

GAURĪDAŚAKAM

लीलालब्धस्थापितलुप्ताखिललोकां
लोकातीतैर्योगिभिरन्तश्चिरमृग्याम् ।
बालादित्यश्रेणिसमानद्युतिपुञ्जां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥ १ ॥

līlāabdha-sthāpita-luptākhillalokām
lokātītair yogibhir antaś ciramrgyām,
bālāditya-śreṇisamāna-dyutipuñjām
gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm aham īḍe.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like eyes. All the worlds were brought into being, sustained and made to disappear by Her with effortless ease. She is being sought for long in their heart even by yogis who have transcended the earthly order of things. This Divine Goddess is as refulgent as the collective lustre of row of rising Suns.

Devi is but the kinetic aspect of the Supreme Self that brings about the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the Universe. This is evident in all Devi stotras. The 'Devi Māhātmya' says, "Śṛṣṭisthiti, vināśānām śaktibhūte sanātani". She is the refulgent gem that is inlaid in the casket of the mind of the sages- "munijanamaṇḥ peṭiratnam", says Mūka Kavi describing the Goddess at Kāncī in his 'Mūkapañcaśatī-Stutiśatakam' (29).

The last line of this verse is the refrain recurring in the decad of verses.

प्रत्याहारध्यानसमाधिस्थितिभाजां
नित्यं चित्ते निर्वृतिकाष्ठां क्लयन्तीम् ।
सत्यज्ञानानन्दमयीं तां तनुरूपां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥ २ ॥

pratyāhāra-dhyāna-samādhi sthitibhājām
nityam citte nirvṛtikāṣṭhām kalayantīm,
satyajñānānandamayīm tām tanurūpām
gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm aham īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like eyes. She generates Supreme Bliss for ever in the minds of those who have attained the state of Samādhi or deep trance after passing through the state of pratyāhāra and dhyāna. Her real being is Truth-Consciousness-Bliss; yet She takes the form (of Gaurī) to help the devotees.

Pratyāhāra is a stage in 'yoga' when the sense organs that detract the mind into the channels of lust, anger and ignorance are held in check and the mind is in its state of pristine purity. Dhyāna is that continuous meditation on the appropriate object without being sidetracked on irrelevant paths. Samādhi, says Yājñavalkya, is the togetherness of the soul and the Supreme Self. Devi represents the Supreme Bliss and hence is described elsewhere as Ānandavalli. Devi being 'karuṇāmayī' the Compassionate mother, takes the form of Gauri to help the 'Sādhakas' realise the Truth.

चन्द्रापीडानन्दितमन्दस्मितवक्त्रां
चन्द्रापीडालंकृतनीलालकभाराम् ।
इन्द्रोपेन्द्राद्यर्चितपादाम्बुजयुग्मां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥ ३ ॥

chandrāpīḍānadita-mandasmitavaktrām
candrāpīḍālamkṛta-nīlākabhārām,
indropendrādyarcita-pādāmbujayugmām
gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣim aham īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother, with lotus-like eyes. Her face is marked by a gentle smile, happiness being infused in Her by the moon-crested Lord (Śiva). Her black tresses are adorned by the jewel of moon. Her pair of lotus-like feet are worshipped by gods such as Indra and Upendra.

Śaṅkara visualises the ideal happy pair Śiva-Gaurī. The presence of the moon is fancied by the poet to cause 'ānanda' in Śiva and 'smita' in Gaurī. In the second line there is disharmony in contrast with the harmony in the first line. The black tresses are shown in contrast with the white moon. There is nothing incompatible in the Supreme Being which encompasses everything positive and negative, light and darkness, being and non-being. The scriptures declare that the Supreme Spirit is beyond all the relativities of life. As Śvetāśvatara puts it 'Yadātamas tan na divā na rātriḥ na sat na cāsat' IV.18 - 'When one is rid of ignorance and becomes one with the Supreme, there is no day or night, no being or non-being'. This is negative way of expressing the all-embracing character of the Supreme that Śiva or for that matter Gaurī is. In the hierarchy of Gods like Indra and others the Supreme God-head is Gaurī.

आदिक्षान्तामक्षरमूर्त्या विलसन्तीं
भूते भूते भूतकदम्बप्रसवित्रीम् ।
शब्दब्रह्मानन्दमयीं तां तटिदाभां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥४॥

ādikṣāntām akṣaramuṛtyā vilasantīm
bhūte bhūte bhūtakadamba-prasavitrīm,
sabdabrahmānandamayīm tām taṭidābhām
gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm ahaṁ īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother, with lotus-like eyes. She is in the form of 'akṣara' beginning from 'a' and ending with 'kṣ'. She creates the various living beings in everyone of the cosmic elements. She is of the nature of Sabdabrahman identical with the Supreme Bliss. She is as refulgent as the streak of lightning.

The entire gamut of speech is but a series of permutations and combinations of the string of sounds represented by the letters beginning with 'a' and ending with 'kṣ'. These are the various manifested forms of the akṣara (imperishable) Reality. Bhartṛhari, the expositor of Śabdabrahman says, 'Anādinidhanam brahma śabdatattvam yad akṣaram' in his Vākyapāḍīyam I. 1. "The Word-Reality is that Eternal Thing with no beginning or end". This Word Reality is that Nāda-brahman and it is the source of the world of things made of the cosmic elements. Rightly therefore has the Divine Mother been identified with 'the form of letters' the symbols of Eternal Sound that constitutes the source of the elemental world of tattvas. 'Śabdabrahman' is none other than the Upaniṣadic 'ānandam brahma'.

मूलाधारादुत्थितवीथ्या विधिरन्ध्रं
सौरं चान्द्रं व्याप्य विहरज्वलिताङ्गीम् ।
येयं सूक्ष्मात्सूक्ष्मतनुस्तां सुखरूपां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥५॥

mūlādhārād-utthitavīthyā vidhirandhram
 sauraṁ cāndraṁ vyāpya vihārajvalitāngīm,
 yeyaṁ sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatanus tām sukharūpām
 gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm ahaṁ īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like eyes. The Śakti arises from the Mūlādhāra goes up through the upward path to the Brahmaṇḍa, pervading the Solar and Lunar kalās, assuming a lustrous frame as She is engaged in this sportive act. Her form is subtler than every other subtle thing and is Blissful in content.

This verse refers to the rousing of Kuṇḍalinī Śakti, otherwise called 'Māheśvarī Śakti'. The 'Kuṇḍalinī' located at the base of the spine when aroused by due yogic process to intense activity rushes up through the various ādhāras or loci of power 'Mūlādhāra' etc, along 'Suṣumnā', and on the Candrakalā and Sūryakalā being activated brings in the ecstatic experience of oneness with the Supreme Bliss. This is marked by the unfolding of the 'Sahasradala' in the 'Brahmaṇḍa'. In the penultimate state one experiences supernormal mental faculties and spiritual powers.

नित्यः शुद्धो निष्कल एको जगदीशः

साक्षी यस्याः सर्गविधौ संहरणे च ।

विश्वत्राणक्रीडनलोलां शिवपत्नीं

गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥ ६ ॥

nityaḥ śuddho niṣkala eko jagadīśaḥ

sākṣī yasyāḥ sargavidhau samharaṇe ca,

viśvatraṇa-kṛīḍanalolām siva patnīm

gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm ahaṁ īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like eyes. The One Lord of the world (Śiva) Who is eternal, pure and impartible stands witness to the cosmic deed of creation, and dissolution (of the Universe) by the Consort of Śiva Who is at the same time engaged in the effortless deed of protecting the Universe.

Reference is made here to the cosmic deeds of the Divine Mother. Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda praising the glory of the Divine Mother says in Saundaryalahari (V-24) that Brahmā, Hari and Rudra perform the three-fold cosmic deeds under the supervision of Sadāśiva, Who in turn acts under the direction of Devi. Here Devī Herself is said to perform the cosmic deeds. This only shows that Śiva and Śakti are inseparable. This inseparable nature is underlined clearly in the Umāmaheśvara Stotram “Prapañca-sṛṣṭi-sṭhiti-samhṛtābhyām namonamḥ Śaṅkara-pārvatibhyām” (V-5). Śrutis proclaim the supremacy of Śiva in passages such as “Niṣkalam niṣkriyam śāntam, niravadyam nirañjanam”. (Śv.Up.VI-19). ‘He is part-less free from actions, tranquil, faultless, taintless...’.

यस्याः कुक्षौ लीनमखण्डं जगदण्डं
 भूयो भूयः प्रादुरभूदुत्थितमेव ।
 पत्या सार्धं तां रजताद्रौ विहरन्तीं
 गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥७॥

yasyāḥ kuṅṣau līnaṁ akhaṇḍaṁ jagadaṇḍaṁ
 bhūyo bhūyaḥ prādurobhūd-utthitameva,
 patyā sārḍhaṁ tāṁ rajatādrau viharantīm
 gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm aham īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like face. The entire Universe is embedded in the womb of the Divine Mother. This Universe that was created by Her is being created again and again periodically. I praise Gaurī sporting on the silver mountain (Kalāsa) in the company of Her Lord.

The idea that the Divine Mother is the sole eternal Reality and that the Universe emerges from Her and merges in Her periodically is mooted here to show the utter dependence of the living and non-living on Her. The sports of the Divine Couple on the Kailāsa alluded to here is intended to show that they stand afar uncontaminated by the worldly ills and impurities though ever engrossed in their cosmic deeds designed to lead the souls on their onward path of spiritual progress. It is the functioning of that 'anugrahaśakti' that is called the 'Vihāra' or sport of Gaurī in this verse. The phrase 'Patyā sārđham' reminds us of the Ardhanārīśvara form.

यस्यामोतं प्रोतमशेषं मणिमाला
 सूत्रे यद्वत्क्वापि चरं चाप्यचरं च ।
 तामध्यात्मज्ञानपदव्या गमनीयां
 गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥८॥

yasyām otaṁ protaṁ aśeṣaṁ maṇimālā
 sūtre yadvat kvāpi caraṁ cāpyacaram ca,
 tāṁ adhyātma-jñānapadavyā gamanīyām
 gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm ahaṁ īde.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like eyes. In Her are entwined everything that is moving and non-moving in the same way as in a gem-necklace a number of gems (of varied hue and size)

are interwoven around a string. That Divine Mother is to be attained by the path of spritual knowledge.

Śāṅkara introduces a simile to explain how the living and non-living of varied levels and types in this Universe have been knit together into a beautiful and organic whole, each in its proper place by the great artist, the Kalāvati that Gauri is, in the same way as a skilful goldsmith brings about a beautiful pattern of necklace studded with gems of varied sorts all of them shining beautifully with the golden thread that holds them together being not so visible. The Divine Mother likewise is not fully known though Her creation are an open book for us to see. That Supreme Reality can be comprehended only by a study of scriptures and practice of the ordinances prescribed therein. Vedānta prescribes the jñānamārga as a sure means of 'Mukti' of. "Brahmavidāpnoti param" - 'Knowledge of Brahman leads to Liberation'. (Tait. Up. Brahmānanda Valli. I.)

नानाकारैः शक्तिकदम्बैर्भुवनानि
व्याप्य स्वैरं क्रीडति येयं स्वयमेका ।
कल्याणीं तां कल्पलतामानतिभाजां
गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥९॥

nānākāraiḥ śaktikadambair bhuvanāni
vyāpya svairam kṛīḍati yeyam svayamekā,
kalyāṇīm tāṁ kalpalatām ānatibhājām
gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm aham īḍe.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with the lotus-like face. This Gaurī, alone and by Herself, sports pervading unimpededly all the worlds with Her manifold Śaktis. She is the Auspicious Goddess Who plays the role of Kalpalatā (wish-granting creeper) to those who salute Her.

The Divine Mother is unrivalled in Her power. What She is conscious of She wills, What She wills She does. Her Jñāna Icchā and Kriyā Śaktis act in unison and in all their plenitude. All these are governed by Her 'Anugraha Śakti'. All these Śaktis in varying degrees are brought into play in accordance with the degree of spiritual maturity of the souls in various states, and stages. With Her illimitable and pervasive powers She acts at once and everywhere. Her acts of reward (Anugraha) and punishment (Nigraha) are guided by the singular motive of bringing about ultimately the Śreyas to the soul. Hence She is 'Kalyāni' the Auspicious One. As Mūka Kavi extols "avanatajanānukampām anukampākūlam asmad anukūlām". The Goddess seated at Kāncī near the bank of the river Kampā is indeed partial to us who offer obeisance to Her Who is full of compassion (Ārya śatakam, V.82)

आशापाशक्लेशविनाशं विदधानां

पादाम्भोजध्यानपराणां पुरुषाणाम् ।

ईशामीशार्धाङ्गहरां तामभिरामां

गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥ १० ॥

āsāpāśakleśavināśaṁ vidadhānām

pādāmbhoja-dhyānaparāṅām puruṣāṅām,

īśām īśārdhāṅgaharām tām abhirāmām

gaurīm ambām amburuhākṣīm aham īḍe.

I adore Gaurī, the Divine Mother with lotus-like face. She destroys the sufferings arising out of desire and bonds of persons who are in the habit of meditating on Her lotus-like feet. This Goddess Who has appropriated half of the body of Śiva is One radiating beauty all around.

Desire (āśā) is the root of all evils, proclaim the scriptures of all religions. The Gitā declares “Kāma eṣa..... mahāśanaḥ mahāpāpmā”..... ‘Desire is all-consuming and great sin’.

प्रातःकाले भावविशुद्धः प्रणिधाना-

द्वक्तया नित्यं जल्पति गौरीदशकं यः ।

वाचां सिद्धिं संपदमग्र्यां शिवभक्तिं

तस्यावश्यं पर्वतपुत्री विदधाति ॥ ११ ॥

prātaḥkāle bhāvaviśuddhaḥ praṇidhānāt
bhaktyā nityaṁ jalpati gaurī daśakaṁ yaḥ,
vācāṁ siddhiṁ sampadaṁ agryāṁ śiva bhaktiṁ
tasyāvaśyaṁ parvataputrī vidadhāti.

One who utters early in the morning with thoughts pure and single-minded devotion everyday this decad of verses in praise of Gaurī, to him Pārvatī shall vouchsafe surely power of speech immense prosperity and devotion to Śiva.