

॥ श्री शिव - पञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रम् ॥
SRI SIVA - PANCAKSARA - STOTRAM

(1)

नागेन्द्रहाराय विलोचनाय

भस्माङ्गरागाय महेश्वराय ।

नित्याय शुद्धाय दिगम्बराय

तस्मै नकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

Here, the first word Nāgendra - hārāya begins with the letter 'na'. In the verse, expressions descriptive of the form of Śiva as well as His true transcendent nature are employed. He wears the serpent-king as garland, and has the third eye in His forehead; He has the ashes smeared all over His body. He is the supreme Lord, eternal and pure, and is sky-clad. To that Śiva who is in the form of the letter 'na', may this obeisance be!

(2)

मन्दाकिनीसलिलचन्दनचर्चिताय

नन्दीश्वरप्रमथनाथमहेश्वराय ।

मन्दारमुख्यबहुपुष्पसुपूजिताय

तस्मै मकारमहिताय नमः शिवाय ॥

The water of the Mandākinī serves as the sandalpaste for bathing Śiva's body. Mandākinī is the Gaṅgā as she descends from Heaven. The Gaṅgā that flows along the holy Kedāra is named Mandākinī. Śiva receives the furious Gaṅgā as she falls in His matted locks; and the water trickles and bathes His body. He is the supreme Lord of Nandi and other leaders of the troops of attendants in Kailāsa. He is

worshipped with mandāra and many other flowers. He is specially praised by uttering the letter 'na'. To Śiva who is adored in the form of the letter 'ma' may this obeisance be!

(3)

शिवाय गौरीवदनाब्जबृन्द-
सूर्याय दक्षाध्वरनाशकाय ।
श्रीनीलकण्ठाय वृषध्वजाय
तस्मै शिकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

He is Śiva, the bestower of all that is good. The name itself has 'śi' as its first letter. He is as the Sun to the bunch of lotuses that is Pārvatī's face. Devī had to re-incarnate herself as the daughter of the Himalayas because in her previous manifestation she had to commit suicide for the misdeeds of her father Daksha. Lord Śiva destroyed Daksha's sacrifice, not because Daksha had dishonoured Lord Śiva, but because he was responsible for his daughter committing suicide by falling into the sacrificial fire, not being able to bear the dishonour shown by him to her Lord. Śiva is Nilakanṭha. Śiva has on His banner the bull-emblem. The letter 'śi' which is the third in the five-lettered mantra is an indicator of His magnificence. To that Śiva may this obeisance be!

(4)

वसिष्ठकुम्भोद्भवगौतमार्य
मुनीन्द्रदेवार्चितशेखराय ।

चन्द्रार्कवैश्वानरलोचनाय

तस्मै वकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

Lord Śiva is adored by great ascetics and sages like Vasiṣṭha, Agastya, and Gautama, as also by the gods. His three eyes are the Sun, the Moon, and Fire. To that Śiva who is in the form of the letter 'va', may this obeisance be!

(5)

यक्षस्वरूपाय जटाधराय

पिनाकहस्ताय सनातनाय ।

दिव्याय देवाय दिगम्बराय

तस्मै यकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

In their war with the demons, the gods came out victorious. In the hour of victory, they were overcome by false pride which made them forget the source of their strength, the supreme Brahman. In order to bring them to their sense, Brahman, the great Godhead, appeared before them as bright column of light spanning heaven and earth : The gods did not know what this Yakṣa (Spirit) was. The first to be sent on the mission of discovery was Agni. He could not burn even a blade of grass, when he was asked by the Spirit to prove his strength. Similarly, Vāyu who was the next to go as emissary could not move the blade of grass. Finally, the chief of gods, Indra, was commissioned to solve the mystery. At his approach, the Spirit vanished before him. Then, in the same ethereal region, Indra came across a woman who was

shining intensely, Umā the daughter of Himavān. He asked her: "What Spirit is this?" She replied "It is Brahman", and added : "It was through the victory of Brahman that you attained glory". Thus, Pārvatī became the first deva-guru. Śiva, the non-dual Spirit (Mokṣa) is the supreme Reality that was revealed by her to the Gods. Lord Śiva wears a braid of matted locks. He bears in His arm the Pināka bow. He is the most ancient (sanātana) Being : the shining God. The quarters are His clothing. He appears in the form of the letter 'ya'. To that Śiva may this obeisance be!

