्रो अग्नौ यो अप्सु य ओषधीषु यो रुद्रो विश्वा भुवना विवेश तस्मै रुद्राय नमो अस्तु । तमुष्टुहि यः स्विषुस्सुधन्वा यो विश्वस्य क्षयति भेषजस्य । यक्ष्वांमहे सौमनसाय रुद्रं नमोभिर्देवमसुरं दुवस्य । अयं मे हस्तो भगवानयं मे भगवत्तरः । अयं मे विश्वभे षजोऽयं शिवाभिर्मर्शनः । ये ते सहस्रमयुतं पाशा मृत्यो मर्त्याय हन्तवे । तान् यज्ञस्य मायया सर्वानवयजामहे । मृत्यवे स्वाहा मृत्यवे स्वाहा । ॐ नमो भगवते रुद्राय विष्णवे मृत्युर्मे पाहि ॥

प्राणानां ग्रन्थिरसि रुद्रो मा विशान्तकः । तेनान्नेनाप्यायस्व ॥ सदाशिवोम्

ॐ शन्तिः शन्तिः शन्तिः

श्री रुद्रसूक्तम् - चमकम्

ॐ अग्नविष्णु सजोषसेमावर्धन्तु वां गिरः । द्युम्नैर्वाजेभिरागतम् ।

वाजंश्व मे प्रसवश्च मे प्रयतिश्च मे प्रसितिश्च मे धीतिश्च मे क्रतुश्च मे स्वरश्च मे श्लोकश्च मे श्रावश्च मे श्रतिश्च मे ज्योतिश्च मे सुवश्च मे प्राणश्च मे सपानश्च मे व्यानश्च मे सुश्च मे चित्तं च मे आधीतं च मे वाक्कं मे मनश्च मे चक्षुश्च मे श्रोत्रं च मे दक्षश्च मे बलं च मे ओजश्च मे सहश्च मे आयुश्च मे जरा च मे आत्मा च मे तनूश्च मे शर्म च मे वर्म च मे ङ्गानि च मे स्थानि च मे परूगं च मे शरीराणि च मे ॥ १ ॥

ज्यैष्ठ्यं च मे आधिपत्यं च मे मन्युश्च मे भामश्च मे समश्च मे सम्भश्च मे जेमा च मे महिमा च मे वरिमा च मे प्रथिमा च मे वर्ष्मा च मे द्राघुया च मे वृद्धं च मे वृद्धिश्च मे सत्यं च मे श्रद्धा च मे जगच्च मे धनं च मे वशश्च मे त्विषिश्च मे क्रीडा च मे मोदश्च मे जातं च मे जनिष्यमाणं च मे सूक्तं च मे सुकृतं च मे वित्तं च मे वेद्यं च मे भूतं च मे भविष्यच्च मे सुगं च मे सुपथं च मे ऋद्धं च मे ऋद्धिश्च मे क्लृप्तं च मे कृप्तिश्च मे मतिश्च मे समतिश्च मे ॥ २ ॥

शं च मे मयश्च मे प्रियं च मे सनुकामश्च मे कामश्च मे सौमनसश्च मे भद्रं च मे श्रेयश्च मे वस्यश्च मे यशश्च मे भगश्च मे द्रविणं च मे यन्ता च मे धर्ता च मे क्षेमश्च मे धृतिश्च मे विश्वं च मे महश्च मे सविच्च मे ज्ञात्रं च मे सूश्च मे प्रसूश्च मे सीरं च मे लयश्च मे ऋतं च मे मृतं च मे सयक्ष्मं च मे सनामयच्च मे जीवातुश्च मे दीर्घायुत्वं च मे सनमित्रं च मे सभयं च मे सुगं च मे शयनं च मे सूषा च मे सुदिनं च मे ॥ ३ ॥

ऊर्कं मे सूनृतां च मे पयश्च मे रसश्च मे घृतं च मे मधुं च मे सग्धिश्च मे सपीतिश्च मे कृषिश्च मे वृष्टिश्च मे जैत्रं च मे औदभिद्यं च मे रयिश्च मे रायश्च मे पुष्टं च मे पुष्टिश्च मे विभुं च मे प्रभुं च मे बहुं च मे भूयश्च मे पूर्णं च मे पूर्णतरं च मे सक्षितिश्च मे क्यूवाश्च मे सन्नं च मे सक्षुच्च मे व्रीहयश्च मे यवाश्च मे माषाश्च मे तिलाश्च मे मुद्गाश्च मे खल्वाश्च मे गोधूमाश्च मे मसुराश्च मे प्रियङ्गवश्च मे सणवश्च मे श्यामाकाश्च मे नीवाराश्च मे ॥ ४ ॥

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अश्मां च मे मृत्तिका च मे गिरयश्च मे पर्वताश्च मे सिकताश्च मे वनस्पतयश्च मे हिरण्यं च मे स्यश्च मे सीसं च मे त्रपुश्च मे श्यामं च मे लोहं च मे सग्निश्च मे आपश्च मे वीरुधश्च मे ओषधयश्च मे कृष्टपच्यं च मे सकृष्टपच्यं च मे ग्राम्याश्च मे पशवं आरण्याश्च यज्ञेन कल्पन्तां वित्तं च मे वितिश्च मे भूतं च मे भूतिश्च मे वसुं च मे वसतिश्च मे कर्म च मे शक्तिश्च मे सर्थश्च मे एमश्च मे इतिश्च मे गतिश्च मे ॥ ५ ॥

अग्निश्च मे इन्द्रश्च मे सोमश्च मे इन्द्रश्च मे सविता च मे इन्द्रश्च मे सरस्वती च मे इन्द्रश्च मे पूषा च मे इन्द्रश्च मे बृहस्पतिश्च मे इन्द्रश्च मे मित्रश्च मे इन्द्रश्च मे वरुणश्च मे इन्द्रश्च मे त्वष्टा च मे इन्द्रश्च मे धाता च मे

इन्द्रश्च मे विष्णुश्च म इन्द्रश्च मेऽश्विनौ च म इन्द्रश्च मे मरुतश्च म इन्द्रश्च मे विश्वे च मे देवा इन्द्रश्च मे
पृथिवी च म इन्द्रश्च मेऽन्तरिक्षं च म इन्द्रश्च मे द्यौश्च म इन्द्रश्च मे दिशश्च म इन्द्रश्च मे मूर्धा च म इन्द्रश्च मे
प्रजापतिश्च म इन्द्रश्च मे ॥ ६ ॥

अग्नश्च मे रुमिश्च मेऽदाभ्यश्च मेऽधिपतिश्च म उपाग्नश्च मेऽन्तर्यामश्च म ऐन्द्रवायवश्च मे मैत्रावरुणश्च
म आश्विनश्च मे प्रतिप्रस्थानश्च मे शुक्रश्च मे मन्थी च म आग्रयणश्च मे वैश्वदेवश्च मे ध्रुवश्च मे वैश्वानरश्च म
ऋतुगृहाश्च मेऽतिगृह्याश्च म ऐन्द्राग्नश्च मे वैश्वदेवश्च मे मरुत्वतीयाश्च मे माहेन्द्रश्च म आदित्यश्च मे
सावित्रश्च मे सारस्वतश्च मे पौष्णश्च मे पात्नीवतश्च मे हरियोजनश्च मे ॥ ७ ॥

इधमश्च मे बृहिश्व मे वेदिश्च मे धिष्णिषाश्च मे सुचश्च मे चमसाश्च मे ग्रावाणश्च मे स्वरवश्च म उपरवाश्च
मेऽधिषवणे च मे द्रोणकलशश्च मे वायव्यानि च मे पूतभृच्च म आधवनीयश्च म आग्नीध्रं च मे हविर्धानं च मे
गृहाश्च मे सदश्च मे पुरोडाशाश्च मे पचताश्च मेऽवभृथश्च मे स्वगाकारश्च मे ॥ ८ ॥

अग्निश्च मे धर्मश्च मेऽर्कश्च मे सूर्यश्च मे प्राणश्च मेऽश्वमेधश्च मे पृथिवी च मेऽदितिश्च मे दितिश्च मे द्योश्च
मे शक्वरीरङ्गुलयो दिशश्च मे यजेन कल्पन्तामृक्कं मे सामं च मे स्तोमश्च मे यजुश्च मे दीक्षा च मे तपश्च म
ऋतुश्च मे व्रतं च मेऽहोरात्रयोवृष्टया बृहद्रथन्तरे च मे यजेन कल्पेताम् ॥ ९ ॥

गर्भाश्च मे वत्साश्च मे त्र्यविश्च मे त्र्यवी च मे दित्यवाट् च मे दित्योही च मे पञ्चाविश्च मे पञ्चावी च मे
त्रिवत्सश्च मे त्रिवत्सा च मे तुर्यवाट् च मे तुर्योही च मे पष्ठवाट् च मे पष्ठोही च म उक्षा च मे वशा च म ऋषभश्च मे
वेहच्च मेऽनड्वाच्च मे धेनुश्च म आयुर्यजेन कल्पतां प्राणो यजेन कल्पतामपानो यजेन कल्पतां व्यानो यजेन
कल्पतां चक्षुर्यजेन कल्पताग्नौ यजेन कल्पतां मनो यजेन कल्पतां वाग्यजेन कल्पतामात्मा यजेन कल्पतां
यज्ञो यजेन कल्पताम् ॥ १० ॥

एका च मे तिस्रश्च मे पञ्च च मे सप्त च मे नव च म एकादश च एका च मे त्रयोदश च मे पञ्चदश च मे सप्तदश
च मे नवदश च म एकविंशतिश्च मे त्रयोविंशतिश्च मे पञ्चविंशतिश्च मे सप्तविंशतिश्च मे नवविंशतिश्च
म एकत्रिंशच्च मे त्रयस्त्रिंशच्च मे चतस्रश्च मेऽष्टौ च मे द्वादश च मे षोडश च मे विंशतिश्च मे
चतुर्विंशतिश्च मेऽष्टाविंशतिश्च मे द्वात्रिंशच्च मे षट्त्रिंशच्च मे चत्वारिंशच्च मे चतुश्चत्वारिंशच्च
मेऽष्टाचत्वारिंशच्च मे वाजश्च प्रसवश्चापिजश्च क्रतुश्च सुवश्च मूर्धा च व्यशिन्यश्चान्त्यायनश्चान्त्यश्च
भौवनश्च भुवनश्चाधिपतिश्च ॥ ११ ॥

ॐ इडा देवहर्मनुर्यज्ञनीबृहस्पतिरुक्थामदानि शग्सषद्विश्वे देवाः सूक्तत्वाचः पृथिविमातृमा मां हिंसीमधुं
मनिष्ये मधुं जनिष्ये मधुं वक्ष्यामि मधुं वदिष्यामि मधुमतीं देवेभ्यो वाचमुद्यासगं शुश्रूषेयां मनुष्येभ्यस्तं मा
देवा अवन्तु शोभायै पितरोऽनुमदन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः_शान्तिः_शान्तिः ॥

Transliteration of Footnotes

1. varṇas-svarah, matra balam, sāma santanah, ityuktaś-śikṣādhyāyah. -Taittiriya-upaniṣad-1.2.....
2. yo mam paśyati sarvatra sarvash ca mayi paśyati, tasyaham na pranaśyāmi sa ca me na praṇaśyati. - Bhagavad-gita-6.30
3. sahasra-śirṣā puruṣah, sahasrākṣah sahasrapat,... tasmāt-yajñat-sarvahutah, reah samani jajñire, ... vedaham-etam puruṣam mahāntam... Purusa Saktam-1-4-7.
4. ekam-evadvitīyam brahma.
5. bahula-rajase viśvotpattau bhavāya namo namah prabala-tamase tat-samhāre haraya namo namah, jana-sukha-kṛte sattvodriktau mṛdaya namo namah pramahasi pade nistraigunye śivāya namo namah. Sivamahimnah Stotram-30.
6. pitāmahasya jagataḥ mātā dhātā pitāmahah. - Bhagavad-gita-9.17
7. gurave sarva-lokānām dakṣiṇāmūrtaye namah. - Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra Dhyana Śloka-4
8. śaṅkaram śaṅkarācāryam.
9. samhara-kale prajah samharan rodayatīti. - Viṣṇusahasranama Sāṅkara Bhāṣya-114
10. rudam rāti dadatīti. - Viṣṇusahasranama Sāṅkara Bhāṣya-114.
11. rurduhkham duhkha-karaṇam va, drāvayatīti vā rudrah. Viṣṇusahasranama Sāṅkara Bhāṣya-114
12. bhiṣaje bhava-rogiṇām. Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra Dhyana Śloka-4.
13. yathā drṣṭih tatha srstih.
14. srotasam-asmi jahnavi, sthāvarāṇām himālayah, vainateyaśca pakṣiṇām. Bhagavad-gita-10.31,25,30
15. ye caiva sātṭvikā bhāvā rājasās-tāmasāśca ye, matta eveti tān-viddhi na tvaham teṣu te mayi. - Bhagavad-gita-7.12.....14
16. drṣṭi-pūtam nyaset pādam
17. vah satarudrivam-adhite so'gnipato bhavati sa vāyuputo bhavati sa atmapato bhavati sa surapanat-pato bhavati sa brahmahatyayah pato bhavati sa suvarṇasteyat-pūto bhavati sa kṛtyakṛtyat-pūto bhavati tasmad-avimuktam-aśṛito bhavatvityāśrami sarvadā sakṛdva japet, anena jñānam-apnoti samsārarnava-nāśanam, tasmad-evam viditvainam kaivalyam padam-aśnute kaivalyam padam-aśnuta iti. - Kaivalya-upaniṣad-2.
18. girau kailāse sthitvā lokānām śam tanotiti girisantah.
19. giri vāci sthitva vede tiṣṭhannartharapena sam tanoti.
20. karma raudram, rāgaśca raudrah, kopaśca raudrah, yasya raudra-trayam nāsti avāpta-sarva-kāmatvena raga-dveṣader-abhāvāt sa araudrah. Viṣṇusahasranama Sāṅkara Bhāṣya-906
21. aghorebhyo' tha ghorebhyo ghora-ghoratarebhyah. Mahanarayana-upaniṣad-19.
22. girim kailāsākhyam trayate palayatiti giritrah.
23. giri vāci sthitvā trayate iti giritrah.
24. girau kailāse sete tiṣṭhati, giri vāci vedeṣu vā sete tiṣṭhati.
25. nija gira pāvana karana karana rāma yasa tulasi kahyo. Ramacaritamanasa-1.361
26. tanme manaḥ śiva-sankalpam-astu. - Siva-sankalpa Sūktam-1
27. a no bhadrah kratavo yantu viśvatah. - Rg Veda Samhita-1.89.1
28. sa no buddhyā śubhayā samyunaktu. - Svetāśvataropaniṣad-4.1

29. bhūta pisaca nikaṭa nahim avai, mahābīra jaba nāma sunāvai. - Hanuman Cālīsā-24
30. bhisaje bhava-roginām. - Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra Dhyāna Śloka-4.
31. yatayanti duḥkḥayanti nivāsenā iti yatudhāna.
32. ananta-janma-saṅcitah vāsanah ta yatra nidhīyante tāh yātudhanyah.
33. hiranmayena patreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham, tattvam pūṣannapavrṇu satya-dharmāya dīṣṭaye. pūṣannekarṣe yama sūrya prajāpatya vyūha raśmin samaha tejo yatte rūpam kalyānatamam tatte paśyāmi, yo'savasau puruṣah so'hamasmi. - Iśāvāsya-upaniṣad-15-16
34. kalo jagad-bhakṣakah. - Sivāparādha Kṣamāpana Stotram-12.
35. ullanghya sindhoḥ salilah saltlam yah śoka-vahniḥ janakātmajayah. -Valmiki Ramayana Dhyana Sloka.
36. jānagnih sarva-karmani bhasmasat-kurute tathā. - Bhagavad-gita-4.37.53
37. agne naya supatha raye asmān viśvani deva vayunani vidvān, yuyodhyasmaj-juhuranameno bhūyīṣṭhash te nama uktim vidhema. -Iśāvāsya-upaniṣad-18.
38. mṛtyunjayam mṛtyu-bhiyāśritānam aham matir-mṛtyum-upaiti pūrvam, atha svabhavad-amptesu teṣu katham punar-mṛtyu-dhiyo vakāśah. Saddarśanam-2 ..54
39. senanīnām-aham skandah. Bhagavad-gita-10.24..
40. ūrdhva-malam-adhaḥ śākhām-aśvattham prahur-avyayam, chandamsi yasya parnani.... Bhagavad-gita-15.1.
41. yajñopavitam paramam pavitram prajāpateryas-sahajam purastat, ayusyam-agryam pratimuñca śubhram yajñopavītam balam-astu tejah. - Brahmapaniṣad-5
42. idash śārīram kaunteya kṣetram-ityabhidhiyate. - Bhagavad-gita-13.1
43. buddhim tu sārathim viddhi. Kathopaniṣad-1.3.3
44. sa ghoso dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām hṛdayani vyadārayat, nabhaśca pṛthivīm caiva tumulo vyanunādayan. - Bhagavad-gita-1.19
45. api cetsudurācāro bhajate mam-ananyabhāk, sadhur-eva sa mantavyah samyag-vyavasito hi sah. Bhagavad-gita-9.30.
46. sakala jīvaṁśca karito sambhala.
47. tair-dattan-apradayaibhyo yo bhunkte stena eva sah. Bhagavad-gita-3.12.
48. sarvam jñāna-plavenaiva vrjinam santariṣyasi. Bhagavad-gita-4.36 78
49. jīvo brahmaiva naparah. - Brahmajñānāvalīmāla-20
50. pranavo dhanuḥ śaro hyatma brahma tallakṣyam-ucyate, apramattena veddhavyam śaravat-tanmayo bhavet. - Mundaka-upaniṣad-2.2.4
51. utkramantam sthitam vāpi bhuñjānam va guṇānvitam, vimadhā nānupaśyanti paśyanti jñāna-cakṣuṣah. - Bhagavad-gita-15.10..
52. karma kim param karma tajjadam. - Upadeśa Sara-1
53. aste bhaga asinasya śete bhagyam śayanasya, tiṣṭhadbhyo tiṣṭhatasya carati carato bhagah. - Subhāṣitam
54. caraiveti caraiveti. - R8 Veda Aitareya-brahmanam-
55. ya niśa sarva-bhūtānām tasyam jāgati samyamī, yasyam jāgrati bhūtāni sa niśa paśyato muneh. - Bhagavad-gita-2.69
56. uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varan-nibodhata. - Kathopaniṣad-3.14.
57. na sa sabha yatra na santi vṛddha na te vṛddha ye na vadanti dharmam, nāsau dharmo yatra na satyamasti na tatsatyam yacchalenānuviddham. -Mahabharata Udyoga Parva-35.58.
58. vidvān sarvatra pūjyate. Subhāṣitam

59. atmānam rathinam viddhi śārīram rathameva tu, buddhim tu sārathim viddhi manah pragraham-eva ca. indriyani hayana-ahur-viṣayamsteṣu gocaran, atmendriya-manoyuktam bhoktetyāhur-maṇiṣinah. -Kathopaniṣad-1.3.3-4.
60. ravanu rathi biratha raghubira. Ramacaritamānasa-6.79.1.
61. vijñānasārathir-yastu manah pragrahavan-narah, so'dhvanah paramāpnoti tadviṣṇoh paramam padam. - Kathopaniṣad-1.3.9
62. yasmāt sarvam jagat bhavati.
63. samsara-rujam ca duḥkham dravayati.
64. tarati śokam-atmavit. Chandogya-upaniṣad-7.1.3.
65. jaṭilo munda luṅcita-keśaḥ kāṣayambara-bahukṛta-veśaḥ. - Bhaja Govindam-14
66. sipayah paśavah praviṣṭah iti.
67. sipayo rāsmayas-teṣu niviṣṭa iti. Viṣṇusahasranama Sankara Bhāṣya-273
68. yada tvam-abhivarsasyathemah prāṇa te prajāḥ, anandarūpās-tiṣṭhanti kāmāyānna bhaviṣyati. - Praśnopaniṣad-2.10.
69. midhvan secakah. atīśayena sektā midhuṣṭamah.
70. madhye vāmanam-āsīnam viśve devā upāsate. Kathopaniṣad-2.5.3.
71. agram prakṛtam padam nayati mumukṣūn-iti agranth. - Viṣṇusahasranama Sankara Bhāṣya-218
72. sad-eva somyedaṁ-agra āsīd. - Chandogya-upaniṣad-6.2.1
73. śībhe udaka-pravahe bhavah sibhyah.
74. avasvane dhvani-rahita-jale bhavah.
75. srotasi pravahe bhavah.
76. jaghane prsthā-bhāge bhavah jaghanyah.
77. budhne male bhavah budhnyah.
78. punyena punyam lokam nayati papena papam ubhābhyām-eva manuṣyalokam. Praśnopaniṣad-3.7
79. yamah samyamataṁ-aham. Bhagavad-gīta-10.29
80. bhadram karnebhīḥ śrṇuyama. Atharva Veda Śānti Patha.
81. yuddhe capyapalayanam. Bhagavad-gīta-18.43...
82. mano-rūpeekṣu-kodanda pañca-tanmātra-sāyakā. Lalitasahasranama-10-11
83. Sobhanam-indriyadimayam sārngam dhanur-asyāstiti. - Viṣṇusahasranama Sankara Bhāṣya-567
84. vātena saha vrstih vatyah.
85. sarkara-paṣānādi-sahito vrṣṭi-jala-viśeṣaḥ reṣmyah.
86. apa mala aura apa khajānā, apa hi kharcanaḥ. Kabiradāsa.
87. umaya saha vartate iti somah.
88. umāsayam paramēśvaram prabhum trilocanam nilakantham praśāntam, dhyātvā munir-gacchati bhūta-yonim samasta-sakṣim tamasah parastat. Kaivalyopaniṣad-7.
89. sam sukham gamayati iti sangah.
90. bhīṣmād-vataḥ pavate. bhīṣodeti sūryah. Taittiriya-upaniṣad-2.8.1-2.
91. mayaivaite nihataḥ pūrvam-eva nimitta mātram bhava savya-sacin. Bhagavad-gīta-11.33.
92. tam viddhi rudram kaunteya. Mahabharata Santi Parva-330.69.
93. nayam hanti na hanyate. Bhagavad-gīta-2.19.
94. tarayati samsara-sāgarat iti tārah.
95. etad-alambanam jñātvā brahma-loke mahyate. Kathopaniṣad-1.2.17.
96. tārakasyopadeśena kāsī-samsthomrto bhavet. Skanda Puranam-4.1.30.14
97. sa tarati sa tarati sa lokāms-tārayati. - Narada Bhakti Sutra-50

98. šam sukhash bhāvayati utpādayatiti va sambhuh.
99. mayah sukham bhavayati utpādayatīti vā mayobhah.
100. Tirthikurvanti tirthāni. - Narada Bhakti Sūtra-69.
101. alam sampūryam karma-phalam atti iti aladyah bhokta jtvah ityarthah.
102. anenaiva jrvanatmanā nupraviśya nama-rūpe vyakarot. Chandogya-upaniṣad-6.3.3.
103. bhaktānārm puratas-tisthatiti pulastih. 141
104. na grham grham-ityāhur-grhini grham-ucyate.
105. tam durdarśam gūḍham-anupraviṣṭam guhahitam gahvareṣṭham purāṇam, adhyatma-yogadhigamena devam matvā dhiro harṣa-śokau jahāti. -Kathopaniṣad-1.2.12
106. anoraniyan-mahato mahiyan. Kathopaniṣad-1.2.20.
107. nindaka niyare rakhiye angana kuṭi chavaya, bina pani sābuna binā nirmala kare subhāya. Kabira Doha.
108. yasmin-sthito na duhkkena gurunapi vicalyate. Bhagavad-gita-6.22.
109. kiranti bhaktebhyah dhanani, kiranti svecchayā naśyanti.
110. asamantāt niśśeṣena hatam pāpam yaiḥ.
111. asamantāt mivanti sthūlibhāvam prapnuvanti iti
112. ko daridrah, yah sada asantuṣṭah..
113. ko va daridri hi viśālatiṣṇah. - Praśnottari-5.
114. sarveṣu ahassu roga-daridryadeh auśadhavat vināśa-hetuh tasmāt viśvāhabheṣaji.
115. kam ganga-jalam pardayati palayatiti kapardah.
116. prthivi sasyaśalini, deśo'yam kṣobha-rahitah, brahmanah santu nirbhayah.
117. rudrādhyāyi vased-yatra grame vā nagare'pi vā, na tatra kṣut-pipāsādyā durbhikṣa-vyādhyayo'pi ca.
118. sthirair-angais-tustuvagm-sas-tanabhiḥ vyaśema devahitam yadayuh. - Atharva Veda Santi Patha.
119. Atmanastu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati. Brhadaranyaka-upaniṣad-4.5.6.
120. prasipata-pratikarah samrambho hi mahātmanām.
121. svasti na indro vṛddhaśravah, svasti nah pūṣā viśvavedah, svasti nastarksyo ariṣṭanemih, svasti no brhaspatir-dadhātu. Atharva Veda Santi Patha.
122. garte hrdaya-kuhare sidatiti.
123. hanyante anaya iti hetih ayudham-ityarthah.
124. tapamyaham-aham varsash nigṛhnamyutsrjami ca. - Bhagavad-gita-9.19
125. vividham kiranti himsanti vikirayah, tan dyati khandayati iti vikiridah.
126. anātmanastu śatrutve vartetatmaiva śatruvat. - Bhagavad-gita-6.6.
127. sarve bhavantu sukhinah sarve santu niramayah, sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu ma kaścit duhkha-bhagbhavet.
128. tesam nityabhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemam vahamyaham. Bhagavad-gita-9.22.
129. na me bhaktah pranaśyati. Bhagavad-gita-9.31.
130. dharma-setu-palakam tvadharma-mārga-nāśakam. Kalabhairava Astakam-5
131. ira annam, irānām samūhah bibharti iti ailabṛdah.
132. yuh papiṣṭhaḥ śatruh va, yubhiḥ yudhyantiti yavyudhah.
133. bhuñjate te tvagham pāpā ye pacantyātma-kāranāt. - Bhagavad-gita-3.13
134. puṣṇāmi causadhiḥ sarvah somo bhūtvā rasatmakah. -Bhagavad-gītā-15.13....

135. tatatmani nirate ya upaniṣatsu dharmās-te mayi santu. Sama Veda Santi Patha.
136. dadami buddhi-yogam tam yena mam-upayanti te. -Bhagavad-gita-10.10.
137. vāsāmsi jirṇāni yathā vihaya navāni grhṇāti naro parani, tatha śārīrāṇi vihaya jirṇānyanyāni samyati navāni dehi. Bhagavad-gita-2.22.
138. tarati sokam-atmavit. Chandogya-upaniṣad-7.1.3.
139. vidyaya vindate'mṛtam. - Kenopaniṣad-2.4.
140. pramado vai mṛtyuh. (pramadam vai mṛtyum-aham bravimi. - Sanatsujatiyam-1.4).
141. mptyor-ma amytam gamaya. - Brhadaranyaka-upaniṣad-1.3.28
142. karāgre vasate lakṣmi karamūle sarasvati, karamadhye tu govindah prabhāte karadarśanam.
143. nanhe munne bacce teri muththi me kya hai, muththi me hai takadira hamari.
144. nara kare karani to nara hi narayana ho.
145. joarapluṣṭan diṣṭyā sukhayati sudhādhārasiraya. - Saundaryalahari-20.
146. sukhena brahma-samsparśam-atyantam sukham-aśnute. Bhagavad-gita-6.28..
147. tasmad-atmajñam hyarcayed-bhūtikamah. Mundakopaniṣad-3.1.10.
148. mayā kṛta ārādhana bhagavān sarvātmakah priyatām.
149. dharmo mitram mṛtasya ca.
150. om krato smara kṛtam smara. - Iśāvāsyopaniṣad-17.
151. yam yam lokam manasā samvibhāti viśuddha-sattvah kamayate yamśca kāmān, tam tam lokam jayate tāmśca kāmān. Mundakopaniṣad-3.1.10
152. adityānām-aham viṣṇuh. - Bhagavad-gītā-10.21
153. vāco devatā vahnih. padayor-viṣṇuh. - Tattva Bodhah-20
154. annam brahmeti vyajānāt, annāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jayante, annena jātāni jīvanti, annam prayantya bhisamviśantiti. Taittiriya-upaniṣad-3.2.1-4.
155. annad-bhavanti bhūtāni parjanya-annasambhavah, yajñād-bhavati parjanyo yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavah. Bhagavad-gita-3.14.
156. sura nirāgasa ho... by Subodh Bhav
157. svara ke binā jīvana sūnā.
158. tamaso ma jyotir-gamaya. - Brhadaranyaka-upaniṣad-1.3.28.
159. tejasvinā vadhitam-astu. - Yajur Veda Santi Patha
160. yogah karmasu kauśalam. - Bhagavad-gita-2.50
161. nayamātmā balahinena labhyah. - Mundakopaniṣad-3.2.4
162. sarvam paravaśam duḥkham sarvam atmavaśam sukham. Bhagavad-gita-6.17.
163. yuktahara-vihārasya... yogo bhavati duḥkhaha. -
164. atmakṛīda ātmaratih kriyāvān. - Mundakopaniṣad-3.1.4.
165. yal-labhase nija-karmopattam vittam tena vinodaya cittam. -Bhaja govindam-2
166. bhadram karnebhiḥ śṛṇuyama devah, bhadram paśyemākṣabhiḥ. Atharva Veda Santi Patha.
167. tasmāt sastram pramāṇam te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau, jhatvā śāstra-vidhanoktam karma kartum-ihārhasi.-Bhagavad-gita-16.24.
168. ananyaś-cintayanto mam ye janah paryupāsate, teṣām nityabhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemam vahamyaham. -Bhagavad-gita-9.22.
169. jagata iśadhi-yukta-sevanam, aṣṭamūrtibhrd-devapūjanam. Upadeśa Sarah-5

170. pañca tvānugamiṣyanti yatra yatra gamiṣyasi, mitranyamitra madhyastha upajivyoṣajīvinah. - Vidura Niti-64.
171. abhayam pratisthām vindate. - Taittiriya-upaniṣad-2.7.11
172. yadyad-acarati śresthah tattad-cvetaro janah. - Bhagavad-gita-3.21
173. atithidevo bhava. Taittiriya-upaniṣad-1.20.5
174. prithivi sasyasalini
175. annam bahu kurvita, tad-vratam, na kañcana vasatau pratyācakṣīta, tad-vratam, tasmād-yaya kaya ca vidhayā bahvannam prāpnuyat. - Taittiriya-upaniṣad-3.9-10.
176. tasmādva ete deva atitarāmivānyān-devan-yadagnir-vayur-indras-te hyenan-nediṣṭham pasparśuh. Kenopaniṣad-4.2
177. tasmādva indro'titaram-ivanyan-devān sa hyenan-nediṣṭham pasparśa. - Kenopaniṣad-4.3
178. sa hyenat-prathamō vidañcakāra brahmeti. Kenopaniṣad-4.3.
179. etameva puruṣam brahma tatamamapaśyad-idam-adarśam-iti, tasmād-idandro namedandro ha vai nāma. -Aitareya-upaniṣad-1.3.13-14.
180. svasti na indro vṛddha-śravah. svasti naḥ pūṣā viśvavedah. svasti nas-tārṅkṣyo ariṣṭanemih. svasti no brhaspatir-dadhātu. - Atharva Veda Santi Patha.
181. diyate vimalam jñānaṁ kṣīyate karma bandhanam.
182. aikāgryam paramam tapah.
183. adhikāriṇam-āśāste phala-siddhir-viśeṣataḥ, upāyā deśa-kālādyāḥ santyasmin-sahakarinaḥ. - Vivekacudamani-14
184. vedānām sāmavedo'smi - Bhagavad-gita-10.22.
185. brhatsāma tathā sāmnam - Bhagavad-gita-10.35.
186. tvam mātā sarva-devānām tvam ca yajñasya kāraṇam, toam tirtham sarva tirthānām namaste'stu sadanaghe. - Skandapurāṇam..
187. yajñārthat-karmano'nyatra loko'yam karma-bandhanah, tadartham karma kaunteya mukta-sangah samācara. - Bhagavad-gita-3.9
188. adharam madhuraṁ vadanam madhuraṁ nayanam madhuraṁ hasitam madhuraṁ, hṛdayam madhuraṁ gamanam madhuraṁ madhurādhipater-akhilam madhuraṁ. -Madhurāṣṭakam-1
189. madhu vātā ṛtāyate madhu kṣaranti sindhavah, mādhvīr-nah santvoṣadhiḥ, madhu naktam-utoṣaso madhumat-pārthivagm rajah, madhu dyaurastu nah pita, madhumān-no vanaspatir-madhumāgm astu sūryah, mādhvīr-gavo bhavantu nah. - Brhadaranyaka-upaniṣad-6.3.6
190. modante pitaro nṛtyanti devatāḥ sanāthā ceyam bhūr-bhavati. - Narada Bhakti Sūtra-71

Swami Tejomayananda, a spiritual Master and visionary leader has devotedly carried forward the vision of his Guru - Swami Chinmayananda, the founder of Chinmaya Mission. As Global Head of Chinmaya Mission, for 23 years he travelled extensively spreading the message of Vedānta. Under his leadership, several prestigious projects Chinmaya were inaugurated and are blossoming International Residential School, Chinmaya Vibhooti Vision Center and Chinmaya Vishwa Vidyapeeth (a deemed to be university).

An outstanding teacher of Vedanta, he conveys the profound knowledge of the scriptures with simplicity, wit and humour. A prolific and versatile author, his commentaries on several texts and original compositions in Sanskrit are loved and appreciated by laymen and scholars alike.