

॥ मणिकर्णिकाष्टकम् ॥
MANIKARNIKASHTAKAM

(1)

त्वत्तीरे मणिकर्णिके हरिहरौ सायुज्यमुक्तिप्रदौ
वादन्तौ कुरुतः परस्परमुभौ जन्तोः प्रयाणोत्सवे ।
मद्रूपो मनुजोऽयमस्तु हरिणा प्रोक्तः शिवस्तत्क्षणा -
त्तन्मध्याद्भृगुलाञ्छनो गरुडगः पीताम्बरो निर्गतः ॥

O Mother Manikarnika! on your banks, both Siva and Vishnu who grant liberation (where soul merges with with Almighty) converse among themselves at the time when the being is about to start his final journey. When Lord Siva is told by Lord Vishnu "May this soul attain My form," immediately the soul emerges and departs from the body with the mark of Brgu Rsi, adorned in yellow silk seated on Garuda.

(2)

इन्द्राद्यास्त्रिदशाः पतन्ति नियतं भोगक्षये ये पुन -
जायन्ते मनुजास्ततोऽपि पशवः कीटाः पतङ्गादयः ।
ये मातर्मणिकर्णिके तव जले मज्जन्ति निष्कल्मषाः
सायुज्येऽपि किरीटकौस्तुभधरा नारायणाः स्युर्नराः ॥

O Marikarnika! the celestials (33 crores in number) like Indra who are born in earth at the exhaustion of their merits, the humans, the animals and insects when they take a holy dip in your water become free from sins and get cipatedeman they resemble Lord Vishnu bedecked with crown and gems (Kaustubha gem).

(3)

काशी धन्यतमा विमुक्तिनगरी सालंकृता गङ्गया
तत्रेयं मणिकर्णिका सुखकरी मुक्तिर्हि तत्किङ्करी ।
स्वर्लोकस्तुलितः सहैव विबुधैः काश्या समं ब्रह्मणा
काशी क्षोणितले स्थिता गुरुतरा स्वर्गो लघुत्वं गतः ॥

Kasi is the most blessed place (in the world) as it is adorned by Ganga and as it grants liberation; in such Kasi, Manikanika is extremely pleasing as it is ever attended upon by liberation (in the form of a slave). When the heaven was compared by Brahma and by celestials to this Kasi, Kasi on this earth became heavier (due to the greatness) and heaven was made in significant.

(4)

गङ्गातीरमनुत्तमं हि सकलं तत्रापि काश्युत्तमा
तरस्यां सा मणिकर्णिकोत्तमतमा यत्रेश्वरो मुक्तिदः ।
देवानामपि दुर्लभं स्थलमिदं पापौघनाशक्षमं
पूर्वोपार्जितपुण्यपुङ्गवमकं पुण्यैर्जनेः प्राप्यते ॥

Amongst all the places, the banks of Ganga is incomparable and on its banks the city Kasi in the best. Even in Kasi Manikarnika is the best as the Lord present there bestows emancipation. This place can be attained only by fortunate men due to the heaps of merits accumulated over the births; for, this place which is capable of destroying even the worst sins is hard even for the celestials to get.

(5)

दुःखाम्भोधिगतो हि जन्तुनिवहस्तेषां कथं निष्कृतिः
ज्ञात्वा तद्धि विरिञ्चिना विरचिता वाराणसी शर्मदा ।
लोकाः स्वर्गसुखास्ततोऽपि लघवो भोगान्तपातप्रदाः
काशी मुक्तिपुरी सदा शिवकरी धर्मार्थमोक्षप्रदा ॥

Having known how liberation (in difficult) for the beings who are drowned in the Ocean of sorrow, this Varanasi which bestows Bliss, is created by Brahma. The other worlds like Svarga give temporal happiness and enjoyments; but Kasi is always the bestower of liberation and ever auspicious and grants righteousness (*dharmā*) material wealth and liberation (*moksha*).

(6)

एको वेणुधरो धराधरधरः श्रीवत्सभूषाधरः
योऽप्येकः किल शङ्करो विषधरो गङ्गाधरोमाधवः ।
ये मातर्मणिकर्णिके तवजले मज्जन्ति ते मानवाः
रुद्रा वा हरयो भवन्ति बहवस्तेषां बहुत्वं कथम् ॥

There is only one Vishnu the holder of the earth, the bearer of flute and the srivatsa on the chest; similarly there is only one Siva who holds the poison (in throat), bears the Ganga (in his head) and the lord of goddess Uma. Even then O mother Manikarnika those beings who dip in your holy waters turn into Sivas and Vishnus whose number is countless. Their innumerability is surprising (it is out of the grace of Manikarnika)

(7)

त्वत्तीरे मरणं तु मङ्गलकरं देवैरपि श्लाघ्यते
शक्रस्तं मनुजं सहस्रनयनैर्द्रष्टुं सदा तत्परः ।
आयान्तं सविता सहस्रकिरणैः प्रत्युद्गतोऽभूत्सदा
पुण्योऽसौ वृषगोऽथवा गरुडगः किं मन्दिरं यास्यति ॥

Death on your bank is considered auspicious and is praised ever by celestials. Indra is ever eager to witness such a man with all his thousand eyes. The sun goes out to welcome such a man with thousands of his rays extended. Such a holy person who is seated either on a bull or an eagle, does not care which place he would reach (since he is welcomed everywhere).

(8)

मध्याह्ने मणिकर्णिकास्नपनजं पुण्यं न वक्तुंक्षमः
स्वीयैरब्दशतैश्चतुर्मुखधरो वेदार्थदीक्षागुरुः ।
योगाभ्यासबलेन चन्द्रशिखरस्तत्पुण्यपारंगत -
स्त्वत्तीरे प्रकरोति सुमपुरुषं नारायणं वा शिवम् ।

The greatness acquired by bathing in Manikarnika could not be explained even by Brahma the preceptor, who is adept in expounding the meaning of Vedas by his four faces continuously for hundreds of years. Siva, by the powers of his austerities makes the sleeping person (ignorant) into Vishnu or Siva, on your banks.

(9)

कृच्छ्रैः कोटिशतैः स्वपापनिधनं यच्चाश्वमेधैःफलं
तत्सर्वं मणिकर्णिकास्नपनजे पुण्ये प्रविष्टं भवेत् ।
स्नात्वा स्तोत्रमिदं नरःपठति चेत्संसारपाथोनिधिं
तीर्त्वा पल्वलवत्प्रयाति सदनं तेजोमयं ब्रह्मणः ॥

The merit acquired by hundreds and thousands of *krchras* (expiatory rites) which are capable of destroying sins, or the merits of Asvamedha sacrifices is enjoined in the merit acquired by bathing in Manikarnika. The person who recites this hymn after his bath, crosses the ocean of world way of life as if it were a puddle of water, and reaches the luminous abode of Brahma.

