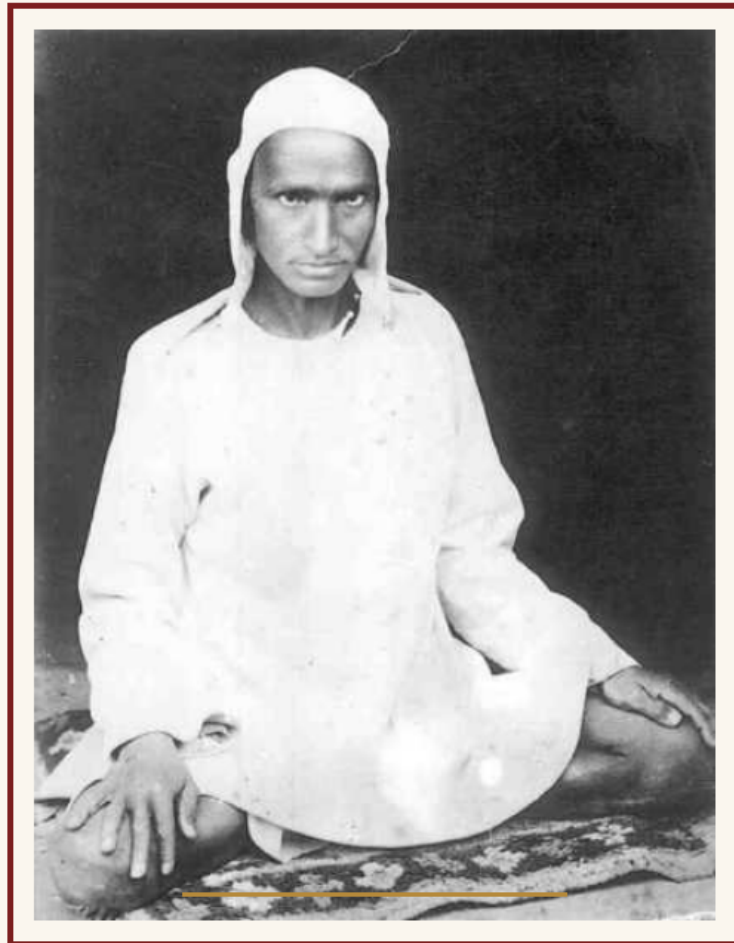




Śrī Sadguru Stuti Kusumāñjali

A Handful of Flowers in Praise of the Sadguru

Śāstrī Viṣṇudatt Mīśra · 1957

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Śrī Sadguru Stuti
Kusumāñjali

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with the author's own Ūrmilā Commentary

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with the author's own *Ūrmilā* Commentary

Composed and expounded by Śāstrī Viṣṇudatt Miśra, Sāhityāchārya
First published: Vora & Co., Bombay, 1957

SANSKRIT AND HINDI TO ENGLISH

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A Handful of Flowers in Praise of the Sadguru

With the author's own Ūrmilā Commentary

Original Sanskrit and Hindi: *Śrī Sadguru Stuti Kusumāñjali, Śrī Ūrmilā-bhāṣya* Composed and expounded by **Śāstrī Viṣṇudatt Miśra, Sāhityāchārya**

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Om. Obeisance to the Great Munīndra (Lord of Sages) — the Perfected One, Lord of the perfected, the venerable master of yoga, adorned with every excellence, who dwells in the caves of Kailāś: **Śrī Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā** (the Bābā of Haiḍākhān).

(a meditation for repetition)

Om. Obeisance to the Sadguru (the true guru — throughout this book, Haiḍākhāṇḍī Bābājī himself).

*na guror adhikaṁ na guror adhikam,
na guror adhikaṁ na guror adhikam.
śiva śāsanataḥ śiva śāsanataḥ,
śiva śāsanataḥ śiva śāsanataḥ. || 1 ||*

There is nothing higher than the guru, nothing higher than the guru,
nothing higher than the guru, nothing higher than the guru.
So Śiva ordains, so Śiva ordains,
so Śiva ordains, so Śiva ordains. || 1 ||

*idam eva śivaṁ idam eva śivaṁ,
idam eva śivaṁ idam eva śivaṁ.
mama śāsanato mama śāsanato,
mama śāsanato mama śāsanataḥ. || 2 ||*

This alone is auspicious, this alone is auspicious,
this alone is auspicious, this alone is auspicious.
So I ordain, so I ordain,
so I ordain, so I ordain. || 2 ||

*stabakaiḥ aṣṭa saṅkhyākair nānā kṛti guṇānvitaiḥ,
divyaḥ sumanair nirmīto añjaliḥ stvāṁ prasādayet.*

Made of eight bouquets, each woven of many workings and virtues —
may this divine handful of blossoms find favour with You.

To the lotus feet of the Perfected One, Lord of the perfected, the venerable master of yoga, adorned with every excellence, the great Munīndra who dwells on Kailāś — offered in all humility.

The Dedication

(1)

siddha siddheśvarādhīśa! siddha siddhendra vandita!
bhṛṅgāyatām stavaṁ divyaṁ śrīmatām pāda-padmayoḥ.

Perfected One, sovereign of the lords of perfection! You whom the chief of the perfected adore! Let this divine hymn become a bee at the lotus of Your blessed feet.

(1) O Lord of the perfected! Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! The lords of perfection bow to you. May this hymn of verses become a honey-bee, and find its place upon the Lord's lotus feet.

(2)

śrīman munīndra! amita-prabha! yogi-rājan!
jñānābja-bhāskara mahan-mahanīya-kīrte!
tvat-preraṇā-sphurita-hīraka-ratna-bhāśvarām
tvat-kīrti-hāra-latikām tubhyam arpayāmi.

Blessed Munīndra! Boundless in radiance! King among yogis!
Sun to the lotus of wisdom, whose glory is great among the great!
This slender garland of Your fame — bright with diamonds and gems that Your own inspiration
has kindled — I offer back to You.

(2) O lord of sages! King among yogis! Boundless is your splendour. You are the sun to the lotus of wisdom, shining forever in the one heart. Strung with diamond, jewel and pearl obtained by your grace, this slender garland of your virtues is laid at your feet.

Preface

by Śrī Guru-charaṇāśrit [Mahendra Mahārāj — “one who has taken refuge at the Lord’s feet”]

*sadguruḥ sad-guṇādhāro dhyāna-gamyah sadāśrayah,
satyaṁ param chidānandaṁ saṁsmarāmi hi sarvadā.*

The Sadguru, ground of every good quality, reached by meditation, refuge without end — the supreme Truth, Consciousness and Bliss: on Him I meditate always.

Every person of discernment knows this truth: no unreal, visible thing has ever satisfied a human being. The soul’s search for truth, its honest striving after wholeness, its many disciplines and observances — none of these could bring it face to face with an undivided peace. The one great cause of realising truth is the grace of the great souls, and that alone.

“By the grace of the great, and by that alone.”

That power of grace is present everywhere, always, and equally; and yet we go on being denied the winning of it. The chief obstacle in us is aversion. Put away this aversion born of turning the face aside, and stand before the supremely compassionate one — the sole refuge, the first home of all happiness and all beauty, the very form of the power beyond the beyond, the friend of all, the venerable great one.

There are many roads into that happy refuge. The best of them is *stuti* (a hymn of praise) — that which makes known the Name, the virtues, the *līlā* (divine play — the Lord’s acts in the world), and the very form of the Lord. This practice of reciting a *stotra* is very ancient. However excellent the service, worship and adoration a *sādhaka* (spiritual aspirant) may offer, until some praise has been sung at the end of it, a sense of incompleteness lingers in the heart.

Moved by this feeling, the *Śrī Sadguru Stuti Kusumāñjali* is now published for the good of those who love the spiritual life. Full of both wisdom and devotion, this sweet book — itself of the nature of supreme bliss — will prove of the highest use to all who long for the good.

Its author is the *Sāhityāchārya* Paṇḍit Śrī Viṣṇudatt Śāstrī: a man who goes to the heart of things, deeply feeling, and learned in literature, Purāṇa and philosophy. He is the eldest son of Paṇḍit Śrī Chiraṇjīvlālji Miśra of Alwar. Descended from the Miśra line of the royal house, he is keeper of the temple of Śrī Lakṣmaṇajī granted by the crown. By the Lord’s grace this family is rich in learning, devotion, wealth, kinsfolk and standing. He is a full vessel of Śrī Sadgurudev’s grace. That unearned grace of Śrī Sadgurudev upon him, and his own steadfast devotion, are the real cause of this holy book

coming into being. That a work so sound in doctrine, so strengthening to the wise, and so praised by the learned, should have been composed within the short span of a single fortnight is proof of the extraordinary gift the Sadguru has bestowed.

At the close of this short statement, wishing well to author, publisher and readers alike, I lay down my pen with a heart full of this hope: that through the hearing and pondering of these grace-filled verses, the whole company of mankind may find happiness and peace. Praise of the Sadguru does not merely set earnest seekers on the road to the good — the very hearing and pondering of it makes them, at once, the good itself.

Ah, brothers! How far can one tell the greatness of this jewel of a book, filled with the worth and glory of the Sadgurudev — that descent of Śiva, the Supreme Brahman in form, adorned with every excellence? Come! O man scorched by the three afflictions, come! Do not squander the priceless treasure of your life, which is speech. Its whole meaning lies in this: that without hesitation, in faith and trust, you recite this life and this hymn daily. Let the seekers gather and sing it together. Hear it from the lotus mouth of Śrī Sūta himself: *“That utterance by which the Lord’s most holy glory is sung is the most delightful and the most pleasing, and seems new again at every moment. From it the taste of supreme bliss goes on being known for endless time. The ocean of a man’s grief is dried up forever by the singing of the glory of the Lord of noble renown.”*

*tad eva ramyaṁ ruchiraṁ navam navam,
tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam.
tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇaṁ nṛṇāṁ,
yad uttama-śloka-yaśo ‘nugīyate.*

That alone is lovely, that alone is radiant, that alone is new and new again;
that alone is the mind’s unceasing festival;
that alone dries up the ocean of men’s sorrow —
wherein the glory of the Lord of noble renown is sung.

॥ Om Śāntiḥ ॥

“Śrī Guru-charaṇāśrit”

A Humble Submission

by the author

In this boundless and unavailing ocean of becoming, the Sadguru alone is the one incomparable helmsman. Without the compassion of Śrī Sadgurudev, not even those endowed with divine and more-than-earthly power — the avatāras themselves — are able to make the crossing of this sea of worldly existence entire and complete. It was to make this subtlest of first principles plain that Śrī Rām, the perfect man of righteousness, and Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, the perfect man of divine play, root of joy and full descent of the Lord's every art, took refuge with the great sages Vaśiṣṭha and Sāṇḍīpani.

It was to unlock this same piercing secret that Śrī Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsji Mahārāj set it down in letters of gold in the *Rāmcharitmānas*:

*guru binu bhava nidhi tarai na koī,
jaum̐ biraṁchi saṁkara sama hoī.*

Without the guru none crosses the ocean of becoming,
though he be the equal of Brahmā or of Śaṅkar.

That is: a man may possess the majesty of Brahmā and of Śaṅkar, and even so, without the grace of Śrī Sadgurudev he cannot cross this unfathomable and hard-passaged sea of becoming.

When we take the word *guru* and explain it by the rules of grammar, the analysis runs *gr̥ṇāti* — *upadiśati, iti guruḥ*: “he speaks forth, he instructs; therefore, guru.” By this, the guru is the one who instructs in first principles.

Whether the instruction is spoken, or given by a sign, or given as a silent exposition, in all three of these forms it carries — each more than the last — the power to destroy ignorance and worldly affliction root and branch.

That is to say: instruction by a sign is more powerful than spoken instruction, and destroys the darkness of ignorance faster and more completely; and beyond both of these, the instruction given by the Sadguru through silent exposition possesses the more-than-earthly capacity to make the tablet of the heart blaze, in a single instant, with the divine light of a thousand suns.

Just as in this world the Supreme Brahman is one only — as the words of scripture record, “*ekam evādvitīyaṁ brahma neha nānāsti kiñchana*” (“Brahman is one alone, without a second; there is no manifoldness here at all”) — so too the supreme guru is one only. But just as that Brahman, joined with divine and more-than-earthly power, though one, is soaked through the whole moving and un-moving universe with its divine power of consciousness, and no element whatever is empty of its be-

ing, so too the supreme guru is soaked through the hearts of all the universes with his divine power, whose nature is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss.

The meaning of this is that whoever a particular person's guru may be — whether he is endowed with the greatest of all power and strength of soul, or is the least of the least (in the eyes of others) — for that particular person he alone is Brahman made visible, the giver of the fruits of the four aims of life. For consider: in some great city, in a hundred thousand places, in ten million houses, small bulbs and large are fitted, and all of them shine by the electric power produced from a single power station. Let a hand come into direct contact with the wire of even the smallest of those bulbs, and that great electric power will, by its own attraction, strike the man senseless in an instant — exactly as it strikes down one who touches the wire of some great bulb. The reason appears to be simply this: that the electric power present equally in both the small and the great centres of light is one and the same principle, arriving equally from that one great power station. In the same way, whomever we hold to be our guru, though he be the least — the very principle that shines out in the greatest of teachers is the one root principle by which the heart of every guru is lit. Therefore, since all are connected to one and the same centre, all are quickened by one and the same power; for the word *guru*, being without beginning, finds its full meaning by many roads in that one supreme Sadgurudev, Śiva-Brahman. And so, just as “*sarva-deva-namaskāraḥ keśavaṁ prati gachchhati*” — the salutation made to the whole company of the gods goes to Keśava, since he is the root of all the gods, and is offered to the vast supreme Being — in the same way the faith, devotion and love shown towards every guru in the world, however many they be, is likewise laid at the feet of that same supreme Śrī Sadguru, Śiva-Brahman.

To nourish this very truth, the sages who made the scriptures bowed to the guru as being the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (the Great Lord), and of the Supreme Brahman made visible, in such sayings as:

*gurur brahmā gurur viṣṇuḥ gurur devo maheśvaraḥ,
guruḥ sāksāt para-brahma tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ.*

The guru is Brahmā, the guru is Viṣṇu, the guru is the god Maheśvara;
the guru is the Supreme Brahman made visible — to that blessed guru, obeisance.

For just as all rivers, small and great, come together and find their end in the sea from which they first rose, so in the same way the worship of all gurus whatsoever is worship of that supreme guru; and worship of Śrī Sadgurudev, who is Sāmba Sadāśiva (Śiva together with Ambā, his Śakti) in image, is worship of one's own guru.

To quicken this same principle, by his own divine and more-than-earthly power of consciousness he took pity on this worm of worldly things —

*jehim para kṛpā karahim jana jānī,
kavi ura ajira nachāvahim vānī.*

On whom he shows grace, knowing him for his own,
in that poet's courtyard heart he sets speech dancing.

— and according to such words as these, raining down the nectar of grace and entering the heart in person, he showed the supreme kindness of having this “*divine hymn*” set down in writing: a hymn in whose every line there lives an undiminished power to melt the heart and to water the lotus feet of the blessed Lord, whose nature is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss, with an unbroken flow of the tears of joy — and, with it, the supreme capacity for self-surrender.

Therefore: by this effort, obtained by the direct grace of Śrī Sadgurudev, set down in writing by that grace, made for the sake of that grace, and free of all sectarian partisanship — do you also show the kindness of worshipping your own gurus and so becoming vessels of grace. For this is the worship of the wholly pure principle of guru-hood, and there is in it no distinction of sect whatever.

By reciting it without ceasing, worship your own chosen deities; fill the purified inner being with the flowing nectar of joy; obtain, according to your desire, the fruits of the four aims of life — *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (means), *kāma* (desire) and *mokṣa* (liberation); and, becoming vessels of joy in this world and beyond it, attain the sense of a work well done.

Wishing you well,

the servant of the learned, Viṣṇudatt

Śrī Munīndra Sūkta

*kailāsa girivare ramye nivasantaḥ suśāntibhiḥ,
taṁ munim satataṁ vande sadā kāruṇya-rūpiṇam. || 1 ||*

Dwelling in deep peace on the lovely great mountain Kailāś —
that sage, whose form is compassion always, I ceaselessly adore. || 1 ||

*yasya smaraṇa-mātreṇa siddho bhavati sādhaḥ,
sadguruṁ tam ahaṁ vande haiḍākhānaṁ vāsinam. || 2 ||*

By the mere remembrance of whom the seeker becomes perfected —
that Sadguru, dweller in Haiḍākhān, I adore. || 2 ||

*yasya kṛpā-kaṭākṣeṇa dhanyo bhavati mānavaḥ,
tasya pādayor ekaṁ praṇamāmi niranṭaram. || 3 ||*

By one sidelong glance of whose grace a man becomes blessed —
at his feet, unceasingly, I bow. || 3 ||

*komalaṁ hṛdayaṁ yasya komalaṁ yasya bhāṣaṇam,
daṇḍo 'pi komalo yasya komalāṅgaṁ namāmy ahaṁ. || 4 ||*

Whose heart is tender, whose speech is tender,
whose very chastisement is tender — to that tender form I bow. || 4 ||

*drṣṭim dayāmayīm kṛtvā yaḥ paśyati charācharam,
lokopakāra-nirato rāga-dveṣādi-varjitaḥ. || 5 ||*

Who, making his gaze all mercy, looks upon the moving and the unmoving;
given over to the good of the world, free of liking and loathing alike. || 5 ||

*sadguruḥ sad-guṇādhāro dhyāna-gamyah sadāśayaḥ,
satyaṁ param chidānandaṁ saṁsmarāmi hi sarvadā. || 6 ||*

The Sadguru, ground of every good quality, reached by meditation, ever-gracious in intent —
the supreme Truth, Consciousness and Bliss: on Him I meditate always. || 6 ||

*harir eva harer bhakto harer dhyāna-parāyaṇaḥ,
harer nāmāmṛtaṁ pītvā harer dhāma param vrajet. || 7 ||*

Hari's devotee is Hari himself, wholly given to meditation on Hari;
having drunk the nectar of Hari's name, he goes to Hari's supreme abode. || 7 ||

*yo dadāti cha bālānām sad-jñānam tu sudurlabham,
sarva-sādhana-hīno 'pi tvam ekam avalambanam. || 8 ||*

You who give even to children that true knowledge which is so hard to win —
though I am destitute of every means, You alone are my support. || 8 ||

*mahā-mārtaṇḍa-rūpeṇa moha-dhvānta-vināśakaḥ,
sarva-bhūtātma-rūpo 'si mahendrasya cha jīvanam. || 9 ||*

In the form of the great sun, destroyer of the darkness of delusion;
You are the Self of all beings, and the very life of Mahendra. || 9 ||

The Ārti Song

|| *ārti gītikā* ||

Perfected One, whom the whole world adores, ornament of the heart —
ender of the three cities, lord of the three cities!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Brow beautiful with the three lines of ash, head crested with the Gaṅgā's waves —
Śaṅkar, the supremely fair!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Eyes reddened as with wine, releaser from the fear of becoming —
red-lipped, Lord of all!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Crown of matted locks ringed with serpents, Śiva who wears the moon —
brow adorned with the hoods of snakes!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Throat turned blue by the drinking of poison, nectar to the eyes —
in beauty surpassing the god of love!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Adorned with white ash, splendid with ash, breaker of the fear of becoming —
whose banner is the bull, Lord of the universe!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

In tiger-skin, of peaceful aspect, destroyer of Śiva's foes —
endowed with the power of Śivā!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Bearing the Pināka bow, splendid with noose and goad, releaser from the noose of Yama —
Paśupati, of purifying aspect!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Serpent at the throat, garland of skulls, Śambhu who wears the moon —
lovely as the autumn moon!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Āśutoṣa, Lord of all, the wild one, giver beyond measure —
the supremely merciful giver!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Viśvanāth, upholder of the world, Lord of the universe, borne on the bull —
eye of the world, stealer of hearts!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

Dweller in Haiḍākḥān, dweller in every heart —
the yoga-lord of Siddhāśram!
Hail Śiva! Om Hare!

The Life

(Jagdīś Prasād, M.A.)

(1) His Nature

Obeisance to the venerable teachers of every land and every religious tradition. In all these teachers Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev has been present in the form of grace. Giving instruction and initiation in right conduct, and giving the power to carry religious traditions forward, Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev has himself remained without name and without form. Age after age — from the making of the world to its dissolution — this alone has been Sadgurudev's work. To those who wanted liberation he has given liberation. To those who asked for *dharma* he has given *dharma*.

In this way Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev is the wish-fulfilling tree, and has been the giver of all four aims of life: *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*.

So far as our searching has gone, this much can be said: that upon the famous founders of religions and the venerable heads of the traditions, openly or in secret, the grace of this same Sadgurudev has rested; and upon whatever founders or teachers are yet to come, this same grace will rest. And even so, his name and form will never be exactly known. The reason is that Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev is the one centre of the supreme Mother, the great Wisdom — the sovereign emperor, that is — and is Sadāśiva in his very nature. This is why, wherever he has openly played out his human *līlā*, no one has been able to grasp his form rightly. The photographs taken of him at Prayāg bear this same truth out.

The difference between the two pictures is so plain that Major Basu — who took them — exclaimed on seeing them that either both pictures were of Sadgurudev, or they were of two different men. Adam the photographer too was left astonished by them. And the famous Lama-yogi of Tibet, on seeing this picture of the form of Śaṅkar, sank into deep thought; after some time he said that it was altogether impossible to tell in which of the highest states of yoga Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev abides perpetually.

His state — his own natural being — cannot easily be grasped by speech or by the mind; to paint it in words is like a sandpiper trying to drink the sea dry. Looking at his state, this is how it seems: as though the tide were rising all around him in an ocean of grace; or as though countless *bhāva-samādhis* (trances of devotional feeling) were dancing about him, drunk with joy. It was by knowing this truth that Sahajobāī (the woman saint of the Dādū tradition, famed for setting the guru above God himself) settled upon the Sadguru as her supreme object of worship, and held him higher even

than Rām. The proofs she offers out of her own most subtle experience run like this:

However pleased the Lord Rām is made by devotion to God, he is made ten million times more pleased when his devotee leaves him and gives himself to the service and worship of Sadgurudev.

The Lord Rām, according to the soul's ripened past acts, gives it birth in the world and turns it round the wheel of coming and going; and Sadgurudev sets it free from that coming and going.

The Lord Rām has arranged for five thieves to live with every soul, who torment it helplessly as though it were an orphan; and Sadgurudev frees the soul from those thieves' grip.

The Lord Rām drops the soul into the sweet snare of family and binds it fast with the fetters of possessive love; and Sadgurudev cuts those fetters through.

The Lord Rām has so entangled the soul's intellect and mind in sickness and enjoyment that even the greatest of the wise cannot get free of them — *[text lost: the page is torn]* gives the soul the power of yoga *[text lost]* and carries it clean out of them.

[text lost] in the soul's ego-grasping such a vast body of works and duties *[text lost]* has grown, that deliverance from it is altogether impossible; *[text lost]* Sadgurudev, by granting the vision of the Self, quiets the soul's ego-grasping *[text lost]*. *[text lost]* the Lord has given the soul the power to see everything, but *[text lost]* has not given it the power to see himself — Rām; and *[text lost]* Sadgurudev, giving it a lamp, shows him to it.

Again, the Lord Rām keeps the soul terrified by setting before it the two conditions of bondage and liberation; and Sadgurudev, by his own sweet speech, lifts the soul clear above that bewilderment.

Sahajobāi says: on Sadgurudev I have laid down body and mind alike. I will let Rām go, but Sadgurudev I will not leave!!!

[the first half of each couplet is lost — the page is torn]

...I will not forget the guru; I do not look on Hari as the guru's equal.
 ...gave me birth in the world; the guru freed me from coming and going.
 ...set thieves upon me; the guru snatched me away, orphaned as I was.
 ...cast me in; the guru cut the fetter of possessive love.
 ...made; the guru made me a yogi and freed me from it all.
 ...made; the guru showed me the form of my own Self.
 ...hid it from all; the guru gave a lamp and showed it to me.
 ...brought the two conditions upon me; the guru wiped away every delusion.
 ...I offer up body and mind; I will not leave the guru — I will let Hari go.

[text lost] Sadgurudev, whose form is the immortal Perfected One, Lord of the perfected, Sadāśiva, Dakṣiṇāmūrti *[text lost]* is her chosen Lord. His blessed body is made of divine elements, and *[text lost]* at one and the same time ten million *[text lost]*. His body is of pure Being, Consciousness and Bliss alone. *[text lost]* the supremely generous blessed body of Sadgurudev — what deeds, what deeds *[text lost]* a matter beyond telling!!!

By the mass of light at his brow, the emperor of spiritual practice *[text lost]* abides. His repetition of the Name flows on like the stream of the Bhāgīrathī, *[text lost]* ceaselessly.

To taste the *līlās* of Sāketa-loka, of Śiva-loka and of Goloka, he takes body after body, again and again, and wandering in delight *[text lost]* remains absorbed in the trances of devotional feeling; and

all [text lost] the transports show themselves in his blessed form.

His love for Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa and the rest — who put ten million gods of love to shame — [text lost] is beyond describing, and out of a natural unappeasable longing he stays sunk in the ocean of that sweetness.

He is a supreme lover of the holy abodes, and his *darśan* is to be had especially [text lost] at the places of pilgrimage.

(2) The Land of His Play

It is supposed that from Mānasarovar [text lost] to Chitraśilā (Rānībāg-Kāṭhgodām) [text lost] the mountains are, eight or ten thousand years ago, snow [text lost]. In the formulas of the rites of purification, “Kūrmāñchal” [text lost] — *himavat parvataika-deśe*, that is, in one region of the mountain named Himavān [text lost]. From that formula it is plain that all the mountains of Kūrmāñchal were once [text lost]; and wherever the snow grew less, there settlement [text lost]; and in that age the many caves of the sages and the perfected great souls [text lost]. In the district [text lost], in the eastern part of the Ṣaṣṭikhāta pargana — “Chhakhātā” — Kailās is renowned. Upon it Bāṇāsura set up a *liṅga* at the close of the Dvāpara age, and performed fierce austerity and the worship of Śiva. To the east of Mount Kailās, in the Chaughar tract, stands the mountain called “Devguru” — on it was the āśram of Devguru Bṛhaspati (Bṛhaspati, preceptor of the gods).

This Mount Kailās is wholly deserted. On the day of Śivarātri a fair is held here. Its glory is equal to that of “Jāganāth” and “Mṛtyuñjaya”. To devotees of faith these grant the fruit their hearts desire; and by worshipping Śiva here to ward off untimely death, even incurable sicknesses are taken away. For the getting of a son, many women keep vigil all night on Mahāśivarātri with an unbroken lamp in their hands, and their heart’s wish is fulfilled. In early winter the beauty of Kailās becomes utterly ravishing. In a year when the rains have been good, the mountain stays covered with snow through the cold season; and then its beauty is beyond describing and altogether lovely. At the foot of Kailās is a small village whose name is “Haiḍākhān”. Here Śrī Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadgurudev Munīndra Mahārāj had a rest-house and a Śiva temple built. This happened in about the year 1863. When it happened in the village of Haiḍākhān, Śrī Mahārāj’s name among the common people became simply “Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā” — the Bābā of Haiḍākhān — and the people of Kūrmāñchal still know Munīndra Mahārāj by no other name than “Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā”.

Facing the temple, across the Gautamī Gaṅgā, is a cave made by the gods, which from within seems exactly like a temple. Going two or three yards inside and looking upward, one sees a vast dome like a temple’s. The mere sight of the cave brings the mind to deep peace. This holy place is described in the *Puṇya-smṛti* in these words:

*haiḍākhān vichitra hai dhāmā, pāvan amita sukhad viśrāmā,
gotamgaṅgā garjati niśadin, siddha surāsur archata anudin.*

Haiḍākhān is a wondrous abode, holy beyond measure, a resting place of joy;
the Gautamī Gaṅgā thunders night and day; perfected ones, gods and demons worship there
without pause.

The beauty of Śrī Kailās's peak — at the very sight of it longing is born in the mind.
 At the mountain's foot is a lovely cave; the cave the scriptures speak of is greatest of all.
 Bright with all manner of blossom and fresh leaf — he knows it who has seen it with his own eyes.
 The wild deer roam within the woodland, and all forget their enmity with one another,
 holding the highest vow of harmlessness; by the sage's grace they have forgotten their own natures.
 Since the Lord took up his dwelling here, even the garden of Indra seems a desolate place.
 All happiness is easily had by those who serve this ground, giving body, speech and mind to the Lord's feet.
 With his own mouth Śrī Muni praised it — the glory that was hidden he made known.
 Munīndra looked, and it pleased his heart greatly; rejoicing, he made his dwelling there and clasped it to his breast.
 Supremely pure and still is this mountain woodland; let the hearts of seekers be drawn to it.
 Blessed, blessed is this our place of pilgrimage, where the moving Śiva takes his play.

Besides Haiḍākhān, Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev has many āśrams in this region of Kūrmāñchal — for example: (1) Kaṭghariā Āśram (Haldevānī); (2) Khurpātāl Āśram (Nainītāl); (3) Siddhāśram (Śītalākhet, Almorā); (4) Chheḍū Āśram (Almorā). In the same way, in several hidden caves of the Kūrmāñchal region, Śrī Śrī Sadgurudev has performed fierce austerity, seated in one posture for three and four hundred years at a stretch. Up to now the following caves have been found: (1) the cave of Bāmsulī (beyond Rānībāg); (2) the cave of Saljāgrām (Śītalākhet); (3) the cave of Riḍaṇī-Dvārson; (4) the cave of Haiḍākhān.

(3) His Person

In the *Śrī Śivapurāṇa*, Brahmājī has recorded many descents of Śiva, who came down in the form of yogis, great souls and saints for the sake of making the Vedas and the scriptures known.

In the first age there were among the sages such perfected yogis as Sanatkumāra, Nārada, Yājñavalkya, Vaśiṣṭha, Parāśara, Dattātreya and Śukadeva.

In the middle age there appeared such great men, perfected masters of the science of yoga, as Govindāchārya, Jagadguru Śaṅkarāchārya, Matsyendranāth, Gorakhnāth, Bhartṛhari and Samarth Rāmdās; and Haridās, Tulsīdās, Sūrdās, Bāmākhēpā...

In the present age too there have arisen such great souls as Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa, Svāmī Rāmatīrtha and Ramaṇa Maharṣi.

In the holy land of Uttarākhaṇḍ, from the caves of Śaṅkarāchārya and Toṭākāchārya at Jyotirmath onward, many caves of yogis are to be found here and there. Several caves in Uttarākhaṇḍ are known by the name "the cave of the Perfected One". At the beginning of the twentieth century of the Vikram era [the mid-1800s CE] two great souls were very famous in Kūrmāñchal — Aughar Bābā and Paramhans Bābā — and their āśrams were at Bhuvālī and Nainītāl. Somvārī Bābā of Padampurī (Paramānandjī Mahārāj) was likewise a supreme yogi of the perfected order; his going to Śiva-loka took place in about the year 1930.

The manifesting of Siddha Siddheśvar Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj has been most remarkable and without parallel, and his wealth of yoga beyond compare and beyond description. Besides the land of India, accounts of his supremely gracious deeds continue to be heard in Europe and other foreign parts as well. Paṇḍit Śrī Rāmdattī, the astrologer, says: “The Mahārāj of Haiḍākhān is a perfected yogi. Because he remains absorbed in the bliss of Brahman, established in undifferentiated *samādhi*, he stays wholly untouched by the outer world, and speaks very little.”

How remarkable the person of such an immortal, perfected great soul, merged in Brahman, must be to remember — that only he can know who has had *darśan* of him even once, even in a dream.

Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj’s whole body stays lit with a mass of divine radiance. His body is very tall. The hair of his head is short, and always stays exactly that length — it neither grows nor lessens. His age has never seemed more than fifty years. His bodily strength too is beyond compare: he lifts great mountain boulders without effort. Climbing the mountain slopes his breath does not fail him, and no one has ever seen him breathing hard at such a time. His body is so soft that when one presses it, it seems as though there were no bones in it at all. To look at him, his age seems ordinarily about fifty years; and for the twenty-five or thirty years that his *līlā* went on openly in Kūrmāñchal, everyone saw him at just that age. He was never seen either weak or ill. His arms are very long, hanging down to the knees.

His dress accords with the ancient culture of India. He wears the tuft and the sacred thread. No one has ever seen him wearing ochre cloth. He wears a white loincloth, a *dhotī*, a long *kurtā*, and a four-cornered coat of the *mirjā* kind. On his head he wears a cap coming down to the ears, or sometimes winds a yard or a yard and a half of cloth about it like a turban. Most of the people of Kūrmāñchal have seen Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj in just this dress. The dress in which the learned men of Europe have seen Śrī Mahārāj is very remarkable indeed. When Nils Olof Kriksander first saw him in a hotel in France, he was in European dress, and was using a European language with complete ease. But when he gave *darśan* to this man and his wife in Moscow, he was adorned in a Russian shirt and cap. Śrī Sadgurudev’s use of language is likewise most remarkable. He talks very slowly. The language Śrī Mahārāj uses is some divine speech, whose meaning everyone comes to understand.

His manner of writing too is most remarkable, and from this as well it is known that he is a man of the Purāṇic ages. It appears that he uses an ancient script resembling Brāhmī. From the script of the letters found written on the front page of the *Gumānī-nīti* Rāmāyaṇ, this becomes entirely clear. Research in this direction is as yet unfinished, and it is to be hoped that when this research is complete, new things will come to light which will prove a particular gladness in the life of the people.

In the period when his life was going on openly among the people of Kūrmāñchal, Śrī Mahārāj’s daily observance was of the most ancient, sage-like kind. Besides bathing and the twilight devotions, a particular relish was seen in him for *yajña*, sacrifice, *havan* and the austerity of the five fires. At Heḍākhān, at Panyālī-Kaṭghariā and at Śītalākhēt he had Śiva temples built. In many places he had platforms raised beneath *bilva* trees and Śiva *liṅgas* established. The fire-offering of sesame and ghee was of course performed; but the offering of sesame and barley mixed with water was the more famous with him. The oblation given was of water alone, in the place of ghee. In the final oblation

too a stream of water did the work of ghee. And it was not a matter of two or four *sers* of water: sometimes several *maunds* of water were offered into the sacrificial fire. When a sacrifice of this kind of his was going on, people miles away could see the rising flame of the fire, seven or eight yards high. In the hot season he would kindle fire on all four sides and perform the austerity of the five fires. Setting down a pot of water and wearing only a loincloth, Śrī Śrī Sadāśiva Sadgurudev would seat himself on his mat. The fire would blaze up from all four sides and meet in the middle. His figure would be hidden in the midst of that raging fire. Several hours afterwards, when the fire had quieted somewhat and Śrī Mahārāj became visible, his blessed body would be seen shining like the young sun. The pot of water would grow so hot that if anyone put a hand to it, the hand was badly burned.

Śrī Mahārāj performed many other sacrifices with great ceremony here and there. Recitations and discourses on the sacred stories, week-long readings, the Gītā, the Rāmāyaṇ and the rest took place many times over. Great feasts were held. Hundreds of sādhus, brāhmaṇas and guests were fed daily on the occasions of these festivals. Several ascetic Lamas — that is, yoga-practitioners of Tibet — were seen with him in Kūrmāñchal. At Panyālī-Kaṭghariā two Tāntric Lamas were seen performing their rites in a tent beside him for a whole month. Wherever he went, crowds of onlookers gathered everywhere. Heaps of dried fruit and sweets would pile up. Who brought them, who had them distributed, who ate them — with all this Śrī Mahārāj had no concern whatever. Costly clothes were among the offerings too. If good managers turned up at such a time, then proper arrangements were made: guests were fed, worthy men received *prasād*, and the money offered went to the use of sacrifice, oblation, sacred recitation, Purāṇa readings and feasts. But if self-interested devotees came as managers, they tied up bundles of fruit, sweets and dried fruit and carried them off to their own houses, distributing only a very little as *prasād*. Śrī Sadgurudev’s attention never went that way at all. In the language of the Rāmāyaṇ, his condition was that of one unshakably merged in Brahman:

*umā je rāma charana rata vigata kāma mada krodha,
nija prabhumaya dekhahin jagata kehiana karahin virodha.*

Umā, those who are devoted to Rāma’s feet, free of desire, pride and anger,
see the world as filled with their own Lord — with whom, then, should they quarrel?

How ancient Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj’s blessed body is, and how purified by austerity, is proved by a great many accounts. Once a devotee asked Śrī Mahārāj what was the cause of the scars of wounds on his back. Śrī Mahārāj said that these wounds had been received in the war of the Mahābhārata. From this saying it is proved that his body belongs to the Dvāpara age, of which about five thousand years have now passed. The era which Dharmarāj Yudhiṣṭhira set going from the time of his Rājasūya sacrifice — that Yudhiṣṭhira era now stands at about 5000. From this it is inferred that Śrī Mahārāj’s age is upwards of five thousand years. By bearing so ancient a body, Śrī Mahārāj proves this saying of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* — that saints merged in Brahman obtain release even from the faults of old age and death:

*jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya mām āśritya yatanti ye,
te brahma tad viduḥ kṛtsnam adhyātmaṁ karma chākhilam. || 7.29 ||*

They who, taking refuge in Me, strive for release from old age and death —
they know that Brahman entire, the Self, and action in its wholeness. || *Bhagavad Gītā* 7.29 ||

The person of Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj is self-luminous, Sadāśiva in its very nature. From the account in the *Puṇya-smṛti* it is plain that Śrī Mahārāj's person is the whole wealth of yoga gathered into one: "Śrī Mahārāj is a god so full of mercy that on taking refuge at his feet the entire journey of one's life is carried through to success in happiness. Of all the devotees of faith who have so far been found to have taken refuge with Śrī Mahārāj, every one has been seen happy and at peace. The sage renowned in the world as a dweller in solitude; the ascetic who takes the mountain caves that nature made for his only lodging; the man of great vital fire who lives on the unasked roots and tubers that Mother Earth gives; the perfected celibate, by the mere taking of whose foot-dust the three kinds of craving and every appetite of this world and the next are destroyed; such a purifier of the fallen, high of mind and keen of intellect, wholly beyond place and time, by whose grace the science of the five sheaths and the seven wheels, and their raising, comes about without effort — of the whole rosary of such Sadgurus, 'Śrī Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā' is one of the most brilliant beads."

(4) His Life

He who in his very nature is endless and beyond measure — his life too is by nature endless and beyond measuring.

The human senses have only so much power: they can take in the deeds done at one place alone. And of one whose *līlā* goes on happening in place after place, only this can be said — that our eyes see little, but our mind is certainly left astonished by that immeasurable play, and the exact recounting of any sequence of events proves altogether difficult.

Whenever we hear the experiences of men who have lived beyond a hundred and fifty years, we do believe how many changes and turns of event such a long-lived man has watched in his lifetime — how many kingdoms overthrown, how many new nations risen, how many wars have passed like a moving picture before his eyes! Long-familiar friends and kinsmen have gone from sight!! New acquaintances keep being made, and their various drama too goes on according to destiny, and will go on!!! In truth, a long life is a great spring of experience, which we short-lived men are wholly unable to take in.

For this reason, when we meditate on the seven immortal, ever-living sages, how can their history come all at once into our minds? When some loving devotee has *darśan* of the immortal perfected Lomaśa Ṛṣi at Naimiṣāraṇya, we hesitate even to believe his eyes. At such a moment we come to believe in our own incapacity — how paltry a kind of capacity ours is. This paltry capacity of ours is truly a thing to laugh at.

Sant Jñāneśvarjī writes in his *Jñāneśvarī*, his commentary on the *Gītā*, that "being born" is a most dishonourable business for a man of any dignity; for to stay nine or ten months in the womb, hemmed

about with flesh and blood and fat; then to come out by the passage of urine; then to suck at breasts wet with sweat — any man of dignity counts this a gross indignity. That is why men of shame, once born, remain in constant effort towards this one end: that they may not have to be born again.

Sant Jñānadevjī writes further that to obtain this priceless human body and then be defeated by death is a very great and dishonourable loss. For just as it is said of the lesser animals that such-and-such a dog has died, or such-and-such a cat has died, so if it were said of a man of dignity that such-and-such a person has died, it would be a heavy blow to his honoured life. Therefore those who perceive in the human body a priceless treasury of jewels, or an unbounded hoard of Kubera, do not accept defeat at the hands of death, but keep up a constant effort in the direction of immortality. It was for this reason that when the Lord Śaṅkar, swift to be pleased, appeared and stood ready to grant Lomaśa Ṛṣi a boon, the shrewd Lomaśa asked for the boon of not dying.

Those souls whose only experience is of the taste of sense-objects are unable to understand the taste of the bliss of Brahman known by the great souls; for this bliss is beyond the senses. It has no connection whatever with the touch of objects. To make it plain in an ordinary way, the great souls explain it thus: after drinking a sherbet mixed with much sugar, a sherbet mixed with less sugar tastes flat, although the sweetness of sugar is certainly in this one too. In the same way, once the bliss of Brahman has been tasted, those souls who then taste the flavour of sense-objects find that flavour flat, and quite naturally give up savouring it. Then, as the turning away from the taste of objects becomes natural, and the experience of the bliss of Brahman becomes naturally firm, so the soul arrives at the order of the *siddha*, the perfected. Vaśiṣṭhaji too, in the *Rāmcharitmānas*, has described the grades of souls in just this way:

viṣayī sādḥaka siddha sayāne, trividha jīva jagā veda bakhāne.

The sensual, the seeker, and the wise perfected one:
the Veda declares three kinds of soul in this world.

Those who hold the taste of sense-objects to be the only taste there is, and who take up works and rites out of the desire to obtain the highest of such tastes — the enjoyments of heaven and so on — are the sensual souls. Those who turn away from the taste of objects, who stay in constant effort to savour the taste of the bliss of Brahman, and who bear the obstacles of this road with courage, are the seeker souls. And those who obtain the bliss of Brahman, who remain absorbed in that bliss, and who have no longing left for anything besides it, are the perfected souls. Perfected souls of this kind have existed from the beginning of creation, and will go on existing. And yet, just as it is plain that *manuṣyāṇāṃ sahasreṣu kaśchid yatati siddhaye* — “among thousands of men, only some rare one strives for perfection” [*Bhagavad Gītā* 7.3] — in the same way it is only some rare one among thousands of the perfected who attains the station of Siddheśvar, Lord of the perfected. The perfected soul, absorbed in natural bliss, goes on savouring that ever-new bliss in himself and in every atom of nature. The Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has spoken of just such a perfected soul in the *Harigītā* [the *Bhagavad Gītā*]. To describe the ground of bliss belonging to the station of “Siddheśvar” is altogether beyond accomplishing. Only this much can be said: that the Lord Sadāśiva Śaṅkar alone is seated forever upon the ground of bliss that is the station of Siddheśvar, and that ten million streams of grace surge

out of him and run in every direction — streams that go on granting perfection to souls established in action, in worship and in knowledge, and go on giving the fruits of *artha*, *dharma*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*.

Describing the daily life of such perfected great souls in the *Harigītā*, the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that they roam in the world of the wind, the world of the moon, and the rest. Sometimes, when the wind runs off in delight carrying fragrance and pollen out of beautiful flowers, they travel along with that fragrance. In the hot season, when a thousand drops come down from the banked clouds onto ground scorched with heat and wet the parted, longing sand with a touch of love, they travel in those drops. In this way their daily life is spent in endless roaming through the boundless universe in divine joy — as though, for them, all inertness in the whole universe had utterly vanished, and the eternal dance of pure consciousness were going on in every atom. In such unequalled, unexampled bliss of Brahman they remain absorbed. There is no old age there, and no death. Sometimes, seated in the sweet throats of birds, they take up the repeating of the Lord's holy name. Sometimes, seated in the speech of a venerable teacher, they cut away a disciple's doubts at the root and build up his practice. To describe the life-history of such perfected saints may well be within the power of the endless Lord; but how can helpless men like ourselves do it?

In the *Śrī Rāmcharitmānas*, Gosāñjī [Tulsīdās] has spoken of the daily life of the perfected saints, the lords of perfection, in connection with Sanaka and the other sages, on the occasion of Śrī Rāghavendra's pleasure in the garden. Śrī Sanaka and his brothers are perfected great souls, and they are immortal. Their blessed form is always like a child's, and remaining ever absorbed in the bliss of Brahman, they go on granting to seeker souls the road to resolution and to perfection. Gosāñjī says:

*jāni samaya sanakādika āye, tejapuñja gunasīla suhāye,
brahmānanda sadā laya līnā, dekhata bahu kālīnā,
rūpa dhareṁ janu chāriu vedā, samadarasī suni vigata vibhedā,
āsā vasana vyasana yaha tinhaḥīm, raghupati charita hoi taḥaṁ sunahīm,
taḥā rahe sanakādi bhavānī, jahā ghaṭa saṁbhava munivara gyānī,
rāma-kathā munivara bahu baranī, gyāna joni pāvaka jimi aranī.*

Knowing the hour, Sanaka and his brothers came, masses of light, lovely in virtue and character;

ever absorbed and merged in the bliss of Brahman, yet seeming of many ages;
as though the four Vedas had taken form; even-eyed, and — hear it — beyond all division;
the sky their only garment, and this their one addiction: wherever the deeds of Raghupati are told, there they go to hear.

There, Bhavānī, stayed Sanaka and his brothers, where the wise sage born of the pitcher was;
the great sage told much of Rāma's story — the womb of knowledge, as the fire-stick is of fire.

[*Rāmcharitmānas*, Uttarakāṇḍ]

Hearing the story of the blessed Lord from the mouths of the supreme devotees, the perfected great souls are never satisfied. The Lord Śaṅkar, swift to be pleased, takes the form of a swan and goes again and again to the āśram of Kākabhuṣuṇḍijī to hear the story of Śrī Rām. And Śrī Mārutijī

[Hanumān] takes ten million bodies and arrives to hear wherever the story of Śrī Rām is being told. In truth the perfected great souls are the keenest of relishers of the sacred story, and the savour they draw from hearing it is beyond telling.

Where, then, is one to begin the life of Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj, whose life is without beginning and without end? In Kūrmāñchal alone his life was, for about thirty years, most divine and full of wonders. Where he first appeared cannot be said. It was, by estimate, in the span from the year 1890 CE to 1920 that his life became directly available to the people of Kūrmāñchal. Of this span no ordered record of his movements could be gathered. Some say his first appearance was on the occasion of the dam at Bhīmāl. Others say that the first sight of him was had in the cave at Haiḍākhān. Then again some hold the belief that Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj first appeared in the village of Dhaulā, on account of the devotee Gumānī. And certain worthy persons hold the belief that Śrī Mahārāj came from the direction of Nepāl, where his natural dwelling is in the vast caverns of the mountains.

The inward and the outward *līlās* of Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj are so woven into one another that to describe them separately is altogether difficult. The *līlās* of the perfected saints — or of Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva, the perfected descent himself — are naturally more than earthly, even when he moves about behaving exactly like an ordinary man. Though one confine the water of the Gaṅgā in some particular vessel, its purity and divinity remain undiminished. In passing, and with the aim of taking in his divine *līlās* rightly, let us cast an eye over the life of one perfected saint of the age of the Mahābhārata, whom the Lord Kṛṣṇa described with his own blessed mouth to Arjuna in the *Harigītā*. Who knows but that this very saint may be none other than Siddha Siddheśvar Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj — appearing age after age for the sole purpose of showing favour, wandering through mountain and forest to gather the world in, or making the spiritual road easier and easier!!!

eka anugraha kari — jaga pragaṭe, dayādhīna hai giribana bhaṭake.

To show one favour he appeared in the world;
bound by his own mercy he wandered through mountain and wood.

The passage in the *Harigītā* about the perfected saint, given in the *Puṇya-smṛti*, runs in brief as follows: “In ancient times a righteous ascetic brāhmaṇa named Kāśyapa went to a certain perfected brahmarṣi. That brahmarṣi knew all the secrets of scripture in the matter of *dharma*; he was skilled in the knowledge and science of past and future, expert in the knowledge of the principles of the world, one who understood the secret of pleasure and pain, a knower of the truth of birth and death, versed in merit and demerit, and one who saw with his own eyes the high and low states that beings obtain according to their acts. He moved about like one already liberated: perfected, still of mind, master of his senses, blazing with the splendour of Brahman, able to go everywhere, and knowing the science of vanishing from sight. He wandered with the unseen perfected ones who bear the discus, conversed with them, and sat with them in solitude. As the wind flows everywhere without clinging anywhere, so he moved freely everywhere in a spirit of non-attachment. It was on hearing of this greatness of his that the great sage Kāśyapa went to him. Drawing near, that keen-minded, ascetic, dharma-loving and single-minded sage bowed, as is proper, at the feet of the perfected great soul. He was the best of brāhmaṇas and a most wonderful saint; every kind of worthiness was in him; he knew the scriptures

and his conduct was true. Kāśyapa, on seeing him, was filled with astonishment. He took him for his guru and gave himself to serving him; and by his particular attendance, his devotion to the guru and his spirit of faith, he brought that great soul to be pleased with him. Then, being pleased with his disciple Kāśyapa, that perfected sage considered the matter of the highest perfection and gave the teaching which I shall now relate. Listen.”

“The perfected one said: My child, Kāśyapa! By performing many kinds of good works, men obtain by merit alone a good fruit in this world and a place in the world of the gods. Nowhere does the soul find utter happiness. In no world is it allowed to remain forever. However great the place it may win by bearing hardship in austerity and the rest, from there too it must come down again and again. Deluded by craving, joined to desire and anger, I have sinned many times, and as the fruit of it I have undergone evil states that gave me grievous pain. I have suffered the misery of birth after birth and of death after death. I have eaten food of every kind, and drunk the milk of many breasts. I have seen many fathers and mothers of every sort. I have known happinesses and sorrows of every strange kind. Many times I have been parted from those I loved and joined to people I did not like. The wealth I had earned by hardship was destroyed before my eyes. From kings and from my own people I have had to bear great hardships and humiliations more than once. I have had to endure bodily and mental pains altogether past bearing. Many times I have suffered gross dishonour, sentence of death, and long terms of imprisonment. Falling into hell, I have borne the torments of Yama’s realm. Taking birth in this world, I have known again and again the sorrows of old age, of sickness, and of the pairs of opposites — liking and loathing and the rest. From bearing such affliction over and over, great anguish arose in my mind one day; and, in terror of these sorrows, I took refuge with the Supreme Self and gave up all worldly dealings altogether. After such experience I took to this road, and by the grace of the Supreme Self this excellent perfection has been granted me. Now I shall not come again into this world. As long as this creation stands, and until my liberation comes, I shall watch over the good passage of myself and of other beings. Best of the twice-born! In this way this excellent perfection has been given to me. After this I shall go to the highest world of truth, and in due course attain the unmanifest station of Brahman. Of this you should not have the smallest doubt. I shall not have to come again to the world of mortals. Great-minded one! I am much pleased with you. Speak — what dear thing shall I do for you? The time has come for the fulfilling of the wish that brought you to me. I know what the purpose of your coming is. I am soon to depart from here, and so I am myself prompting you to ask. Learned one, your excellent conduct gives me great satisfaction. Ask what makes for your good, and I shall answer the question you desire. Kāśyapa, I praise your understanding and hold it in high regard. You have recognised me — that alone is why I say you are very wise.”

“Kāśyapa asked: Great soul, how does this body fall away? How is another body then obtained? How is the worldly soul freed from this world of sorrow? How does it give up the root ignorance, and the body born of it? And how does it enter from one body into another? How does a man undergo the fruit of the good and evil works he has done? And when the body is no more, where do his works remain? On Kāśyapa’s asking in this way, the perfected great soul began to answer his questions one

by one..." and so on.

Even after much searching, no regular account of Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj's twenty-five or thirty years of ordered wandering through the region of Kūrmāñchal could be obtained (nor does it appear to be possible); and so, in the matter of his life, one must be content with the setting forth of a certain number of episodes.

(5) *Some More-Than-Earthly Events*

(1) Bhāvar Chhakhātā

Across the Golā river, about two and a half miles east of Haldvānī (district Nainītāl), is a village named Daraulā. There lived a devotee of tender feeling named Ṭhākur Gumān Siṃh Naulā — "the devotee Gumānī". After he had come into his young manhood, when a son was born to him, a fierce dispassion towards the world came over him. Once he went to Haridvār with some hill pilgrims of that place, and, parting from all his companions, threw himself with a will into the work of service and attendance at the āśram of a certain great soul. So keen was his spirit of labour and of devoted service that he slept very little, and his days and nights passed in attending on that great soul.

Some time afterwards, more pilgrims from Haldvānī went to Haridvār to bathe in the Gaṅgā. They recognised the devotee Gumānī at the great soul's āśram, and pressed him not to keep Gumānī at the āśram but to give him leave to return home. They explained that Gumānī's wife and son were waiting anxiously for his return and lamenting greatly for him. The great soul was so moved by Gumānī's habit of service and by his boundless spirit of faith that he shrank from parting with him. But he judged it right that Gumānī should be sent home, and gave the order. Gumānī wept much, and begged the great soul to give him a place at his feet and nowhere else. The great soul consoled him and assured him: "Go on with your worship and practice at home. There, at home, a perfected great soul will give you *darśan* and fulfil you."

Gumānī came home and set his mind on his fields and farming. One evening, under a tree near the house, he had *darśan* of Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj. Śrī Mahārāj was standing there quite naturally, looking towards Gumānī. There was a kind of sweetness shining in his face. His body was soft and radiant as a fresh hibiscus flower. His countenance was utterly gentle and more than earthly. So tall a body Gumānī had never yet seen with his own eyes. Catching sight of him all at once, Gumānī was greatly alarmed, and began to ask him: "Who are you, and why are you standing here?" Seeing him alarmed, Śrī Mahārāj went away and sat down on a slab of rock under a tree some distance off. A little while later, when Gumānī's wits had settled, he recognised Mahārāj, and the words of the great soul at Haridvār came back to him. With deep feeling he came to Śrī Mahārāj's feet, and took refuge there for good.

The devotee Gumānī served Śrī Mahārāj with such single-mindedness — as a devotee performs the worship of his chosen image through all eight watches of the day; or as a *gopī* sunk in devotional trance goes about in a rapture selling curds with the pot on her head, calling out the name of Giradhar. Śrī Mahārāj would sit like a newborn infant, and the devotee Gumānī stayed unbrokenly at his eight-

watch service. For food Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj would accept nothing but *mathā* (buttermilk); and so the devotee Gumānī too lived on buttermilk alone. In a short while the word spread on every side that Gumānī was serving a madman with great devotion, and was a very great fool.

Some time later Gumānī pressed Śrī Mahārāj to come and stay at his house and so show him favour. He built Mahārāj a hut of thatch, standing right against his own house, and Śrī Mahārāj came to live in it. Gumānī always kept the door of that hut shut, so that no needless disturbance should fall upon Śrī Mahārāj's meditation and the rest. Only at the appointed hour, when it was time for food and *prasād*, would he open the door with his own hand and plunge into Śrī Mahārāj's service.

When Śrī Mahārāj had shown so much grace as to live in the hut Gumānī had made, Gumānī thought to himself that buttermilk could hardly be filling Śrī Mahārāj's stomach. If a saint comes to one's house and goes hungry, how bad a thing is that? Thinking so, he begged Mahārāj to begin eating bread, saying it would be a great kindness — for just as our own stomachs are not filled without bread, so his too must surely be left unsatisfied by buttermilk! And the supremely gracious Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj, to please his devotee, began to eat bread.

Seeing a great soul lodged at Gumānī's house, some people mocked him, saying that Gumānī was a simpleton and had put up a madman at his house for nothing — one who could speak neither the hill tongue nor Hindi clearly. But those who knew even a little of Śrī Mahārāj's boundless wealth of yoga stayed for the most part at Gumānī's hut. From the time Śrī Mahārāj came to live there, people were coming and going at Gumānī's house every day. Gumānī welcomed these guests from his heart and counted himself blessed. Being a man of middling means, the grain and money he had put by were used up in good measure. His wife had more foresight. She wanted to set some limit to this hospitality, but no impression could be made on Gumānī. In anger she went away to her father's house. She took her child with her too, and left saying that at this rate the whole household would be destroyed, and that she could not bear to watch it all happen before her eyes. The devotee Gumānī was left alone. But not for that did any fault come into his vow of service, or into the honour and welcome he gave his guests.

It was in these very days — while Śrī Mahārāj was living in Gumānī's hut, and Gumānī always kept its door shut from outside — that a strange thing began happening daily at the temple of Chitreśvar Mahādev at Chitraśilā, in Rānībāg. At five in the morning, when the priest unlocked the temple and went in for the worship, it would seem to him that the air of the temple was sweet with a ravishing fragrance, and that the adorning of Chitreśvar Śiva with sandal paste and garlands had been done in a most unearthly manner. From all this he supposed that some devotee came here before him, performed the worship of Śiva, and went away. For many days the priest paid no particular attention; but when day after day he found fresh adornment and a divine fragrance in the temple, he began to think that gods or *gandharvas* must be coming into the temple before him and performing the worship — for a lock cannot hinder the entry of gods and such beings. This belief of his was growing firm when one day the thought came to him all at once that he ought to hide and get sight of this devotee of Śiva who worshipped with such deep feeling exactly at the hour before dawn.

Keeping watch all night like a thief, the priest waited. At about three o'clock he caught the sound

of someone bathing in the Gautamī Gaṅgā, which flows close by. Alert now, the priest watched on. In a little while he saw a man of very tall stature coming along with the materials of worship in his hands. His eyes were fixed on the newcomer with the keenest curiosity. Shortly the newcomer reached the temple door, on which a large lock was hanging. The moment he came there, the lock opened of itself; the chain too came undone of itself; and the doors, with some sound, opened of themselves. The visitor entered the temple. With great love he performed the worship of the Lord. All this work was finished in about an hour. Then he came out of the temple. The doors closed of themselves. The chain and the lock fastened themselves as well. And now the priest suddenly recognised that the visitor was none other than Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj. With a heart overcome he made full prostration at the blessed feet, and counted himself blessed. He had heard a good deal before about Śrī Mahārāj's attainments in yoga; but seeing with his own eyes such unshakable love towards the Lord Śiva, he was left dumbfounded.

Meanwhile, some time later, all Gumānī's property and grain came to an end. He had been left quite alone as it was. One day he was walking in his field when, all at once, he saw a man coming towards him with a plough on his shoulder. Gumānī stayed so deeply steeped in his own colouring that he took it that Baladāū jī himself — Śrī Kṛṣṇa's elder brother — was coming along with his weapon, the plough, upon his shoulder. Gumānī prostrated himself before him with great love; and even when the ploughman explained to him, "Brother, I am only an ordinary farmer, and I am wandering about looking for work," Gumānī still would not believe what he said. Gumānī asked: "Where is your home?" The farmer answered: "Brother, my home is nowhere; I am a very poor man." At this answer Gumānī was quite overcome with love, and began to say: "Lord, do not put me off with pretences. You are Baladāū jī himself — for your home is everywhere!!"

With much entreaty Gumānī took this farmer home with him, and went on receiving him with every honour and attention.

The rains were about to begin. One day the farmer said to Gumānī: "Bhagatjī, if you will permit me, let me plough your land — for sitting idle does not suit me." Gumānī said: "Lord, your *līlā* is a strange one, and who has the power to put an obstacle in your *līlā*?"

That farmer ploughed the land with great love, and when the season came he sowed rice in it. When in due time the crop was cut, Gumānī was astonished to see that, though rice had been sown there before as well, this time the yield was fifty times what it had been. The threshing floors where the grain was stored were filled to the roof, and even then heap upon heap of rice lay outside.

Now the guests were welcomed with greater enthusiasm still. Someone carried the news to Gumānī's wife as well: that so much rice had come from their field this time that they could not finish it in a whole lifetime. Hearing this wonderful and joyful news, she was greatly astonished — how had her idle husband managed so much labour!! Be that as it may: she came home, bringing her child with her, and never went back to her father's house again.

That a saint devoted to austerity, who lives only in mountain caves, should stay a whole year at Gumānī's house; that a celibate great soul who lives only on roots, tubers and fruit should come to eating bread and grain — all these things prove Gumānī's boundless love, his eagerness, his generos-

ity and his vow of service. In truth Gumānī's devotion to Śrī Mahārāj was a devotion without any second object.

There was not the least trace of fear in the devotee Gumānī. Before setting out for Badrikāśram, Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj put the pilgrims who were to travel with him to a terrifying test — and Gumānī alone was able to pass it.

Having stayed a full year in Gumānī's hut, Śrīman Munīndra Mahārāj departed from there for the good of other devotees.

From the time Śrī Mahārāj went off towards Almorā, the devotee Gumānī could get no sight of him. He was forever waiting for him. Seeing this fierce waiting of his, one remembers the verse of the *Puṇya-smṛti*:

*nita uṭhi dekhaum rāha, kaba āvaim śrī munīndra jī,
satya-dharma-āchārya, brahmachāri haiḍākhāna ke.*

Rising each day I watch the road — when will Śrī Munīndra jī come,
the teacher of the true dharma, the celibate of Haiḍākhān?

When four or five years had gone by, Gumānī began to reflect that his remaining years now seemed few, and that it would be fitting to spend what was left of his life in Śrī Mahārāj's service. Thinking so, he set out for Almorā.

On reaching Śrī Mahārāj, Gumānī was overtaken by the purest of feelings. There was a stream of water in his eyes, and every limb of him thrilled. Śrī Mahārāj had known beforehand that to have a devotee like Gumānī is the fruit of very great austerity; and perhaps it was for this reason that, by his own perfected and silent prompting, he had called Gumānī to him — so that he might give him the sight of Badrīdhām. He said to Gumānī: "Gumānī, we are going to Badrīnāth. If you wish to come, come." Hearing Śrī Mahārāj's words, Gumānī rolled over at his blessed feet, as though Badrīviśāl himself were setting before him the proposal to go to Badrīdhām, and urging him to it!!

Two other devotees also begged earnestly to go on the journey to Badrīnāth. Śrī Mahārāj said nothing — which is to say that on the appointed day Śrī Mahārāj, Gumānī and those two devotees set out for Śrī Badrīnāth.

Some miles on, a great dense forest lay across the way. Śrī Mahārāj had gone on somewhat ahead. Gumānī and the two devotees were walking along behind. All at once they saw a lion standing in the middle of the path before them, its tail raised and its bearing full of anger. On one side of the path was a towering mountain, on the other the terrible depth of the valley. The two devotees said to Gumānī: "Brother, if you want to save your life, run back." Saying this, the two of them turned and fled at great speed. But Gumānī went forward. The lion went on standing there. Passing by its flank, he reached Śrī Mahārāj. The lion's bearing had changed altogether as he came near it: it stood in the road quietly, like a clay toy, and did not even look particularly his way.

Śrī Mahārāj reached Śrī Badrīnāth with Gumānī in due course. With great love they had *darśan* of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa himself. By the grace of Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj, Gumānī obtained that sight of the Lord which Manu and Śatarūpā obtained as the fruit of twenty-three thousand years of fierce austerity.

After this Gumānī returned with Śrī Mahārāj to Almoṛā. Then, obeying Śrī Mahārāj's command, Gumānī came home to the village of Daraulā.

About a year or so later he brought his earthly play to a close.

The devotee Gumānī was so close a devotee of Śrī Mahārāj that even today the cave of Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj stands in his house. Where Śrī Mahārāj used to sit, a large pair of copper tongs is fixed in the ground — presented to Śrī Mahārāj out of love by some aged ascetic. These tongs are most remarkable. There is a particular brightness in their metal, and it seems as though, from the touch of Śrī Mahārāj's body, his own matchless radiance has entered into them too. Besides this, other objects kept in memory of Śrī Mahārāj are in that same cave, which have not yet been properly identified. On the front page of the devotee Gumānī's *Rāmāyaṇ*, some clusters of words written in Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj's own blessed hand have also been found, whose meaning has not yet been made out. The letters of this cluster of words appear to belong to some ancient script resembling Brāhmī. It may be that some scholar of antiquities will be able to make out the exact sense of these words!!! — and, by searching into that script, bring to light the tender feelings of Śrī Mahārāj's mercy-softened heart!!!

(2)

When devotees began coming in greater and greater numbers to Gumānī's house for *darśan* of the supremely radiant Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj, Śrī Mahārāj no longer thought it fitting to stay there. He began to live sometimes at Kālī Chaur, sometimes on the bank of the Golā, sometimes at Kaṭghariā. From time to time he would go away into the cave at Haiḍākhān. Wherever Śrī Mahārāj went and sat, his splendour was a supreme thing to behold, and the eyes could by no means be satisfied with it. Such a radiance was to be seen in his whole body, as though the lustre of all the diamonds and gems there are were glittering in every limb.

Such a strange freshness could be seen in his blessed limbs, as though the twelve-year-old Śukadevjī were coming forth this very moment from his mother's womb. The light at his brow seemed to tremble again and again, from which it was plainly to be known that his pure conscious mind was unceasingly at the repetition of the Name. So more-than-earthly was the power of his supreme perfection that all around him, inert and conscious nature alike, seemed lit and quickened by his radiance.

The *Puṇya-smṛti* has said it truly:

mahimā tahā kī kahai kaun kahai, pratiśvāsa vilakṣaṇa bhāva lahai.

Who shall tell the glory of that place, who tell it?

At every breath a wonder of feeling is received there.

For this reason, wherever Śrī Mahārāj went, sacrificial rites and festivals would begin of themselves. The number of men and women gathered for satsaṅg was so great that sometimes it went beyond twenty-five thousand. This is estimated from the fact that when Śrī Mahārāj was at Kaṭghariā, eighty rupees' worth of candles burned in a single night — and this was talked of at a time when four candles cost one paisā. Śrī Mahārāj would sit absorbed in meditation beneath a dense *kadamba* tree. His whole body glowed with the brilliance of light, and it seemed as though the body were made of white gems. Men and women from villages very far off would bear every hardship to present themselves in service at Śrī Mahārāj's feet for the fulfilment of their heart's desires, and all returned with

glad minds.

Once, the English Commissioner of that region, Ramsay, while making a tour of inspection, came across to the far side of the canal and saw an immense crowd in the Katghariā tract, sitting on every side; and in the middle of it, beneath the *kadamba* tree, seated in the posture of the perfected, Siddha Siddheśvar Munīndra Mahārāj was lighting up all the quarters, as it were, with his own brightness. He was so struck by that sight that he got down from his horse, stood in an attitude of prayer, and went on gazing at Śrī Mahārāj without blinking. Afterwards he called some of the people to him and asked who this great man of boundless radiance might be. The people told him that this was a perfected one, lord of the perfected, a celibate of very simple nature. Hearing the other things told of him, Ramsay was greatly moved, and of his own accord made over twenty-five *bīghās* of land — around the place where Mahārāj was sitting — in Mahārāj's name, free of revenue. This is the land known today as the Katghariā Āśram.

Only a few years after this event, a strange thing happened. Out of the trunk of the very *kadamba* tree beneath which Śrī Mahārāj used to sit, thick branches of *pīpal* came out on one side and of banyan on the other. To see it today is a great wonder: out of the trunk of a single *kadamba* tree, *pīpal* flourishes on one side, banyan on another, and *kadamba* on a third.

This *kadamba* tree spreads over a good stretch of ground, and the sight of it is a generous one. But when one looks at the trunk, the wonder is greater still. On one side there is so large a hollow in that trunk that it fills one with astonishment to consider how so great a tree can stand upon a severed trunk at all, and how it is being nourished!!!

The history of this tree's burning is also most remarkable. There is no knowing how the fire caught in it. Right beside the trunk stood two huts of thatch. In one of them lived the priest; and in the other, the smaller hut, a poor woman ascetic who had taken refuge with Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj kept up her worship and practice with a single mind. As a result of the fire the priest's hut burned down to ashes altogether; and the small hut, in which that poor woman ascetic was absorbed in worship and practice, remained exactly as it had been, and was left entirely untouched by the power of the fire. When, having finished her worship and practice, the woman came out of the hut on some errand, she then became aware of that raging fire. The whole place around was covered with great glowing embers — but on her hut of thatch the burning power of the fire had had, as it were, no effect at all.

(3)

Once, in the days of summer, Śrīman Munīndra Mahārāj was staying at the Khurpātāl Āśram. A newly educated young man had also come to hear certain particular things about Śrī Mahārāj. This news too had reached him: that Mahārāj wore an ear-covering cap. From this the young man began to suppose that Mahārāj might be none other than Aśvatthāmā, the famous immortal warrior of the Mahābhārata, and that perhaps he covered his head entirely with the cap in order to hide the head-wound he received in the Mahābhārata war. With the aim of testing this, the young man came to Khurpātāl (district Nainītāl). No sooner had he arrived, in the early morning hour, than Śrī Mahārāj began to say that on account of the heat he had a wish to bathe. Hearing only this much, the young man said that he would fill a pot from the lake, and Mahārāj could then bathe. The man had calculated

that when Mahārāj took off his cap and his other clothes for the bath, he would certainly be able to see his bare head. Śrī Mahārāj said: “Take my loincloth, my water-pot and my towel, and I will come along with you and bathe at the lake itself.” At this an even better opportunity for the test presented itself. When the two of them reached the lake, Mahārāj said, “Take off my clothes and bathe me.”

The young man took off Śrī Mahārāj’s cap, his *mirjāī* and all his clothes, and bathing him with great love, wiped his divine body with the towel. All this while his mind was filled brimful with the purest of feelings. In bathing this body made of divine elements he felt the highest delight. The *chaupāī* of the *Puṇya-smṛti* is clear in its description of this more-than-earthly body:

divya-tattva-nirmīta tava dehā, avikārī para hṛdaya sanehā.

Your body is fashioned of divine elements,
untouched by change — and yet the heart within is love.

At that moment the young man had no awareness even of himself. He had forgotten altogether the matter he had come to test — whether or not there was a wound on Śrī Mahārāj’s head. It was only after he had wiped his body, dressed him in washed clothes, and washed and dried the wet ones, that he remembered. Having forgotten his purpose, he fell into deep regret. Then Śrī Mahārāj said to him with great love: “One should go to sādhus and great souls carrying faith and love. If some doubt arises, one should pray to the blessed Lord for its removal. Then, by his grace, whether such-and-such a man is a great soul or not comes to be known of itself. Only great souls can recognise great souls — or those upon whom the great souls’ grace rests. And the grace of the great souls rests upon those whose hearts are simple, and who are without pride.”

(4)

Once, when Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj was staying at the Khairnā Āśram (district Nainītāl), the Ranger Sāhib of Kosī — who was at that time at his ranger’s quarters at Vināyak — sent a *ḍāṇḍī* with four men to invite Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj. The men had orders to seat Śrī Mahārāj respectfully in the *ḍāṇḍī* and bring him to Vināyak in it and no other way. Seeing the Ranger Sāhib’s spirit of faith, Śrī Mahārāj made ready to go to Vināyak. It is eight or ten miles from Khairnā to Vināyak, and the road is all uphill. For one mile Śrī Mahārāj travelled seated in the *ḍāṇḍī*. After that he said to the *ḍāṇḍī*-men that the climb would now tire them, and that he himself had a wish to walk, and so they should let him get down and go on foot. The men were certainly tired, but they shrank from setting Śrī Mahārāj down. After five or ten paces a very strange thing happened: Śrī Mahārāj began to feel so heavy to the men that they set the *ḍāṇḍī* on the ground. Then Śrī Mahārāj said to the *ḍāṇḍī*-men: “Rest a while and come on after. I will walk in the meantime.”

Śrī Mahārāj can have gone about a furlong when the men, having rested, set out again. They quickened their pace considerably, so as to catch up with Mahārāj as fast as they could and seat him in the *ḍāṇḍī*. But the astonishing thing was that they did not meet Śrī Mahārāj anywhere on the road. Nor could they get any word of him from the people coming and going along the way. About three hours later, when these men reached Vināyak, they were given the news that Śrī Mahārāj had already been there for three hours.

(5)

Once, Śrīman Munīndra Mahārāj was staying at the Rānībāg Āśram (Kāṭhgodām). Many devotees were going to Kurukṣetra to bathe at a solar eclipse, and many others had halted at Rānībāg with the purpose of bathing in the Gautamī Gaṅgā.

The eclipse bathing was duly completed, after which the pilgrims returned from Kurukṣetra to their homes. When those pilgrims who had bathed at Kurukṣetra came to Rānībāg for *darśan* of Śrī Mahārāj, they expressed great astonishment before him: that he had got back from Kurukṣetra before they had! Śrī Mahārāj kept silent; but the other devotees who were present contradicted them, saying that Śrī Mahārāj had been with them continuously, and that on the occasion of the eclipse he had bathed in the Gautamī Gaṅgā here at Rānībāg along with them.

But the devotees coming from Kurukṣetra said: how can that be? Śrī Mahārāj bathed at the eclipse with us at Kurukṣetra. How are we to believe that Śrī Mahārāj never went to Kurukṣetra at all?

When the argument began to rise between the two parties, Śrī Mahārāj quieted them, saying that on the occasion of the eclipse he had been present, and had bathed, at both places — at Rānībāg and at Kurukṣetra alike.

(6)

To fulfil Śrī Jvālādatt Jośī, the well-known advocate of Almorā, Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj once came to Gwalior. At that time Jvālādattjī held high office under the administration of the state.

Learning that the perfected one, lord of the perfected, the *brahmarṣi*, had come to his house, Jvālādattjī was quite overcome with joy and wonder. He worshipped Śrī Mahārāj with the offering of water for the hands and for the feet, with *ārtī*, and the rest; and afterwards he sent word to the Darbār that the perfected one, lord of the perfected, Sadāśiva Munīndra Mahārāj — whose deeds are filled with a wonderful and more-than-earthly quality — had come to his house.

The Darbār came with great eagerness for *darśan*, and made his birth fruitful.

The Darbār prayed most humbly that Śrī Mahārāj would fulfil the Queen also by giving her *darśan* in the palace.

Yielding to his feeling, Śrī Mahārāj gave his consent. Accordingly, that evening, the Darbār took him to the palace by motor-car with the highest honour. There he remained about two hours. The Queen and all the women's apartments had *darśan* of Śrī Mahārāj and so made their lives fulfilled.

After his departure from Gwalior, the Darbār asked the Queen how old she supposed Śrī Mahārāj to be. The Queen answered that by her estimate Śrī Mahārāj was an old man of eighty years.

The king was greatly astonished to hear it — for to him Śrī Mahārāj had appeared a boy of eleven.

(7)

Once Śrī Bholādatt Pāṇḍe, the advocate, was riding his costly horse towards Kāṭhgodām. The quality of passion was very strong in him. Near Rānībāg he saw Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj seated on a small hill-rock at the roadside. Śrī Mahārāj's mood at that moment seemed most charming: a gentle laughter graced the moon of his face. Seeing him laughing, Bholādattjī supposed, in his error, that this madman-like fellow was looking at him and laughing in mockery, and deserved punishment. At that time he was not acquainted with Śrī Mahārāj. His riding-whip was already in his hand. In great anger he asked Mahārāj why he was looking at him and laughing. With great calm Śrī Mahārāj answered:

“No, Bābā, I am not laughing at you. The great bell of Śrī Badrīnāth’s temple has fallen down. A great many men are putting their strength to it together to lift it — but it is so heavy that it will not rise by any means. It is at seeing this that I am amused!”

Bholāḍattjī thought that to escape a beating this man had made up a wholly new story. Śrī Badrīnāth’s temple is about three hundred miles from there. So he said that this sort of deception would not answer: “I shall find out the truth of it at once. If your statement proves false, I shall punish you severely.” Saying this he went off in an attitude of great fury. Reaching Kāṭhgodām, he found out by telephone whether the bell of the Badrīnāth temple had fallen or not. In due course the answer came back to him: that at the very time he had named, the bell was being lifted with great effort, and that even now it had not been got up. On receiving this news, Bholāḍattjī’s pride sustained a very heavy blow. He was also filled with astonishment at the report. Now he became desperate to ask Śrī Mahārāj’s pardon. After much effort, some days later, he received word that Śrī Mahārāj was near the cave of Bāmsulī. Going there, in the humblest of spirits, he begged Śrī Mahārāj’s forgiveness again and again, and took refuge with him for good.

Śrī Bholāḍattjī performed the service and worship of Śrī Mahārāj with the most single-minded devotion. After obtaining release from his livelihood, he practised severe *sāḍhanā* for twenty-two years at Siddhāśram (Śītalāket). From these twenty-two years of his diaries something of Śrī Mahārāj’s majesty and of the sweetness of his deeds can be learned.

(8)

At the humble urging of Maṅgalā Siṃh the forest patrolman, Śrī Mahārāj came to the village of Chorgalyā; and these were the cold days of the month of Māgh. Śrī Mahārāj did not agree to stay inside a house there, and his *dhūnī* was arranged for outside the settlement.

The cold was falling very hard. From time to time there were spells of snow as well. But Śrī Mahārāj’s *dhūnī* went on blazing exactly as it was. It seemed as though the rain-water did not so much as touch the fire of the *dhūnī*.

(9)

Once, when Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj had taken his seat in the cave at Haiḍākhān, some *sādhus* and great souls, hearing of his fame, came for *darśan* of him. Those days were in the month of Māgh, and the cold was falling hard. In the course of the satsaṅg, talk turned upon the *kāphal* [the hill box-myrtle]. The people of the place explained that in the mountains *kāphal* can only be had in the month of Jyeṣṭha, and that in the cold days this fruit sets nowhere at all. Out of curiosity the thought arose in the great souls’ minds that they ought to ask the perfected one, the lord of the perfected, the celibate Bābā, for *kāphal* and nothing else as *prasād*.

When this notion of theirs became known, Śrī Mahārāj went off some distance and brought back ripe *kāphal* — branch and all — plucked from no one knows where. This he distributed to the great souls as *prasād*.

(10)

In the hot season Śrī Mahārāj moved out of the Haiḍākhān cave and took his seat in a leaf-hut. This hut had been built right on the bank of the Gautamī Gaṅgā. There Śrī Mahārāj performed the austerity

of the five fires. Afterwards it was observed that every morning a lion of vast size would come to Śrī Mahārāj to make its obeisance. Once, when some great souls were staying with Śrī Mahārāj as guests, they saw the lion coming towards them in the morning and began to feel a dreadful fear. Śrī Mahārāj reassured them: “Do not be afraid; the lion will make its obeisance and go.”

When the lion had come quite near, the great souls in their fear shut their eyes tight. A little later, when they opened them, they saw the lion slowly turning and going back.

(11)

When Śrī Mahārāj was at the “Vṛndāvan garden” (Almorā), he called Dūlā Bhagat and said: “If there is a holy stream of sweet water anywhere here, take me to it.” Dūlā considered — where is there a stream of sweet water here, and to what place am I to take him? But he could not settle it. He judged it right to consult Śiromaṇijī Pāṭhak (of Śītalākhet) first. Accordingly he took Śrī Śrī Munīndra Mahārāj with him and went to Śiromaṇijī.

With a most extraordinary spirit of faith Śiromaṇijī seated Śrī Mahārāj at his house; and taking a water-pot, he set out with Dūlā and Gaurīdatt Pant to fetch holy sweet water.

Śiromaṇijī remembered that once, when he had gone into the forest to gather *kāphal*, he had drunk sweet holy water from a slender spring. It was his purpose to bring the holy water from that same spring.

Evening had come on, and it had grown dark. But there was an extraordinary gladness in Śiromaṇijī’s heart; joy made every hair of him stand up. To find the stream in the dark was very hard going. With full eagerness he went on searching here and there by guesswork. After long delay he reached that slender stream. He set about filling the pot. In about half an hour the pot had come to be somewhat filled. After that, earth began to come with the water. So he returned with the pot only that much filled, and presented the water in service to Śrī Mahārāj. Smelling that water, Mahārāj said that it was most excellent and holy. He drank all of it. Then he said that in the morning they would certainly go to this stream.

In the morning itself, Śrī Mahārāj came with the three devotees to the stream, and went on scraping with his finger at the place from which the slender thread of water issued. All the devotees watched this *līlā* of Śrī Mahārāj’s with astonished eyes. After some while a thick stream of water began to come from that spring. A length of bamboo pipe was fitted beneath it.

To this day that stream runs day and night, and its water is very holy, sweet and cold. Knowing Śrī Mahārāj’s wish, his leaf-hut was built close beside it.

The air of this place is so delightful and so charming, and it so pleased Śrī Mahārāj, that he began to say that it would be very good if an āśram were built here. This is a most holy spot. Facing it, among the snow-crowned ranges, one has sight of Badrīnāth, Nandākoṭ and other holy places of pilgrimage.

The resolves of the perfected one, the lord of the perfected, are themselves the resolves of Śiva.

All those who owned land there gave that land in gift for the āśram. Bholāḍattjī the advocate, the devotee from Nainītāl, was entrusted with the management and the legal proceedings. The whole business was carried through smoothly. Śrī Mahārāj named the āśram himself, and gave it the name “**Siddhāśram**”.

Siddhāśram was very dear to Śrī Mahārāj, and he stayed here about six months. Those devotees who obtained Śrī Mahārāj's satsaṅg here have very great merit indeed; they received a joy greater even than the highest bliss. The beauty of Kailāś itself had come down upon Siddhāśram, and a rain of the nectar of supreme bliss kept Siddhāśram unceasingly wet. Sadāśiva himself, Śrīman Munīndra Mahārāj, lay spread over Siddhāśram in those days like a covering cloud. There his more-than-earthly *līlās* went on happening daily.

In those days, whoever went there for *darśan* of Śrī Mahārāj came back fulfilled. Śrī Mahārāj's body too was filled with wonderful attainments in yoga. Whatever marks of the perfected yogi are given in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, all those marks went on showing themselves of their own accord in Śrī Mahārāj's body. Sleep did not come to him. Whenever the fist of his hand opened, a bewitching scent like musk came out of it. The sound of his breathing in and out was never heard by anyone. Whether he walked fast or slowly, no one ever saw him out of breath. From the shining movement of his chin it was plainly to be known that the *ajapā-japa* — the unrepeated repetition — of his chosen Name was going on. His attainments of Annapūrṇā and of the sandals are exceedingly well known in the world. His stool had no bad smell at all: it was exactly like earth, and within five minutes it mingled with the earth in such a way that it seemed there had never been any there. Every limb of his was exceedingly soft, and the devotee who pressed Munīndra Mahārāj's blessed limbs felt as though bones had no existence in his body at all. Hunger and thirst never touched him. The devotion of his devotees was his food. It was seen more than once that whenever Śrī Mahārāj was fed without that devotion behind it, he would vomit the food up.

One night, when Śiromaṇijī had fallen asleep in Mahārāj's leaf-hut itself, Śrī Mahārāj woke him and said: "Look — what is that beside the water-stream?" Śiromaṇijī got up and saw four masses of light close by the stream. By their power there was a light there like the light of day.

He was left speechless, and gazed at them without blinking for fifteen minutes. Afterwards, when those masses of light had vanished, Śiromaṇijī collected himself and asked Śrī Mahārāj: "Lord! Who were those masses of light?" With great love Śrī Mahārāj told him that Śrī Badrīnāth had come to this most holy ground: those masses of light were Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa himself and his inseparable attendants.

(12)

In the city of Mithilā (Janakpur) there lived a Vaiṣṇava sādhu. On his pilgrimage to the Himālaya he had brought water from Gaṅgotrī, and was waiting to go to Śrī Rāmeśvaram on the auspicious occasion of Śivarātri. On the very day he decided that he would set out next morning for *darśan* of the Lord swift-to-be-pleased, Śrī Rāmeśvar, on that same night the Lord Śrī Rāmachandra — who was his chosen deity — gave him this command in a dream: "Go to Almorā, and there take *darśan* of Śrī Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā and worship him. He is an incarnation of Śrī Śiva himself."

Taking his chosen deity's command upon his head, the worthy saint came to Almorā. Śrī Mahārāj had come there to the house of Paṇḍit Viṣṇudattjī Jośī.

Asking his way as he went, the sādhu came to the house of that fortunate and worthy householder. At the sight of that hidden Lord Śiva whom Śrī Rām had pointed him to, he was filled with the highest

delight. Body, breath, mind and intellect all began to bathe in a threefold confluence of indescribable peace, beauty and joy. Seeing this state of his, marked by the eight signs of devotional feeling, the company of devotees present there watched this unheard-of sight with astonished eyes.

After some while he came back to himself. Then he went to the bazaar and had a *dhotī* and a *mirjāī* made for Śrī Mahārāj, and cooked food with his own hands to offer him.

Again he bathed, performed his evening devotions, and did service to his chosen deity, the Lord Śrī Rāghavendra, the perfect man of righteousness. Then, having obtained leave from his supreme object of worship, the divine pair Śrī Sītārāmjī, he plunged into the worship of Bhole Bābā, Śrī Sadāśiva, who is not other than they. With great exactness of rite the worthy saint performed the worship in both the Vedic and the Tāntric manners. After the offering of water for the hands and for the feet, he bathed Śrī Mahārāj with water mixed with the five nectars. Having bathed him then in pure water, he poured upon Śrī Mahārāj's head the water of holy Gaṅgotrī — most sacred, purifier of all the worlds. At the touch of Gaṅgā water offered in unmixed devotion, Śrī Gaṅgādhar, the bearer of the Gaṅgā, was supremely pleased. Devotee and Lord — the sādhu and Śrī Mahārāj — both arrived together in the divine abode of Kailāś. For as long as the bathing lasted, and the *ārtī* was performed, and the food-offering laid, that house went on appearing to the worthy sādhu as the very Kailāś the Purāṇas describe. Others could not grasp this mystery; but before that sādhu, Śrī Mahārāj was giving *darśan* in exactly that form in which the Vedas, the Purāṇas and the Tantras describe the forms of Maheśvara.

And this was no new thing. O Āśutoṣa, giver beyond all measure! This tenderness of yours towards your devotees is known to all. God or demon, whoever he may be — let him but once, however strayed and wandering, come into your refuge, and then what? Lord, bound by your own compassionate nature, you rescue him without fail. O tender-hearted beloved of Śivā, Lord of the universe! A devotee's sorrow so grieves you that you make an end of that sorrow with all speed and make him one whom the three worlds revere. O three-eyed one! Such is that mercy-softened eye of yours: "*sakata na dekhi dīna kara jore*" — he cannot bear to see the humble stand with folded hands.

Be that as it may. After a long while this act of worship came to its end. Readers may judge for themselves out of their own feeling: how should this dull pen express that great meeting, that inward state of devotee and Lord?

Having taken *prasād*, the sādhu sat some time before Śrī Mahārāj. After a while the command came: "Bābā, now go." Hearing this command the sādhu was thrown into distress. He had no sooner folded his hands and bowed his head to make some prayer than that venerable blessed form vanished on the instant. At this he felt no particular astonishment, for he had understood that this is the natural *līlā* of Śiva in the form of a man.

He spent some moments there; his heart, already aching with separation, now came into a state stranger still. Seeing this unheard-of condition of the sādhu's, the company of devotees there requested him respectfully: "Great soul! Be so kind as to give us a full account of yourself, and take the trouble to tell us the cause of this more-than-earthly steadfastness of yours towards Śrī Sadgurudev." The sādhu related his whole story before them all. At this unveiling of a hidden mystery — an unveiling made by Śrī Rām himself, the lord of all the universes, the full Brahman — every one of the

devotees began to count themselves blessed indeed.

(13)

A scholar of great learning put this question to Śrī Sadgurudev Mahārāj: “In the scriptures there is a description of the universal form. We too have reasoned it out on the authority of scripture, but no wholly satisfying answer has been obtained. Be so kind as to say something on this subject from your own blessed mouth.”

Śrī Mahārāj sat silent. It was his rule that even the most hidden of matters touching the spirit he would cause a man to realise directly. He used speech very sparingly. By speech no fitting and undoubtable resolution is reached:

nāyam ātmā tarkeṇa matir āpaneyā

This Self is not to be reached by argument; this understanding is not to be got by reasoning.

[after *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.2.9 and 1.2.23, as the book quotes them together]

Following this very principle, Śrī Mahārāj said: “Shut your eyes, do your worship a little while, and then open them.”

After opening his eyes, as far as that scholar’s sight could reach, in every place and in every visible thing he had *darśan* of Śrī Mahārāj alone. In every atom he saw at that moment the same Śrī Gurudev, wearing his *kurtā* and his cap.

After this true realising of the universal form, the first utterance to break from the paṇḍit’s mouth was this: that in truth the nature of God cannot be settled by scripture; scripture is only a pointing, on the maxim of “*the moon and the branch*” — the finger that points through the branches is not the moon.

*sira bhujaṅga bhūṣita nita he śiva satya lalāma,
karuṇāmaya samaratha śrī sadguru bāraṁbāra praṇāma. || 1 ||*

Your head for ever adorned with serpents — O Śiva, true and beautiful one:
compassionate and all-able Śrī Sadguru, obeisance to you again and again. || 1 ||

*jaṭā gaṅga sira sarpa śaśi vilasata bhavya mahān,
nīlakaṇṭha nikhileśa śiva mohana teja nidhāna. || 2 ||*

Gaṅgā in the matted hair; serpent and moon shining upon the head, splendid and great:
blue-throated, Lord of all, Śiva, enchanting treasure-house of light. || 2 ||

*parāśakti pararūpa tuma parama parātpara nātha,
parānanda paradhāma he parama puruṣa vikhyāta. || 3 ||*

You are the supreme Power, the supreme Form, Lord beyond the beyond:
supreme bliss, supreme abode — O renowned supreme Person. || 3 ||

*harihara sama jana jiya basata sarasa charita jagajāna,
karana kṛpā pragate jagata sādhaḥ janake prāṇa. || 4 ||*

As Hari and as Hara alike you dwell in the hearts of your people; the world knows your
sweet deeds:
to show grace you appeared in the world, you who are the breath of the seekers. || 4 ||

*kisa vidha pragaṭṭā amita guṇa hū matimanda apāra,
kṣamā karo jana jāni nija śrī brahmachārī karuṇāgāra. || 5 ||*

By what means shall I set forth your measureless virtues? I am dull of wit beyond all measure:

forgive me, knowing me for your own — Śrī Brahmachārī, house of compassion. || 5 ||

Om

|| Obeisance to Śrī Sadguru ||

The Bouquet of the Examination of Essence

The first stabaka

(1)

*parama brahma saṁśuddhaṁ sachchidānanda vigrahaṁ,
mānasaṁ tāmasaṁ dīvyāt kurtā ṭopī dharaṁ mahaḥ.*

The supreme Brahman, wholly pure, whose body is Being, Consciousness and Bliss —
may that Light, wearing *kurtā* and cap, shine upon my mind, which darkness holds.

|| The Ūrmilā Commentary ||

*śrī lakṣmaṇa kṛtānām hi padyānām bhāva-darśane,
samarthā ūrmilā ṭikā priyasyeṅgita-kovidā.*

To reveal the inner sense of the verses made by Śrī Lakṣmaṇa,
the Ūrmilā commentary is competent — she being skilled in her beloved's every hint.

To reveal the inner sense of the verses composed by Śrī Lakṣmaṇajī — my own supreme chosen deity, and the supreme devotee of the Lord Śaṅkar, the *chakor* bird gazing at the moon of Śrī Rāmachandra's face — the Śrī Ūrmilā commentary alone is fully competent. For it is the wholly devoted wife who is competent to analyse and to understand her beloved's every gesture and every hint. Śrī Ūrmilājī alone can properly bring out what is in her dearest one's heart — what her beloved is aiming at in a given utterance. For this reason it seemed fitting to give this most beautiful commentary the name Śrī Ūrmilā-bhāṣya; because she alone, of her kindness, is competent to make plain the deep hints of Śrī Lakhanlāl.

The auspicious name of this first *stabaka* is “The Bouquet of the Examination of Essence.” In it the philosophical investigation of the principle of Brahman is carried out. The eleven verses of this *stabaka*, standing as eleven aphorisms, take on the character of root-aphorisms and are the foundation stone of the whole book. In the *stabakas* that follow, it is these same root principles that are expanded.

Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadgurudev is the pure nature of the Supreme Brahman, and his blessed body is of the nature of Being, Consciousness and Bliss. May he — the doer, wearing the ear-covering cap, Maheśvara whose very form is divine — make the temple of my mind, which the quality of darkness pervades, shine with his own divine radiance.

In the Vedas and the Vedāntas the nature of Brahman has been set forth in full. Great and venerable sages have made every effort, out of their divine knowledge, to establish that Light beyond the beyond in words; but a principle which is beyond the reach of speech and of all the senses — how is it to be fully established in words? And so, where the scriptures have laid down “*athāto brahma-jijñāsā*” — “now, therefore, the desire to know Brahman is declared” [*Brahma Sūtra* 1.1.1] — beyond that point they have each taken flight according to their own understanding, and have at the last come to rest by saying only this: “*neti neti nita nigama kahaĩ*” — “not this, not this,” the scriptures say for ever.

Here Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar, that ocean of compassion, has been pointed to as the pure form of the supreme Brahman. The purport of the word *saṁśuddha*, “wholly pure,” is therefore this: that Brahman variegated by *māyā* cannot be Brahman’s wholly pure form. Beyond *māyā*, beyond ego-sense, beyond the senses, beyond form, taste, smell, touch and sound, beyond the five great elements — that is, the pure nature of the Brahman beyond the beyond — is Śrī Śambhu alone; who, being beyond *māyā*, pervades the moving and unmoving world and every last atom of it as a wholly free and luminous form. And although he is beyond the three *guṇas*, yet by his own freedom he takes on a blessed body of Being, Consciousness and Bliss, and descends into this field of action — to give consolation to the hearts of his devotees, to fulfil the eyes of flesh, and to behold for himself his own nature come down upon the stage of the world; and so he makes the mind-temple of his devotees, pervaded though it is by the quality of darkness, wholly luminous with his own beauty, which enchants the three worlds. For very few can be capable of worshipping the Brahman without qualities. The ordinary run of people, badly entangled as they are in the wheel of the world, can be delivered only by the worship of God with qualities. And so, taking on a form, and moving about in a particular dress that steals the mind, he fulfils every living creature out of his own bliss — some by his sight, some by his touch, and some by the singing of his praises.

Of just this kind was the dress of Śrī Guru Mahārāj, by the mere meditating on which a man’s heart, scorched by the three afflictions, comes to know a boundless peace. When so beautiful a form has settled into a man’s heart, then all the forms of the world begin to seem flat to him; for Rahīm has said it plainly:

*priyatama chhavi nayanana basau para chhavi kahā samāya?
bharī sarāya rahīma lakhi pathika āpu phiri jāya.*

When the beloved’s image dwells in the eyes, where shall another image find room?
Seeing the inn already full, says Rahīm, the traveller turns away of himself.

That is to say: if an ant finds a grain of sugar-candy or a heap of sugar-drops somewhere, it takes it in its mouth and runs for its hole; but if that same ant were set down inside a jar of sugar-candy, it would wander about in every direction, drowned in delight, tasting the sweetness and content. At that moment it could make no effort to fill its mouth and run for the hole.

The reason is plain. If we become absorbed in material form, taste, smell and touch, then, because of their pettiness, no full satisfaction can be had. And so long as the individual soul does not obtain an all-surpassing satisfaction, it stays restless and wanders after satisfaction from one sense-object

to another.

In such a case, if the mind begins to take its pleasure in Brahman — the utmost limit of form and taste and smell and every other object — then the petty worldly pleasures of the senses will begin to seem trifling to it beside that endless treasury of supreme bliss; and, once drowned in that supreme bliss, it will become able to let go of its own accord the crocodiles of desire, anger, liking, loathing and greed. Therefore, when the form of the whole Śiva-Brahman, wearing *kurtā* and ear-cloth, has settled into these eyes, then these eyes, being satisfied with the supremely sweet beauty of the Guru-Brahman, will not fall prey to the petty enticements outside, and the mind will obtain an endless peace. It is for this reason that devotees seat that world-enchancing beauty of their Lord Śrī Gurudev in the temple of their minds, and pray for the lighting up of the truth of the Self.

These opening eleven verses of the “Bouquet of the Examination of Essence” expound, in the form of aphorisms, the hidden and essential nature of the Śiva-principle. After this, in the other *stabakas*, light has been thrown on each principle separately. That which is self-luminous needs no other light to make it shine.

And so, to the very end, the establishing of what is to be proved is carried through by means of this same root principle. The chief purpose of holding the form of the supreme Brahman to be a blessed body of Being, Consciousness and Bliss appears to be this: that being a wholly pure blessed body, it is the one and only ground of all three — being, consciousness and bliss; and that is why there exists in it the matchless power to make the mind, wrapped in the quality of darkness, blaze with its own divine power of consciousness.

Loving readers: this is that very first verse, in the form of a great mantra, which broke of a sudden from the mouth of this worthless one as the very incarnation of Śrī Sarasvatī, at ten minutes past eight in the morning on the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Māgh, Sainvat 2013 [January 1957]; and by whose coming forth this life of mine, having gained refuge with Śrī Mahendra Svāmī Mahārāj, was made fulfilled — and, obtaining the knowledge of his true nature, received divine knowledge and the divine eye.

(2)

*moha-dhvānta samāchchhanna rāgādi grāha dustare,
saṁsārārṇava magnasya ekam evāvalambanam.*

For one sunk in the ocean of the world — covered over by the darkness of delusion,
hard to cross for the crocodiles of passion and the rest —
You alone are the support.

For a soul drowned in this ocean of a world — covered on every side by the darkness that is delusion, and pervaded by the crocodiles of desire, anger, passion, envy and the rest, so that a man cannot swim across it and come out by his own strength — the blessed feet of Śrī Gurudev are the one and only refuge.

This world is of itself hard to cross, like a great ocean; and then the tendencies of delusion, greed, envy and the rest, taking on the form of darkness, are making this ocean of the world harder to pass still. Beyond even that, the crocodiles that are desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy —

dwelling in the human body itself, man's greatest enemies, which do not leave off pursuing this soul for even a moment — make this ocean of the world altogether impassable. For the individual soul drowning in this fearsome ocean of a world, the all-powerful blessed feet of Śrī Gurudev are the one and only support.

Just as, though the ocean and its darkness and its crocodiles and all the rest are the very tokens of impassability, yet if a sound boat is to be had a man can mount it and travel with ease — even so, this too is needful: that the boatman whose hand is on the rudder be very skilful, capable and worthy of trust; only then can the voyage be carried through entire. Otherwise, however strong the boat may be, there remains the fear of its being turned back by the boatman's carelessness. If the boat is fair and sound, and the boatman is a master of his craft, then make the voyage of life without misgiving: there is no need of any doubt whatever.

Therefore, O Lord — although in this fathomless ocean of the world an empire of fathomless darkness lies on every side, and although it is hard to cross for the crocodiles of appetite — we have firm faith in your powerful arms. And so, by your grace, the little boat of our life will certainly come easily to the shore of the ocean of becoming; of this there is not the least doubt.

O God of gods! You are wholly able, and you are our one refuge; show us grace and carry us over this ocean of becoming:

jāñ kahāñ taji charaṇa tihāre, kehi ko nāma patita pāvana jaga, kehi ati dīna piyāre.

Where shall I go, leaving your feet? Whose name in this world is “purifier of the fallen”?

To whom else is the utterly wretched man dear?

O Lord! Leaving your supremely divine form, where am I now to wander? I look in all four directions with hopeful eyes, but wherever my gaze goes, there an empire of hopelessness meets it. Therefore, of your kindness, grant to this trifling creature also the refuge of your own blessed feet, and so make good your names — “purifier of the fallen” and “lifter-up of the lowest.”

(3)

*satyodbhavaṁ satyarataṁ satye līnaṁ sadāśrayam,
satya-mārga praṇetāraṁ dhruva-satyaṁ nato 'smy aham.*

Born of truth, delighting in truth, merged in truth, the everlasting refuge;
the founder of the road of truth, the fixed and changeless Truth — to Him I bow.

O yoga and lord of yoga! You are born of truth and are unceasingly engaged in truth; you are merged in truth itself, and you are the giver of refuge to the true. You lay out the road of truth. To that fixed truth which is your nature — you who are truth in all three times — I bow again and again.

The whole created world is made of the three *guṇas*: in one thing there is a greater measure of *sattva*, in another a greater measure of *tamas* with *sattva* and *rajas* in lesser measure. But the nature of Śrī Guru-Brahman, adorned with every glory, has arisen out of pure *sattva* and is *sattva* made visible — and therefore his nature is truth itself.

He is unceasingly engaged in that truth which *rajas* and *tamas* cannot cloud. He is merged in Brahman, which is truth; for since no admixture of any other quality enters into it, it happens at once

— as milk is merged in milk, and milk merged in milk can by no means be shown separate again; so, when the supremely pure Brahman is merged in the supremely pure Brahman, its nature is past all telling. It is for this very reason that you are the one refuge of those in whom *sattva* predominates; and the road which is fixed truth — the eternal Vedic road — you bring forth from your own breath in the form of Hayagrīva. To that nature of fixed truth I bow, that truth may come forth in my own soul.

(4)

*nānā mata samudbhrānta jīva jyoti pradāyakam,
mārtaṇḍa maṇḍalākāraṁ bhāsvaram śānti dāyakam.*

Giver of the light to souls bewildered among many doctrines;
shaped like the orb of the sun, radiant, the giver of peace.

O merciful one! Your nature is that which grants the light of knowledge to souls that have gone astray among many doctrines and schools. Like the disc of the sun, your nature is radiant and blazing, and it is the giver of an unfailing peace.

In this world many doctrines are current. The travellers of each doctrine call their own full of substance and declare the other worthless, and so sow the seed of mutual envy and hatred. By this, no doubt, their own standing is momentarily raised and a momentary satisfaction is produced in their minds; but because the mutual difference of opinion goes on growing, the followers of those doctrines are caught in a knowledge founded on error and lose their own road.

When such travellers — souls fallen from the road — go astray in the darkness of *māyā*, then the divine nature of Śrī Gurudev shows them the way with its matchless light of knowledge.

Just as the orb of the sun, shining by its own light, lights up the whole world, so too the supremely radiant nature of Śrī Sadgurudev, shining by its own light, not merely gives light to all the creatures of the whole world, but gives them spiritual peace as well.

The light of the sun is able to drive away only the darkness that is outside; and if a thousand suns were to rise at once, they still could not drive away the darkness within. But this is the more-than-earthly divine light of the Supreme Brahman, which gives the heart a quiet light and so grants peace, and which, by the refuge of its own blessed feet, fills a man to overflowing with joy.

(5)

*śiva rūpaṁ śivarataṁ śiva saṅkalpa sādhakam,
śivā śakti susandīptaṁ śaśi-maṇḍala maṇḍitam.*

Whose form is Śiva, who delights in Śiva, who brings the auspicious resolve to its fulfilment;
beautifully ablaze with the power of Śivā, adorned with the disc of the moon.

O Lord! Your nature is the very form of the Lord Śaṅkar, and you are unceasingly merged in the form of Śrī Śaṅkar. You grant the fulfilment of those resolves which are auspicious and work the good of the world; and you are ablaze with the power of Śivā — that is, of Pārvatījī.

Your nature is adorned with the blessed disc of the moon. O Lord! You yourself are the form of the auspicious Śrī Śiva; or rather, being a descent of Śiva, you are Śrī Śaṅkar made visible. On

the authority of what the scriptures declare — “*śivo bhūtvā śivaṁ yajet*”, “having become Śiva, let a man worship Śiva” — you take on the form of Śrī Śiva and remain absorbed in meditation upon Śrī Sadāśiva; and by granting success to the wish for the world’s good that any creature whatever may form, you give encouragement to the works of the world’s welfare. That is to say, the fulfilment of noble resolves can be obtained by no one without worshipping you:

*ichchhita phala binu śiva avarādhe,
lahahim na koṭi yoga japa sādhe.*

Without worshipping Śiva the fruit one wishes for is not gained,
though one practise ten million yogas and repetitions.

From such sayings it is proved that to this day no one has obtained the fulfilment of an auspicious resolve of the mind without the grace of Sāmba Sadāśiva, Śrī Bhole Bābā.

Śivā-Śakti — that is, the image joined with the nourishing and sustaining power of Śrī Māteśvarī Śrī Ambikā, worker of the world’s good — abides for ever on the left side of Śrī Sadāśiva. The divine brow stays adorned with the disc of the moon; and because of this, at the mere sight of him the soul scorched by the three afflictions must of itself come to taste an easy peace. And in the hearts of those who meditate, the moment they meditate on that blessed ocean of supreme beauty adorned with the moon’s disc, the tasting of the bliss of Brahman is the natural consequence. May that very essence of beauty, the Śiva-Brahman, be gracious to fill my heart with joy by his light.

(6)
*ānandābdhi samudbhūtaṁ chidānandaika rūpiṇam,
ānanda samplave magnam ānandendurṁ nato ‘smy aham.*

Risen out of the ocean of bliss, whose one form is Consciousness and Bliss,
sunk in the flood of bliss — to that Moon of bliss I bow.

O Chandraśekhara, you who wear the moon! Your nature has arisen from the ocean that is bliss, and is Consciousness and Bliss made visible, and it stays for ever sunk in the sea of supreme bliss. O Moon-god whose very nature is bliss — I bow again and again at your blessed feet.

The sense is this: O Moon of bliss, Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! Your most beautiful and auspicious nature is born of the great ocean of bliss. For in the arising of a blessed body whose nature is supreme bliss, a body made of worldly materials could not bring forth the light of bliss in its fullness; and so this divine nature is born of the great sea of bliss, and is Consciousness and Bliss made visible in a blessed image. And just as the Moon-god, risen out of the ocean of milk, sinks again into that ocean, so too the Moon of bliss, risen out of the ocean of bliss, sinks again into the ocean of supreme bliss, which is the nature of the Supreme Brahman beyond the beyond. To such a Moon of bliss — born of bliss, himself the very image of bliss, and merged in bliss — to the blessed feet of Śrī Śaṅkar, the devotees bow, that they may obtain bliss.

(7)
*māyā javanikāchchhanna bhakta netreḥṣaṇāñjanam,
gañjanam bhava bijānām mahendra mana rañjanam.*

The eye-salve that gives sight to the eyes of devotees curtained over by *māyā*;
the crusher of the seeds of becoming; the delight of Mahendra’s mind.

O Lord of yoga! For giving the divine light to the eyes of devotees veiled by the covering that is *māyā*, your nature is like the nectar-salve for the eyes.

It destroys worldly actions; and it gladdens the mind of Śrī Mahendra Svāmī, that jewel of a disciple who is your own dearest one, sheltered at your blessed feet.

O Yogirāj Sadāśiva! Worldly *māyā* is a very sorrowful thing, for this *māyā* draws even the minds of the wise to itself by force; and so the condition of ordinary souls, caught in the net of *māyā*, becomes wholly pitiable. But before your nature that *māyā* dances like a dancing girl, and does not let any kind of calamity arise for your devotee at all.

Therefore your divine beauty gives light like a beautiful divine collyrium, to give sight to the eyes of devotees curtained over by *māyā*. Just as an eye-salve prepared from divine herbs cuts away the film of the eye and sets light moving in a blind man's eyes, so the mere sight of your beautiful form lifts the curtain of ignorance from before the devotees' eyes and produces a light full of knowledge. By this the evil deeds gathered in former births are destroyed.

The worldly actions a man has done in a former birth and in this one are of the nature of seed; and just as the sower of a seed receives its fruit, so the good and evil actions done by a soul give their fruit without fail in birth after birth. But just as the sprouting power of roasted seeds is destroyed by fire, so that when they are sown no tree grows at all — and fruit is altogether out of the question — in the same way, by the mere sight of you the fruit-giving power in worldly actions, good and evil alike, is destroyed.

That is: a man has to take birth in order to undergo the fruit even of good actions, and to undergo the fruit of evil actions birth is of course necessary. But when the seeds of both kinds of action, good and evil, are stripped of their sprouting power by the mere sight of you, then this soul becomes fit for liberation. So the power to undo the seeds of action in this way is fully present in the sight of your form. And your dearest devotee and disciple, Śrī Mahendra Svāmī, beholding your divine form with his own eyes, stays night and day sunk in an ocean of bliss within his own mind. May that divine nature of yours give light in our hearts, and grant the soul a bliss that is full.

(8)

*tattva-jñāna-rataṁ tattvaṁ tattva brahma svarūpiṇam,
tattva jñāna pradātāraṁ tattvātmaka kalevaram.*

Delighting in the knowledge of the truth; the Truth itself; whose nature is the Brahman that is Truth;
the giver of the knowledge of the truth, whose very body is made of truth.

O great sage! Your divine nature is for ever engaged in the knowledge of the Brahman that is Truth. It is itself Truth made visible. It is the divine form of the Supreme Brahman, void of every limiting condition; and, showing grace to other devotees, it is the giver to them of the real knowledge of Brahman, true in all three times. Every limb of your blessed body is the very substance of that Supreme Brahman.

O best of sages! Although you are yourself the Brahman that is Truth, still, by your divine knowledge, you remain engaged in meditation upon the Brahman beyond the beyond, whose nature is the

Self.

This is the supreme truth of Vedānta: that Brahman itself contemplates none but itself, and that you are yourself the very form of Truth. Just as the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, in the *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*, gave peace to his dear devotee Arjuna by showing him the divine form and declaring the highest reality among all glories to be his own very self — so all the powerful and great glories that exist in the world display only a partial excellence of that Brahman. Therefore it is proved beyond dispute that you alone are the form of Truth, and that every substance besides you which exists in the world is void of substance. As the truth in the human body is the soul: once it has gone out, the body, though furnished with all its senses, is of no use at all, and serves only for burning or for burying.

So the brightness lasts in all glories only so long as the light of that Truth remains in them, and when the Truth departs all things become void of substance. Therefore you are the Brahman that is Truth made visible; and being engaged in the knowledge of Truth and being yourself the form of Truth, you are also the giver of the knowledge of Truth. Only a man who has a full treasury of something can be able to give that thing to others; but one who does not himself possess that thing — how can he be able to give it to others? So you are the giver of the knowledge of Truth as well, and every limb of your blessed body is Truth in form. Being of an indescribable divine radiance, you are the centre of all real being and its true nature.

(9)

*tattva kalpalatā puṣpaṁ mahendra bhṛṅga-sevitam,
mānase ramatā nityaṁ saṁsārāmaya bheṣajam.*

Flower of the wish-fulfilling creeper of Truth, waited upon by the bee that is Mahendra;
for ever taking its pleasure in the mind; the medicine for the sickness that is the world.

O Lord! You are the beautiful flower of the wish-granting tree that is the knowledge of Truth — a flower which, by its matchless splendour, is waited upon by the bee that is Śrī Mahendra. May that divine form of yours, the flower of the beautiful creeper of Truth, take its pleasure in my mind for ever.

In the verse written above, the devotee prays humbly to his Lord: O Lord, the knowledge of the Brahman that is Truth is as it were a wish-fulfilling tree. Just as, going into the happy shade of the wish-fulfilling tree, whatever a man imagines in his heart comes and stands at once before him — so too your more-than-earthly divine form is, as it were, the beautiful flower of the wish-fulfilling tree that is knowledge of the Self. For of all the parts of a tree the flower is held the most important: above bark, leaf, branch and fruit, the flower is counted the chief part in beauty and in quality. So you are not merely the wish-fulfilling tree of Self-knowledge; more than that, you are meditated upon as the flower which is the very essence of that tree.

Here the figuring of Śrī Mahendra as the bee is the reason for figuring the Lord as the flower of the wish-granting creeper; for the bee is the flower's true customer, and covetous of it. The flower which no bee loves is held to have been born into the world in vain. In the same way Śrī Mahendra Svāmī is a suitor for your qualities — your worth, your greatness, your knowledge, your dispassion, your yoga. As the bee stays busy in its suit for nectar, and even when it has tasted nectar in good measure is

still not satisfied — so your dear disciple too, though he takes initiation into your more-than-earthly qualities night and day, and though he is satisfied again and again, remains greedy still. As the saying has it — *“lubudha madhupa iva tajai na pāsū”*, “like a greedy bee, he will not leave his side” — and by his unceasing service he makes that saying good.

Your nature, joined with such qualities as are beyond this world, is the one great medicine for the sickness that is worldly birth and death; that is, it is the giver of immortality to the soul. May that form take its pleasure in our minds unceasingly, at every moment, for the welfare of us creatures tormented by worldly ignorance. That is to say: may we, enchanted by its true beauty, be freed from the snare of birth and death, and succeed by your grace in attaining the real truth whose form is *“ahaṁ brahma”* — “I am Brahman.” This alone is our inmost longing.

(10)

*mahendra hṛdayābje tvaṁ vasa āchandra-tāraṁ,
tava te mohinīm mūrtim dṛṣṭvā lokaḥ prasīdatām.*

Dwell thou in the lotus of Mahendra’s heart, as long as moon and stars endure;
and seeing that enchanting image of yours, let the world be glad.

O most glorious one! May your beauty abide in the heart-lotus of Śrī Mahendra Svāmī, that jewel of a disciple and supreme devotee of yours, for as long as moon and stars remain in the world; and, meditating on your beautiful image seated in his heart-lotus, may the creatures of a world scorched by the three afflictions be drowned in bliss.

O helmsman of the ocean of yoga! This Mahendra Svāmī Mahārāj is your devotee without a second and your true disciple. May your divine image abide in his heart as long as moon and stars, or earth and sky, remain in the world. This is the heartfelt blessing of the soul of me, a brāhmaṇa, echoing from every corner of my heart; for what has this trifling servant, in virtue of his brāhmaṇahood, besides a blessing — that he might lay it in service before him and so show his gratitude for the divine knowledge granted him? Nor does he appear to need any other blessing, for the supreme treasure of his heart is you yourself.

In your sight, in meditation on you, in the repetition of your name, in the remembrance of you alone he stays drowned in bliss night and day. Therefore, to grant success to this brāhmaṇa’s words, be seated unceasingly in his heart-lotus; for by your abiding in his heart the good of countless devotees can be brought about through the sight of you.

The pure knowledge of Brahman has always come down by the succession of gurus; and so the good fortune of bringing the Bhāgīrathī that is your own nature down to worldly creatures as trifling as ourselves belongs to this great man alone.

It is he who has shown the kindness of bringing this deathless message to our souls; otherwise we were creatures stuck fast in the mire of cavilling founded on error. What gift, then, shall we offer our benefactor, and so be fulfilled? We offer this very blessing as our gift. It was in his divine soul that we obtained the first sight of your image; and so, meditating on that divine image of yours, full of supreme bliss, seated in that temple of the mind, may we stay drowned in bliss night and day. For since it is through him that we are made fit for the good fortune of that sight, may we go on seeing

the nature that is true in all three times in that very place where the good fortune of the first sight was obtained.

There is a second sense as well: that our fortunes are not strong enough for us to go on seeing you unceasingly with our own sight, since our minds are exceedingly restless and cannot stay gathered in one place; and you are all-pervading in your nature. Yet he has bound you to himself by his devotion. So, just as by the help of an instrument such as the radio even a man of limited understanding can sit in his own room and hear the hidden and widespread sound of the sky — because, mastery over the sound-waves having been gained by the instrument’s power, those waves, pervasive though they are, are concentrated inside that instrument — in the same way, when you abide unceasingly in Śrī Mahendra Svāmī’s heart, adorned with faith and devotion and love, being charmed by his more-than-earthly qualities, then we shall easily be able to behold the auspicious sight of your divine light concentrated in that instrument which is his pure heart. For this truth is set down in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*:

aham bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija.

Though I am wholly free, I am dependent upon my devotees, as though I were not free at all,
O brāhmaṇa.

And so it is altogether impossible that the good fortune of this steady sight of you should be obtained by devotees so easily anywhere else.

This “Bouquet of the Examination of Essence” stands for the reasoned examination of the principle of Brahman. In it both forms, the unqualified and the qualified, have been examined. From this it is plain that the knowledge of the principle of Brahman is deathless knowledge; that it passes from one heart into another heart; and that book, Veda, Purāṇa and history are altogether unable to display it fully.

That truth, if it can be obtained at all, can be obtained only by the grace of Sadgurudev. For that there exists no other means whatever in the world. Of it the poet says:

*soi jānai jehim dehu janāī, jānata tumhahi tumhai hoi jāī,
tumharihim kṛpā tumhahi raghunandana, jānahim bhagata bhagata ura chandana.*

He alone knows it to whom you give the knowing; and knowing you, he becomes you.
By your grace alone, Raghunandan, do the devotees know you —
you who are sandal-paste to the devotee’s heart.

That is a truth to be won by the grace of Śrī Guru alone, by the grace of the Lord alone; even a glimpse of that knowledge is not to be had by other means. Once a man has obtained it, he has no need of the gaining of any other thing:

yal labdhvā chādhikam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ.

Having gained which, he counts no other gain greater than it.

[*Bhagavad Gītā* 6.22, as the book quotes it]

That is: on obtaining that supreme gain, all a man’s appetites are stilled of themselves, and he is made blessed for ever.

(11)

*stava rājam imam puṇyam paṭhanti śraddhayānvitāḥ,
śrī guroḥ kṛpayā teṣāṁ karasthāḥ sarva-siddhayaḥ.*

Those who, filled with faith, recite this holy king of hymns —
by the grace of Śrī Guru, all the attainments lie in their hands.

By reciting with faith and devotion this most holy king of hymns — that is, merely the “Hymn of the Examination of Essence” — all attainments, material and spiritual alike, become wholly easy of access, by the grace of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Śrī Gurudev.

The real purport of this is as follows. If in his life a man can find each day so much time as will let him recite the whole hymn daily, then there is no measuring his supreme joy. Otherwise, if time is short, then even by reciting only the ten verses of the Examination of Essence, full peace and happiness are obtained. For these are the root-aphorisms; it is from these that I obtained the divine light and the power to unlock the mysteries that follow. This is my own personal experience. You too have come into this field of action to gain experience: try it and see. To make a man believe in the burning power of fire, in the fragrance of musk, or in the divine light of jewels, no oath is needed — these are truths true in all three times, fixed and unshakable. || 11 ||

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Divine Form

The second stabaka

(1)

*mahendrāchala sambhūtā yogi sāgara gāminī,
punātu bhuvanaṁ pūrṇī puṇya-stuti kathā nadī.*

Risen from the mountain that is Mahendra, running to the ocean that is the yogi —
may the full river of this holy story of praise make the whole world pure.

The name settled upon the second *stabaka* of the *Śrī Sadguru Stuti Kusumāñjali* is “The Bouquet of the Examination of the Divine Form.” In it, by displaying the various forms of the Brahman beyond the beyond, the establishing of one indescribable Śiva-principle is carried through; and the whole meaning of human life is shown to lie in taking refuge in that principle with the whole of oneself.

This most holy story — the Gaṅgā of praise that purifies the world — is stranger than other rivers. Worldly rivers set a current of water flowing, and by bathing in them a man’s body and mind are cleansed. But this river of story has this strangeness in it: that its water is sound itself; and sound, being the eternal property of space, is an eternal thing, and, pervading the atmosphere undiminished, is a thing that flows on always and equally even in places where the water of rivers cannot reach — in mountain caves and hollows.

Again, rivers make holy only that region through which their current runs; but this river of praise has this excellence, that the power to make the whole three worlds holy at once is present in it equally. Those who would bathe in a river must go to the riverbank; but this Gaṅgā takes the form of sound and, taking the form of a book, arrives of itself at the house of every enquiring devotee, to make him pure.

As other rivers descend from the mountains, so this Gaṅgā of knowledge descends from Śrī Mahendrāchala — Mount Mahendra. Here Śrī Mahendra Svāmī, blessed in his very name, has been given the figure of a mountain in the language of poetry; and in truth this appears well founded, for as a mountain is steady and immovable, so Śrī Svāmī Mahārāj’s faith at the blessed feet of the supremely venerable Gurudev is immovable, and the form of him seated in *samādhi* appears altogether mountain-still. From that holy Mount Mahendra this most purifying Gaṅgā of knowledge comes forth; and as worldly and heavenly rivers alike find their end in the ocean, so this most purifying Gaṅgā of knowledge reaches of itself to the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudev, and easily carries its travellers there too. Such is this river of the gods that is knowledge: full with the whole of itself; and by its fullness and its purity it makes holy not one world only, but, purifying the three worlds, stays for ever engaged in the

welfare of the whole moving and unmoving universe.

Blessed is this most purifying Gaṅgā of knowledge; and blessed are those fortunate companies of devotees who plunge into it, and who by that plunging taste peace and joy in body, in mind, in speech and in spirit.

(2)

*yogīśvarāṇāṃ charaṇaṃ pavitraṃ yogīśvarāṇāṃ vachanaṃ pavitraṃ,
yogīśvarāṇāṃ mananaṃ pavitraṃ yogīśvarāṇāṃ śaraṇaṃ pavitraṃ.*

Holy are the feet of the lords of yoga; holy is their speech;
holy is the pondering of them; holy is refuge with them.

In this unavailing world the story of the Lord is the one thing to which the name “*pāvanaṃ pāvanānām*” — “the purifier of purifiers” — can be given; that is, in the recital of the Lord’s qualities there exists an undiminished power to make holy things holier still. The lotus feet of the kings of yoga are supremely holy, for:

prāyeṇa tīrthābhigamāpadeśaiḥ svayaṃ hi tīrthāni punanti santaḥ.

Under the pretext of going on pilgrimage, it is the saints themselves who purify the holy places.

At the Kumbh and at other such seasons, saints go to the places of pilgrimage on the pretext of visiting them, and make even those holy places pure with the dust of their feet.

By the authority of the books of *dharma*, the removal of the world’s great sins comes about through bathing at a place of pilgrimage. Since the sins of sinners are poured into them night and day, it must be that in time the power of these places wanes; but from time to time saints come and, by the setting down of their most sacred feet, make the water of those places sinless and full of power once more. It is for this reason that the makers of the scriptures have held the lotus feet of the lords of yoga supremely purifying.

And the speech of the lords of yoga is supremely holy too: by the mere hearing of it the light of knowledge arises even in wholly ignorant men, and from the teachings heard in satsaṅg a man’s mind obtains supreme peace at once.

In the same way the remembering and the pondering of the kings of yoga are tokens of the highest purity. By the mere remembering of them the many kinds of base resolve that arise in the mind are destroyed on the instant. And refuge with the lords of yoga is beyond doubt the holiest thing of all; for however defiled a soul may be, on taking refuge with the great with a true heart it becomes pure of itself, and comes to be endowed with the more-than-earthly

power of making others pure as well. || 2 ||

(3)

*hṛdayāravinde vasa me hy aśraṇaṃ na tvad vinā me virahāgni śāntiḥ,
śāntasya te darśana mātra janmā miṣṭhānnavan me manaso na śāntiḥ.*

Dwell unceasingly in the lotus of my heart; without you the fire of separation in me is not quieted.

The mere sight of you, the peaceful one, is like the sight of sweets — my mind gets no peace from it.

O you who are tender to those who take refuge, support of the world! Dwell unceasingly in the heart-lotus of me, a sinner; for without obtaining you it is impossible that my fire of separation should be quieted. This fire in the heart takes the fearful shape of desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy, and seeks at every moment to burn the soul to ashes. The sight of your sweet image is supremely peaceful and gives peace; but, O Lord, this soul of mine cannot be satisfied by the mere sight of you. It has been set spinning on the full wheel of the dancing-girl *māyā*. Just as it is impossible for hunger to be stilled by the mere looking at the sweets laid out in a confectioner's shop — so this soul can obtain supreme peace only when you show the kindness of making my heart your permanent dwelling place and so fulfil it. Therefore be gracious: be seated in this empty heart and make me glad.
|| 3 ||

(4)

*dandahyamāno 'smi kalatra vitta chintā chitāyām bhavataḥ samakṣam,
katham kṛpāchārya bhavat-kṛpā-kaṇā nātarti sakṣoma harātra muñchasi.*

I am burning up on the pyre of anxiety for wife and wealth — and burning before your very eyes.

How is it, Kṛpāchārya, that you do not release upon me here one drop of your grace, and take my torment away?

O Kṛpāchārya — master of grace, venerable teacher who shows mercy! In this boundless ocean of becoming I am burning, before your very eyes, upon a pyre of anxieties: for wife, for wealth, for sons and for many another craving. In such a state, why do you not show the kindness of sprinkling my soul with the drops of your nectar of grace — drops fully able to still the sorrows of sorrowing creatures at once — and so quiet me?

The purpose of addressing the venerable Śrī Gurudev at the outset by the title Kṛpāchārya is this: that you are the teacher of grace, supremely compassionate. In this mire that is the world I am sunk to the neck. Now I am distracted with anxiety over the keeping of a wife; now I am occupied in thinking of the household's oil and salt and firewood; now the worry of the children's schooling, and now of their clothes and food, torments my soul. That anxiety is itself a kind of terrible funeral pyre; for the great have shown that anxiety is more deadly than the pyre. The pyre burns only a dead body to ashes; but this anxiety is so terrible that it dries and burns the living body itself, and wastes a man away to death.

If that pyre of anxiety were burning me out of your sight, there would be nothing to be distressed about. Taking it for the play of fate, with no protector at hand, I would have borne the burning. But the greater sorrow is this: "*bhavataḥ samakṣam*" — that I am burning in it while you look on; and your title is Kṛpāchārya, the master of grace. Why then do you not rain the drops of the nectar of grace upon me, to still my pain and my worldly ills of mind and body — that all my afflictions may be taken away, and I may know happiness by your grace, and so your very epithet "Kṛpāchārya" be made fully good? || 4 ||

(5)

*kechij janāḥ tvām kṛpam āhur īdyaṁ yatiṁ cha kechin nṛpatiṁ cha kechit,
sarva svarūpasya na te 'sti rūpaṁ rūpāṇi sarvāṇi tavaiva rūpam.*

Some call you, the praiseworthy one, Kṛpa; some an ascetic; and some a king.
You whose nature is all things have no one form: all forms are your form alone.

O Lord! Some men hold that auspicious nature of yours, worthy of praise, to be Kṛpāchārya; some hold you to be the lord of ascetics; and some hold you to be the form of a certain king of the age of the Mahābhārata. But you are all-pervading, and all forms are yours. Therefore you have no one particular form. Since every form in the world is your own nature, all the forms of all creatures whatever are your nature, shining by your power alone and quickened by your own power of consciousness.

(6)

*rūpaṁ tvadīyaṁ nayanābhirāmaṁ śāntākṛtiṁ saṁyama śobhi-gātram,
dṛśā pibanto 'pi na tṛptim āpur lekḥā alekhatvam anuprapannāḥ.*

Your form, delighting the eyes; your peaceful aspect; your limbs made lovely by self-restraint

—
drinking it in with their gaze the gods were not satisfied, and became as though painted.

O bewitcher of the bewitcher of minds! Your nature is a treasure-house of supreme beauty. Your yogi's dress and your aspect are supremely peaceful, and your most beautiful limbs, by reason of your self-restraint, are a mine of the highest loveliness. It is from drinking the sweetness of your beauty that the gods, struck with wonder, gazing at you without blinking, seem like figures painted in a picture. Here the gods' own unblinking nature is taken as the effect of wonder, and so the figure of poetic fancy is made. || 6 ||

(7)

*aham tṛṣārto 'smi aneka janmabhir nirīkṣituṁ te vadanāravindam,
punaḥ punar jīvana mṛtyu śṛṅkhalā baddho 'pi kiṁ nātha! na te 'nukampyaḥ.*

Through many births I have been parched with thirst to look upon the lotus of your face.
Bound again and again in the chain of birth and death — am I not, O Lord, one to be pitied by you?

O God! Through many births and rebirths I have thirsted with longing for the sight of your lotus face. That is: I take birth again and again on the stage of the world and become the food of Time; and again I am born. Here I act out many plays and then become death's mouthful once more; then I am born and I die; and bound over and over in the fetters of birth and death, I am brought and set before you. And even so, O Lord — seeing this pitiable condition of mine, like a guilty prisoner's — why does no feeling of pity for me wake in your heart? When even a great criminal comes again and again in so pitiable a state and prays for protection, the feelings of every merciful man are certainly moved to pity him. But I cannot tell what offence of mine it is for which you feel no pity even at my most pitiable state. Therefore, O ocean of compassion: be gracious, that this offender may at least in this birth be made fit to beg the alms of your mercy — so that your titles of “merciful” and “gracious”

may also be preserved, and I may be lifted out of this ocean of becoming by your glance of grace. || 7 ||

(8)

*anukampasva mām dīnaṁ śaraṇya! śaraṇāgatam,
śaraṇāgata dīnānām paritrātā parāyaṇa!*

Have pity on me, wretched and come to you for refuge, O giver of refuge!
You who are devoted to the rescue of the wretched that come for refuge!

O giver of refuge, protector of those who come to you! I am utterly low and wretched. Remembering your title of tenderness to those who take refuge, I have come to your refuge. You are for ever girded to protect the poor who come to you. Therefore have pity on this wretch — have pity, have pity. And if my deeds are not worthy of pity, then even so, for the sake of preserving your own title as the rescuer of those who take refuge, show grace to this orphan. || 8 ||

(9)

*yogeśa! yogeśvara yoga yogya yogyo 'si yogārjita bhūti bhoktum,
yogyeṣu yogasya nidhiṁ nidhātum yogāgninā te punar eva yogaḥ.*

Lord of yoga! Master of yoga, worthy of yoga — you are worthy to enjoy the powers yoga has won.

But to lay up the treasure of yoga in those who are worthy, by the fire of yoga you take yoga again.

O lord of yoga! You are the sovereign of yogis and the master helmsman of the science of yoga. You are therefore wholly worthy to enjoy the majesty that yoga has earned. Yet you do not enjoy that yoga-won splendour: you take your pleasure in the Self, in just this dress of an emperor among saints. The reason for this appears to be that, in order to place the divine attainments of yoga in the very worthiest men of the world, you burn your own body again and again in the fire of yoga, and taking a new yogic body, free of old age and death, wander in this same dress once more and again.

It seems, perhaps, that this is your inward wish: that as the terrible age of Kali has made an end of the Vedas, the scriptures and the sciences of the world, so it may not make an end of the science of yoga also — for then the world would simply be destroyed utterly. And so, until you find some fit heir, with whom are you to lodge the treasure of yoga in trust? There is this too:

adr̥ṣṭvā 'nyatamaṁ loke rūpaudārya guṇaiḥ samam.

Not having seen in the world any other equal to you in beauty, in generosity, and in qualities —

that is, there is simply no other equal to you in form, in generosity and in quality, whom you might consider a fit heir to this matchless treasure. Therefore, for its safekeeping, you yourself refine your material body in the fire of yoga and bring about its renewal. Blessed is your greatness, and blessed your principle of guarding the vision of yoga for the good of the world.

How far can we trifling creatures sing the praise of your qualities? || 9 ||

(10)

*tvam eva योगेश्वराय नित्यम् आर्याभिर्मार्ग्यो 'सि योगे 'पि भ्राग्यावद्भिः,
दृशि त्वादिने समं भोग्यो योगी कृपा त्वादिना 'त्रा विषेसा काराणम्.*

You alone are sought unceasingly in yoga by the noble masters of yoga, and by the fortunate.
In your sight enjoyment and yoga stand equal: your grace alone is the deciding cause.

O swan of the yogi's heart! By every discipline of yoga, day and night, the yogis are busy in the effort to obtain the sight of you in their own heart-lotus.

Even by the power of their full practice of yoga, the sight of you is had only by good fortune, now and then, by some yogi seated in *samādhi*. But, O Lord, those who are wholly fortunate in this world obtain the sight of your beauty — lovely to the three worlds — in the very stuff of their enjoyments, even while they are engaged in worldly pleasures. For in your sight enjoyment and yoga hold an equal place.

It is by no means settled that only the yogi may be fulfilled by the sight of you, and that those attached to worldly enjoyment must be wholly deprived. For you are Brahman made visible; you are Bhole Bhaṇḍārī, Āśutoṣa, swift to be pleased. Therefore in your vast sight enjoyment and yoga are equal, and your grace alone is the chief cause of your sight and of your mercy. Enjoyment and yoga are worldly conditions. When the grace of your blessed feet comes, there is no need of them at all. It is the real knowledge of “*by what means is Rām made willing*” that is hard for a man to come by. Those true and faithful devotees who have taken refuge at your blessed feet with the whole of themselves — you go about after them to give them your sight; for this is your promise:

*nāhaṁ vasāmi vaikuṇṭhe yogināṁ hṛdaye na cha,
mad-bhaktāḥ yatra gāyanti tatra tiṣṭhāmi nārada!*

I do not dwell in Vaikuṇṭha, nor in the hearts of yogis;
where my devotees sing of me, there I stand, O Nārada!

“O Nārada, supreme devotee! I dwell neither in the abode of Vaikuṇṭha nor in the hearts of yogis. Where my most faithful devotees sing of me and remember me — there do I dwell always.” By this promise, fortunate men obtain the gladness of the Lord's sight even while they remain engaged in the splendours of enjoyment; but all that is to be accomplished only by the grace of that cause of the world's causes, the supremely playful one, the stealer of the heart of the whole universe.

Because he is supremely free, it is altogether impossible to find out by what action he is satisfied. An action which in worldly eyes appears blameworthy — in many a place he has been seen pleased with even that. And so, for us:

*rāzī haiṁ ham usī meṁ, jis meṁ razā hai terī;
yahā yū bhī vāh vāh hai, aur yū bhī vāh vāh hai.*

I am content with that alone in which your own pleasure lies;
here it is “well done!” if it goes this way, and “well done!” if it goes that.

The beggar who asks only for grace has business with his alms alone. He has no concern with criticising the giver's conduct, or with what that giver does or leaves undone. Therefore, O friend of the poor, rain the nectar-drops of your grace upon this poor man too. || 10 ||

(11)

*krpā kaṭākṣaṃ kuru śānta buddhe! śāntasya te śāntimayaṃ kaṭākṣaṃ,
bhavāmbudhes tīvra taraṅga tāḍitaḥ krpā kaṭākṣeṇa bhavāmi śāntaḥ.*

Cast on me the sidelong glance of grace, O you of quieted mind! Your glance, peaceful one, is made of peace.

Beaten by the fierce waves of the ocean of becoming, by that glance of grace I am made calm.

O you whose very nature is supreme peace! Bestow the beautiful gift of your glance of grace, full of the highest bliss, upon this trifling worldly creature. Your nature is supremely peaceful, and in the falling of your glance a full peace is present. I am battered by the raging waves of this fearful ocean of the world; and if, in such a state, supreme peace comes to me from your glance of grace, then I shall be made blessed. That is: in this fearful ocean of the world, wherever my gaze falls, there on every side the flames of unrest are to be seen; and if anywhere a happy, cooling shade is to be seen, it is seen only in the shelter of your blessed feet. Therefore be gracious: grant me the shelter of your lotus feet and so favour me. || 11 ||

(12)

*bhavārṇave 'smin duḥkha vīchi saṅkule putrāpta bāndhava kalatra kuṭumbi matsyaiḥ,
chhinnasya me marmasu nāsti hṛd-vyathā tvat-kurta ṭopa nigrāhita chetasah.*

In this ocean of becoming, crowded with waves of sorrow, the fish that are son and kinsman and

friend and wife and household

cut me at the quick — yet there is no pain in my heart, for my mind is held fast by you in your *kurtā* and cap.

O ocean of compassion! This sea that is the world is churned on every side by the waves that are sorrow, and my soul is badly sunk in it; and the crocodiles and fishes that are son, daughter, kinsman and wife are for ever biting me at the quick. Now the son says, “Bring me a book”; the wife says, “The girl has come of marriageable age, look for a husband” — and by such promptings, night and day, a man is afflicted, now with mental distress and now with terrible sicknesses. All these, as it were like fishes, tear away and eat the very muscle from this creature’s tenderest places.

And yet, O Lord, in my heart there is present your beautiful image adorned with *kurtā* and cap; and because of it not the least sorrow is felt from these worldly afflictions. For when a doctor operates upon a man who has been put to sleep, he has no knowledge of the pain at all. In the same way the nectar of your beauty has flooded my mind; and so worldly troubles do not seem to me in the least degree painful. Counting it all — pleasure and pain, loss and gain — as the fruit of your grace, I bear it gladly.

|| 12 ||

(13)

*kurtā ṭopa dharaṃ vande ardha mīlita lochanam,
siddhāsana samāsinaṃ sarva siddhi namaskṛtam.*

I bow to him who wears the *kurtā* and the cap, his eyes half closed;
seated in the posture of the perfected, saluted by all the attainments.

O God! To that divine form of yours — wearing the *mirjaī*, the *kurtā* and the cap; the eyes half closed in the attitude of meditation; seated in the *siddhāsana*, with all the powers and attainments bowing before you — to that form I bow again and again. || 13 ||

(14)

*śiva eva śivaḥ śiva eva śivaḥ, śiva eva śivaḥ śiva eva śivaḥ,
śaśi maṇḍala maṇḍita bhāla dharo, hara eva haro hara eva haraḥ.
phaṇi maṇḍita divya kapola dharo, bhava eva bhavo bhava eva bhavaḥ,
guru reva gurur gurur eva guru, rgurur eva gurur gurur eva guruḥ.*

Śiva alone is Śiva, Śiva alone is Śiva; Śiva alone is Śiva, Śiva alone is Śiva.

Bearing on his brow the disc of the moon — Hara alone is Hara, Hara alone is Hara.

Bearing the divine cheek circled with serpents — Bhava alone is Bhava, Bhava alone is Bhava.

The guru alone is guru, the guru alone is guru; the guru alone is guru, the guru alone is guru.

O Lord! Your divine form as Śiva pervades the whole universe, moving and unmoving. In earth, in sky, in water, in fire and in wind — down to the last atom — it is your Śiva-nature alone that is spread on every side. That is to say: by the doctrine *sarvaṁ brahmayam jagat*, “the world is all made of Brahman,” it is the form of Śiva that stands present in every visible thing; and everywhere, his brow adorned with the disc of the moon, there is Hara and Hara only. No being other than Hara exists in the world at all. He who bears the cheek circled by Vāsuki, king of serpents — it is Bhava, and the being of Bhava, that is present on every side. O guru! You are Śiva Gurudev himself, the moon-rayed one; and the being of Śiva Gurudev pervades all. Besides that there is no power in the world whatsoever. To come to feel it — *sarvaṁ śivamayam jagat*, “the world is all made of Śiva,” or *sarvaṁ gurumayam jagat*, “the world is all made of the guru” — is the fruit of your grace, and of nothing else. || 14 ||

(15)

*hṛdayābje mahendreṇa dhṛto ‘si jñāna kāmīyā,
mahendrāchala prodyantaṁ bhāskaraṁ praṇato ‘smy aham.*

In the lotus of his heart Mahendra has held you, out of longing for knowledge;
and I bow to the sun as it rises over the mountain that is Mahendra.

O most compassionate Śrī Gurudev! Your devotee and disciple Mahendra, who has taken refuge at your holy feet, has held your auspicious form in the lotus of his heart in order to receive the teaching of knowledge. That is: you have opened Śrī Mahendra Svāmī’s heart-lotus into flower with your own divine rays. And thereafter, to you — the sun rising over the unmoving mountain that is Mahendra — at your holy feet I bow again and again.

In the verse above, the guru’s form is given the figure of the sun, and Śrī Mahendra Svāmī is set in the place of the mountain of sunrise. As the whole world bows to the sun rising over the eastern mountain, and as men bow with the sun-god to the mountain that holds the glory of making him rise — for it is by that mountain’s favour that they get the sight of the sun at all — just so it is Śrī Mahendra Svāmī who holds the glory of granting us the knowledge of your divine form. He too, therefore, has a full right to the credit. Otherwise the understanding of us worldly creatures would have stayed for

ever in error, and the divine light of knowledge could by no means have reached us. So we are wholly in debt to you, and with you to Śrī Mahendra Dev, who made us aware of you. || 15 ||

(16)

viśvodbhava pralaya pālana karṇadhāra!
dhāryaḥ katham syād hṛdayāravinde,
dhārā pravāhita madīya śarīra naukām
dhṛtvā kareṇa śanakaiś charaṇe badhāna.

O helmsman of the world's arising, its keeping and its dissolution —
how should you be held in the lotus of my heart?
This boat that is my body is carried off on the current:
take it in your hand and gently moor it at your feet.

O helmsman of the boat of life! You are the steersman of the whole world's making, keeping and unmaking: by your divine power you take the form of Brahmā and bring the entire universe forth; as Viṣṇu you nourish and sustain it all; as Śaṅkar you draw the whole world back into yourself. How am I to hold so great a form as yours within my trifling heart? O God, this boat that is my body is caught in the whirlpool of creation. A boat caught in a whirlpool of water turns round and round before it goes down; in the same way I am made again and again the prey of birth and death, and caught in the delusion of this fearful creation my understanding has gone astray.

Now be gracious to me, and grant this boat of my life the shelter of the shore-land that is your lotus feet. If some capable man comes to the help of a boat caught in a whirlpool, he can draw it out and bring it to the bank. Who in the world, then, is more capable than you, that I should pray to him and speak out my wish to be saved? My honour now rests in your hands. I am yours: sink me if you will, or carry me across if you will. And so my one hope is this — that divine powers such as you descend into the world only for the world's good; therefore have compassion, and grant my little vessel of life the refuge of your holy feet. || 16 ||

(17)

ādinātha! kṛpānātha! nāthanātha! jagad-guro!
anāthanātha! nātheśa! anāthān nāthaya sva naḥ.

O First Lord! O Lord of grace! O Lord of lords! O guru of the world!
O Lord of the masterless! O sovereign of lords — take us, who have no lord, for your own.

O Ādināth! — that is, the very first founder of the Nāth order is Śiva Gorakh himself, and so you are the first of the Nāths. You are the Lord of grace, greatly merciful, master even of masters, and the one and only guru of the whole world. You are the sole Lord of the masterless: their protector is you alone, who have no other protector in this world. You are the Nāth of Nāths and the sovereign of masters. In the presence of one so powerful as you, the Lord of the masterless, how can we remain without a lord? Be gracious, then, and quickly take us for your own, so that in gaining a master all-capable as you our soul may have its Lord — and so that strength, and self-confidence, and courage may come alive in it from your shelter. || 17 ||

(18)

*viṣṇuḥ krośati satyena viṣṇoḥ śapatha pūrvakam,
sulabhā sakalā siddhir yogirāja prasādataḥ.*

Viṣṇu cries it aloud in truth, and swears it by Viṣṇu:
every attainment is easily had, by the grace of the king of yogis.

O all-knowing one! This Viṣṇudatt, who has taken refuge in the worship of your holy feet, calls out — swearing by Bhagavān Viṣṇu, his own chosen deity — to give assurance to men caught in the false show of the world: that all attainments whatsoever, of this world and of the next, can be made wholly easy for a man by your grace. In this there is not the least room for doubt. || 18 ||

(19)

*nāthito bhavatā nātha! anātho loka-nāthakaḥ,
loka-nātho 'pi santyakto anātho loka-bhikṣukaḥ.*

Made lord by you, O Lord, even the lordless becomes lord of the world;
and the lord of the world, once you forsake him, is lordless — a beggar in the world.

O Lord! The masterless creature whom you have taken for your own can become Lokanāth, lord and ruler of the world; while the emperor of the world, if you pass him over, is left without a master and goes wandering door to door for alms. And even by begging he cannot fill his belly, for Śrī Gosvāmīji [Tulsīdās], who knew the secret of the Lord's power, wrote: *bhīkh na milāhim kuber ghar, jo kudrṣṭi raghubīr* — “he on whom Raghubīr's eye falls unkindly will get no alms, though he hold out his hand before Kuber himself.” Your grace, then, is the mother of every good; and of that grace we creatures of the world are the beggars. Grant us that same divine grace, and take us too for your own. || 19 ||

(20)

*śivanātha śivā-nātha! nātheṣu hīrakopama!
tvayā nāthena dhanyās te sanāthāḥ loka-nāyakāḥ.*

O Lord Śiva, O lord of Śivā! Among lords you are as the diamond.
Blessed are those keepers of the worlds, who have their Lord in you.

O Lord of the three worlds, three-eyed one! You are Śivanāth, and you are also the beloved husband of Pārvatī. Among the Nāths it is you who blaze like a diamond with your own divine splendour. Indra, Varuṇa, Kuber, Yama and the other guardians of the worlds are blessed, for they have gained a master all-capable as you. With a Lord so wholly powerful as you standing over their heads, they rule in the shade of your canopy without fear and without break. || 20 ||

(21)

*tvam akṣara samo 'vyaktaḥ tvam akṣara samo 'vyayaḥ,
tvām evākṣara brahmāṇam sākṣarāḥ hr̥dy upāsate.*

Unmanifest are you, like the imperishable syllable; undecaying are you, like the imperishable syllable;
and it is you, Brahman-as-the-syllable, whom the lettered worship in the heart.

O Lord of yoga! You are imperishable as that syllable-Brahman, Omkār, which never wanes; you are possessed of the unmanifest form; and you are for ever adorned with the unbroken power of the three gods. Like Omkār you do not perish even in the dissolution of the worlds. Learned men, and men accomplished in the science of Brahman, worship you in the heart in precisely that form — as the imperishable Brahman, that is, as Omkār — and so obtain a settled peace within. Which is to say: Omkār, the seed of the Vedas, is your own visible nature, and you are the visible form of Omkār. The worship of Omkār is the worship of you, and the worship of you is the worship of Omkār. Between these two forms of Brahman there is no difference at all. || 21 ||

(22)

*tvam akṣarāṇām adhipo 'si yogin! yogātmabhir yoga-dṛṣṭvaiva lakṣyaḥ,
lakṣyo 'py alakṣyatvam anuprapanno prapanna lakṣyaiḥ punar eva lakṣyaḥ.*

You are sovereign of the syllables, O yogin; by souls given to yoga you are seen only with yoga's eye.

Seen — and then passing into unseenness; and to those who take refuge and make you their mark,
seen once again.

O Lord of yoga! You are master of all the syllables, the imperishable Brahman itself. Men of yoga, mounted in meditation, behold your form as Omkār in the lotus of the heart with the inward eye, and make it their mark and meditate upon it. And then, having been seen by those men of yoga through the eye of yoga, after some time you become unseen — that is, this road is the very figure of the passage from the worship of the form to the worship of the formless.

Understand it easily thus. At first they behold your Omkār form within the pericarp of the heart. Thereafter, as the practice of yoga rises higher and higher, even the awareness of Omkār disappears; that is, they receive in the heart the intimation of the formless Brahman. And thereafter, when they arrive at the furthest limit of yoga and the goal is won, your divine form comes into sight once more. Your nature, then, is unknowable even to yogis. How should a worldly grub like me, burrowing in the objects of sense, have the power to understand it? || 22 ||

(23)

*tvām lakṣyabhūtaṁ nayanābhirāmam
śyāmam sunāsaṁ sukapola chakṣuṣam,
siddhāsanam siddha gaṇādhi sevitam
vīkṣyaiva lokāḥ upayānti siddhatām.*

You who are the goal, delight of the eyes,
dark of hue, fine of nose, fair of cheek and eye,
seated in the posture of the perfected, served by the hosts of the perfected —
merely by beholding you, men come into perfection.

O sovereign of the perfected! In what form do you grant your sight to those yogis who have won the goal? That is: your form becomes the mark of their outermost eyes, and appears to those eyes supremely beautiful. You are graced with a most lovely dark hue; you have the fine nose likened to

a parrot's beak; you are adorned with beautiful dark cheeks and with eyes of the highest beauty. In that form you sit in the *siddhāsana* while the hosts of the perfected are absorbed in your service on Mount Kailāś. Merely by beholding so divine a figure, creatures attain to perfection — that is, they become *siddha* themselves. || 23 ||

(24)

*lakṣyāt param tvām munayo namanti lakṣyatvam āyānti tvayānulakṣitāḥ,
alakṣito yoga samādhi madbhiḥ bhaktyā prapannaiś ccharamendriya-lakṣyaḥ.*

Beyond all mark the sages bow to you; and marked by you, they themselves become the mark.
Unseen by those drunk on the samādhi of yoga — yet to those who take refuge through devo-
tion,
you are the mark of the outermost eye.

O God of gods, best of the great seers! The company of the great sages bows to you as beyond all object of aim — that is, as beyond the reach of the senses. And those on whom you have cast the glance of grace even once become the mark of the world's eyes; being filled with every splendour, every living creature must turn and look at them.

O God, you are unseen even by the great seers sunk in the samādhi of yoga; and yet, through supreme devotion, you are gracious enough to become visible even to the outermost eye. Though your divine form lies beyond the reach even of the eye of knowledge, still by devotion the devotee is made able to behold your form with worldly eyes. And rightly so: in the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa taught his devotee Arjuna from his own lips — *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś chāsmi tattvataḥ* — that by devotion alone can a man come to know me in truth, how great my universal form is and what manner of being I am [Gītā 18.55]. In fact devotion alone is the one means of knowing your nature and of attaining you. || 24 ||

(25)

*siddha siddheśvaram siddham siddha siddheśa vanditam,
siddhārtham siddha sandeśam siddhādhīśam nato 'smy aham.*

To the perfected one, Lord of the perfected, himself accomplished, worshipped by the per-
fected
and by their lords;
whose every purpose is accomplished of itself, who is himself the message of perfection —
to that sovereign of the perfected I bow.

O you who reign over the empire of the attainments! Endowed with the greatness described above, you are yourself *siddha*, perfected, and the master of the perfected; you are to be worshipped by the *siddhas* and by the lords of *siddhas* alike. All your purposes are accomplished of themselves, and it is from you that the world receives the message of perfection. To such a one — Śrī Gurudev, sovereign of the perfected and of the lords of the perfected — let a hundred obeisances be offered at your holy feet. || 25 ||

(26)

siddhendra! siddha saṅkalpa! siddha saṅkalpa sūchaka!
siddhaṁ tvāṁ vīkṣya loka 'smin bhikṣuko loka-vanditaḥ.

O lord of the perfected! O you whose will is already accomplished, and who make its accomplishment known!

Beholding you, the perfect one, even a beggar in this world becomes one the world reveres.

O Siddhendra! O you whose every wish is fulfilled of itself — *svayaṁ-siddha sab kāj*, “all business accomplished of itself” — that is, endowed with that furthest condition of perfection in which the thing is done in the very moment of the thought. Possessed in this way of a splendour like the wish-granting tree’s, you give your devotees immediate word of the heart’s desire the moment it is granted. Merely by taking the sight of one so wholly perfected — Lord of the perfected, Śrī Śaṅkar come down in human form — even a beggar becomes worthy of the world’s reverence. Which is to say: the man who has won the good fortune of your *darśan*, though he be a beggar in worldly eyes, is far more fortunate than an emperor. || 26 ||

(27)

bhaktiā kevalayā baddho 'py abaddhaḥ karma bandhanaiḥ,
bandha mokṣau cha te deva! bhavad asya viḍambanam.

Bound by devotion alone, yet unbound by the bonds of action —
bondage and release, O God, are for such a one as you only a masquerade.

O lover of your devotees! Though you are wholly unconstrained by the bonds of action, still you let yourself be bound in the bond of devotion, and remain from time to time subject to those you love. O God, these two principles — worldly bondage by action, and liberation from it — are for a supremely free ruler like you a mere masquerade. That is to say: to sit as the individual soul in the heart of every creature, to be caught in worldly bondage, and to voice a longing for release — all this, in one of your great power, is nothing but *līlā*. || 27 ||

(28)

tvāṁ dhāraṇā dhyāna samādhi yogair dhyāyanti lokaśvara! dhyānam āsthitāḥ,
dhyānāvaruddho 'si mamāpi tāmasaṁ dīptuṁ madīyaṁ hi malina mānasam.

By concentration, meditation and the yoga of samādhi they meditate on you, O Lord of the worlds, established in meditation;
and you are held fast in meditation by me too — to set alight my own soiled and darkened mind.

O Lord of the worlds! The great companies of seers fix their meditation unbroken and contemplate you by way of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi* — concentration, meditation and absorption, which are the chief limbs of the science of yoga. I am altogether empty of any knowledge of yoga’s difficult practices; and yet, calling your mercy to mind, I hold your divine figure in meditation, so as to set ablaze this mind of mine — the cause of my bondage and my release, and overrun with the workings of the dark *guṇa*. May the wretched mind that darkness has covered be delivered, by your presence, by whatever means. Be gracious, then: make this temple of the mind fulfilled, by dwelling in it without ceasing. || 28 ||

(29–30)

*mānase 'smin mahāmoha-dhvānta santata tāmase,
tamasāvṛta sarvasve tamoguṇe parāyaṇe;
vasa tvaṁ rājahaṁso 'si haṁsa dīpta pradāyaka!
tava saḥavāsa sāyujyān mānaso mānasāyatām.*

In this mind — walled about without a break by the darkness of the great delusion,
its whole substance wrapped in darkness, given over to the dark *guṇa* —
dwell, for you are the royal swan, the giver of the swan's own brightness;
and by the union of your company, let this mind become Mānasa itself.

O royal swan! This heart is shut in on every side and without pause by that great darkness which is delusion; every movement within it is wrapped in the darkness of unknowing; and night and day it lies sunk in the appetites of the dark *guṇa*. Be gracious, and take up your dwelling in such a heart as this, in the form of the royal swan — so that, winning the joy of your company, my mind may attain the light of Brahman, take on the form of the Mānasa lake, and become a thing of the highest happiness, of the highest beauty, and fit for the world to look upon.

O God, it is from the swan's dwelling there that the authors of the scriptures have drawn the true glory of Lake Mānasa. So when you dwell in this mind in the form of the swan, then, poor pond though it is, by the sole distinction of your dwelling it will be counted among the Mānasa lakes and be made blessed. This is my innermost longing. Be gracious and fulfil it, so that this bewildered creature may be fulfilled. || 29–30 ||

(31)

*tvam vāyu sūryo 'gnir mahī mahābhdhis tvam chandra tāraṇa sarit sara oṣadhis tvam,
tvam prāṇa ātmā mana indriyāṇām netā mahātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ.*

You are the wind, the sun, the fire, the earth, the great ocean; you are moon and star, river
and lake and healing herb;
you are the breath, the self, the mind — the leader of the senses, the great soul, the ancient
Person.

O you who bear the form of the universe! It is you who take the form of wind and grant the breath of life to all the creatures of the world. It is you who rise each day as the sun and keep the world's life moving. It is you who as fire give nourishment and sustenance, and who, taking the form of earth, bear up all that moves and does not move. It is you who as the great ocean send the rains in their season and quicken the world. It is you who take the form of the moon and gladden the world with rays of the deepest coolness, and who ripen the herbs.

It is you who shine forth as the constellations and keep the wheel of the world turning as it should. It is you who in the form of rivers and lakes give the rain and the strength it brings. It is you who as the healing herb are the giver of life. And here, by the maxim *oṣadhyāḥ phala pākāntāḥ* — “the herbs are those that end in the ripening of their fruit” — every kind of grain that the earth brings forth is counted a healing herb; so that the power which keeps the world alive in the form of food is your form and no other. It is you who are the ever-present sky, pervading all. And, O Lord, it is you who as *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *udāna*, *vyāna* and *samāna* are the vital airs that drive the workings of the body.

When you abide in the body in the condition of the vital breath, you are spoken of by the name of the individual soul. It is you who are the mind, the cause of bondage and of release; and it is you who are the ancient Person, leader of the mind and the senses. Your greatness is unknowable by thought, by word or by deed. How should this trifling creature have the power to know it as it truly is? || 31 ||

(32)

*tvam enam ātmānam anu prapannaṁ pūrvārjitātma sukṛtodaya samprapannam,
bhūtvā prapannārti haro na pāsi kā sā prapā? yatra na pāntha tṛptiḥ.*

This soul has come to take refuge in you, come by the rising of the merit it earned in lives before;
and if, being the remover of the suppliant's affliction, you do not protect it —
what sort of water-stall is that, where the traveller's thirst is not quenched?

O God of gods! This trifling soul of mine has somehow reached your refuge, which destroys the three afflictions, because the impressions of the heaped-up merit earned in a former birth have risen in it. Being one who loves those that come for shelter, why do you not guard the honour of your own good name and protect this soul of mine? A *prapā* — a roadside stall where water is given free — at which the traveller's thirst is not wholly stilled and satisfied: how can such a stall make its name mean anything? And your good name is famous through the world in this:

*sakṛd eva prapannāya tavāsmīti cha yāchate,
abhayaṁ sarva bhūtebhyo dadāmy etad vrataṁ mama.*

To whoever comes to my refuge but once, in good feeling or in ill, and asks with a single-pointed heart, "I am yours" — to him I give freedom from fear of every living being.
This is my settled vow.

The keeping of such promises, made in place after place, will only be a keeping of them if you protect with your whole being every creature that comes for refuge. So, O Lord, if my sins make you hesitate to grant me shelter, then for the guarding of your own good name it is still necessary that you should lift up even such heaps of sin as I am. Be gracious, therefore, and quench my thirst too with the water that is the knowledge of the Self. || 32 ||

(33)

*prapanna pārijāto 'si prapanna bhaya nāśanaḥ,
prapannārpita sarvasvaḥ prapannārti vināśanaḥ.*

To those who take refuge you are the *pārijāta* tree; to those who take refuge, the destroyer of fear;
to those who take refuge you give your whole substance; of their affliction you are the undoing.

O lover of those who come for shelter! To the devotees who come to your refuge you are the *pārijāta*, the tree that grants every wish. As a man's every appetite is quieted of itself the moment he steps into the *pārijāta*'s shade, and whatever thing he longs for stands at once before him — so are you the destroyer of every fear, of this world and the next, for those who take refuge in you. And

beyond this there is a further distinction in you: for the protection of those who come for shelter you stand always ready to give away your whole substance. As Śrī Gosvāmījī [Tulsīdās] set it down in the *Mānas*: *jana kahū kachhu adeya nahim more* — “there is nothing in all my store that I could not give to my devotee.” O crown of givers, this is the whole truth; for when you stand always ready to give the devotee your very self, what worth has any other thing? In destroying with your whole being the fear of those who come for refuge, you are for ever girded and ready. || 33 ||

(34)

prapanna prāṇa santrāṇa strātā tattva vid agraṇī,
prapannaṁ praṇataṁ dīnaṁ nāvamantuṁ tvam arhasi.

O rescue of the suppliant’s very life, O saviour, foremost of the knowers of truth —
one who has taken refuge, who bows before you, and who is poor: him you must not despise.

O *pārijāta* of those who take refuge! In guarding the lives of those who come for shelter you alone are wholly able; and in the worldly view you are ceaselessly at work providing for them and for their households — as will be fully seen further on in the story of the devotee Gumānī. You are the first among the knowers of truth. And so: I have taken refuge; I bow at your lotus feet, for in the three worlds I can see no shelter anywhere but at these feet. And a third mark clings to me besides — that I am poor in both senses, the worldly and the scriptural. In the world a man is counted poor for want of wealth and grain; in the scriptures a man is counted poor if he is empty of the knowledge of the Self. By both reckonings, then, I am poor.

O Lord! Do not put to shame such a beggar as this, fallen at your door. Grant him shelter with your whole being, and so increase the glory of your fame. Beyond you I have no refuge anywhere, as the *Vinaya Patrikā* records —

nāhim nātha! avalamba mohi āna ko,
karama mana bachana pana satya karunā nidhe,
eka gati rāma! bhavadiya pada trāna ko.

I have no other support, O Lord!

In deed, in thought and in word my vow is true, O treasury of compassion:
there is one road only, O Rām — the shelter of your feet.

By these words and their like, there is no other support at all. I only wait for the nectar of your grace, my eyes fixed on your holy feet and filled with hope. Be gracious now and lift me up; lift me up. || 34 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Divine Form.

Om

Salutation to the blessed Sadguru.

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Mystery

Third stabaka

This bouquet is set down under the name “the Bouquet of the Examination of the Mystery,” because the prayers made in it are made through the indirect way of the spirit, by giving some particular truth the dress of a figure. Accordingly the verses that follow describe this world under the figure of the forest of becoming.

(1)

*bhavāṭavī śrānta bhavat kathotsuko, bhāraṁ vahan gokhara tulya cheṣṭaḥ,
itas tato 'har niśa tāpa tapto, himsāratā 'neka vihaṅga pīḍitaḥ.*

Weary in the forest of becoming, eager for the story of you,
bearing his load, his labour that of the ox and the ass;
scorched day and night by the burning heat, this way and that,
tormented by many a bird that lives to kill.

O you who bear the blessed form of Sat-Chit-Ānand! O Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! This traveller that is my soul has lost the road in the deep wood that is the world, and is worn out. Yet it had heard the story of you before ever it entered this thicket; only, once it had entered, being wrapped about by a knowledge that is all confusion, it kept no full memory of its former births, and went to and fro in this forest of the world like an ox or an ass, loaded down, for the filling of its belly.

This wood is vast and terrible, and once the road is lost in it, escape is next to impossible. So it is scorched by burnings of every kind — cold, sun, rain, wind; now afflicted with anxiety for a wife, now scorched by the many burnings of the hunger for wealth; and tormented by the fear of many a beast of prey. On the side of the forest, lion and boar and leopard are always out hunting. Just so in this forest of the world: now the son makes the father wretched by declaring his want of money; now the wife quarrels and burns her husband in the fire of her rebellion. Sister, niece — whichever way he turns, nowhere is peace to be seen; only the cry of *bring, bring* sounding on every side. These are the cruel beasts of prey of the forest of becoming; and tormented by them with his whole being — ||

1 ||

(2)

*saṁkṣubdha chittaḥ satataṁ tṛṣṭuraḥ saṁtrasyamāṇo 'tha kuṭumbi dasyubhiḥ,
sva śakti sandarśana baddha cheṣṭo sva gotra dārātmaja śakty arakṣitaḥ.*

His mind shaken without a pause, sick with thirst, terrified by the bandits that are his own household;
his striving bound to the measure of his own strength, unguarded by the strength of kin and wife and son.

O most compassionate one! This mind of mine is made utterly wretched, and is unceasingly troubled and made frantic with the thirst for the objects of sense. On the side of the forest, the distraction of thirst is described because in the deep wood there is no water-stall, and wells and pools are out of reach. (For further on, this bewildered creature is given the figure of Gajendra, the lord of elephants, and the whole figure is built so as to make it fit to receive the Lord's compassion.) And on the side of the forest of becoming, it is frantic with the she-demon Thirst; for when a man grows old, his teeth and hair and hearing and eyes all wear out — but in old age it is desire that grows young:

*jīryanti jīryataḥ keśāḥ dantāḥ jīryanti jīryataḥ,
chakṣu śrotre cha jīryete, tṛṣṇaikā taruṇāyate.*

The hair of the ageing man ages, the teeth of the ageing man age;
eye and ear wear out — thirst alone grows young.

Frantic, then, with that great she-demon Thirst, who can never be stilled; and afraid and flustered on every side by the bandits that are his own household. The intention in giving the household the figure of bandits is this: mother, sister, father, son — those whom a man holds altogether dear — all of them harbour the one wish, that they alone should take his whole wealth and estate and property. And though the feeling in every heart is the same, still no brother tells another brother what is in his heart, nor wife her husband, nor brother his sister; and each lies watching the other. As thieves are wary of disclosing the purpose of their hearts even among thieves, such is the condition of these household bandits.

Frightened by them, this maddened elephant that is my mind went down of a sudden one day into the lake of enjoyment, to bathe there, taking it for nectar; for the nature of enjoyments is that they are lovely at first sight, and in them there is nothing but the illusion of gladness. Real gladness is a thing beyond speech and beyond this world; of that, worldly enjoyments have not even the shadow. These enjoyments are a momentary flame, kindled by the oblation of the very best essence of one's own body, and in a single second, like an electric current, they burn to ashes a man's whole substance and all the deeds he has gathered through birth after birth. Into that lake of enjoyment, in the illusion that gladness was there, this maddened elephant of my mind goes down to make merry. || 2 ||

(3)

*vigāhyamāno makara svarūpiṇā kāmāgninā duḥprasahena grastaḥ,
sva śaktika sandarśana baddha cheṣṭe sva gotra dārātmaja śakty arakṣitaḥ.*

As he bathed, he was seized by the fire of desire in the shape of a crocodile, past all bearing;
his striving bound to the measure of his own strength, unguarded by the strength of kin and wife and son.

O crusher of the pride of the god of love! This elephant of the mind was drowned in gladness and maddened with its bathing in the lake of enjoyment. At that moment desire, a crocodile of enormous strength, came upon it suddenly and seized it without mercy — that is, brought it under its power. Then, being seized, this elephant of the mind put out all its strength and strove with its whole might to get free; and when rescue by its own strength proved impossible, it strove with all its might through those it had taken for its whole world — its kinsmen, wife, sons and household.

But, O Lord, this was mere illusion. Those who were its own also, after a little, found themselves unable and began to turn their faces away; and seeing its strength failing, they abandoned it one by one and fled at the very moment of need. For these crocodiles that dwell without ceasing in the human body — desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy — are creatures of great power. Once caught in their wheel, what strength has human power to get free of them? And as for kinsmen and relations, they are companions of laughter and good cheer only; the moment they see the days of trouble, they turn their faces away at once. So, forsaken by all its own and seized by that mighty crocodile, this elephant of the mind, lying in that lake of enjoyment, began to be brought altogether low. And then it — || 3 ||

(4)

*itas tato kātara dṛṣṭipātaḥ śūnyam samagram bhuvanam vilokya,
ekam bhavantam śaraṇam prayāti katham sa te nātha! na trāṇa yogyaḥ.*

Casting his frightened look this way and that, and seeing the whole world empty,
he goes for refuge to you alone: how then, O Lord, is he not fit to be saved?

O Lord! Frantic and beside itself, it looked all round with a frightened gaze and was made utterly wretched — that those whom it had counted its own, and for whom, at the least trouble falling on them, it had thrown away everything and busied itself in their protection at the risk of its life; those whom it had fed and kept by earning money through deceit and fraud and injustice of every kind — those very kinsmen and relations of mine have all left me and gone.

What shall I do now? And where shall I go? In this sapless world, who now is my protector? Seeing the whole universe empty in this way, and in the hope of protection, it thought and considered and came with a single-pointed mind for refuge to your holy feet — the one protector of the whole creation, Lord of the masterless, strength of the weak. Your door stands always open to those who come for shelter, and your good name is this: *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*, “as men come to me, so do I receive them” [Gītā 4.11]. How then is even this most wretched and abject creature not fit to be protected by you? — that is to say, in such a plight as this it is you who, by your own mercy, protect it, and so make good those titles of yours: the gracious, the merciful, the ocean of compassion. || 4 ||

(5)

*trātā 'si lokasya charācarasya trātum jagat te 'sti suyoga niṣṭhā,
trāyasva enaṁ bahu duḥkha pīḍitaṁ pīḍā haratvaṁ tava loka viśrutam.*

You are the saviour of the world, of all that moves and does not move;
your steadfastness in yoga is for the saving of the world.
Save this one, afflicted with many sorrows:
that you take away affliction is famous through the world.

O saviour of the three worlds! You are the protector of the whole world, the still and the moving. And your practice of yoga is for the protection of this world alone, for joined in yoga you protect the entire universe at once. Protect, then, this creature afflicted with many sorrows, for you are famous in the world for the taking away of affliction. You are ceaselessly at work in the deliverance and protection of every living thing; and all those names of yours that are set down in the next verse are signs of the world's good. Thus — || 5 ||

(6)

*śivo 'si śiva rūpo 'si śiva saṅkalpa sādhaḥ,
śivātmā śiva gata prāṇo śiva śaṅkara sevakaḥ.*

You are Śiva; you are of Śiva's form; you are the accomplisher of every auspicious resolve;
your soul is Śiva's, your life is gone into Śiva, and you are the servant of Śiva Śaṅkar.

O giver of fearlessness! You are Śiva himself, the maker of blessing, and you are the visible descent of Śiva in his full parts. Auspicious resolves you graciously accomplish at once. You are the very soul-essence of Śiva; your life is unceasingly absorbed in Brahman; and for the teaching of the world and the keeping of its bounds you are also the servant of Lord Śaṅkar himself. Being Śiva yourself, you are still Śiva's supreme devotee, to give the world its initiation. And further — || 6 ||

(7)

*śiva sāyujya sākāra sāmīpyādi samanvitaḥ,
sālokyam sārṣṭi sampannaḥ śiva rūpa dharo hy asi.*

Endowed with union with Śiva, with his very shape, with nearness to him and the rest;
possessed of his world and of his own lordship, you are the bearer of Śiva's form.

O you who are joined with the splendour of Bhava! You are the visible form of Śiva; you are in the fullest nearness to Śiva; you are a dweller in Śiva's own abode of Kailāś; and you are Śiva's visible shape. That is: all the marks of liberation that the authors of the scriptures have set down are found in you completely and in their true sense. Therefore you are yourself Śaṅkar, the giver of fearlessness. || 7 ||

(8)

*śiva rūpaṁ cha te tattvaṁ yogi gamyaṁ sudurlabham,
kathaṁ māḍṛṇ mahā manda buddhi yukto vichintayet.*

That truth of yours, the form of Śiva, is reached by yogis and is very hard to win:
how should one like me, dull of wit, so much as think upon it?

O Śambhu! That utterly unapproachable truth which is your form as Śiva is beyond the reach even of yogis with the eye of yoga, and is exceedingly hard to win. That is: even through the samādhi of yoga, the real seeing of you comes to one yogi or another, and for a moment only, and only if he is fortunate. How should a dull-witted man like me, sunk in the objects of the world, be able to meditate upon so matchless a nature as yours? || 8 ||

(9)

*buddhyā na jñāyase tvaṁ vai śuddhayā 'pi parantapa!
kim utā 'śuddhayā loka kṣut pipāsādi yuktayā.*

By the understanding you are not known, O scorcher of foes, not even by an understanding that
is pure —
how much less by an impure one, beset with the world's hunger and thirst.

O Parantapa! — that is, O form of the highest austerity; or, O Śambhu, who with your fierce blaze scorch those enemies that live within the human body, desire and anger and the rest. Your nature is not to be known even by an understanding fully refined and pure. How, then, can it be known by an impure understanding, beset with worldly hunger and thirst? || 9 ||

(10)

*kevalaṁ tvad dayā nātha! asmākaṁ tāraṇa kṣamā,
kṣamasva aparādhān me dayālutvaṁ pradarśayan;
mātrvat tava vātsalyaṁ maṇiṣibhir udāhṛtam.*

Your mercy alone, O Lord, is able to carry us across.
Forgive my offences and show forth your mercifulness;
for the wise have declared your tenderness to be a mother's.

O sun to the lotus of the science of yoga! Your mercy alone is the one means of our deliverance. O treasury of mercy, forgive us all our offences and give the full proof of your mercifulness; for great and tender-hearted devotees and learned men have described your love as a mother's. As it is said, *kuputro jāyeta kvachid api kumātā naiva bhavati* — “a bad son may be born somewhere, but there is never a bad mother.” However wicked the son may turn out, God has made a mother's heart of such heavenly stuff that the tenderness in it never falls short; and therefore it has no second thing to compare it to. So do you also, like a mother, pay no heed to our faults and be merciful. || 10 ||

(11)

*mātā sadā nija sutasya hite 'nuraktā saktā 'pi karmasu kadā 'pi sutaṁ na muñchati,
evaṁ bhavān yoga gatāntarātmā 'py ātmārāma janān naiva vihātum arhaḥ.*

A mother is for ever bent on her own son's good, and though busy with her work she never
for a
moment lets the child go;
so you, though your inward self has gone into yoga, must never forsake those who take their
delight in you.

O you who are made of mercy! As in the world a mother is ceaselessly at work in the making of her son's good, and though hard pressed with the business of the house does not let go the thought of her son even for a moment — so you, though absorbed without pause in the samādhi of yoga and gone wholly into the Self, keep in every moment a full care for the welfare and the whole good of us who are as dear to you as sons. That in the time to come you should keep that same full care, and not forget us — this is our humble prayer to you. || 11 ||

(12)

arhattama yogīndra! yoga mārga pravartaka!
rakṣāṁs asmān yoga yuktas tvaṁ svīyā yoga māyā.

O most worthy, lord of yogis, founder of the road of yoga —
joined in yoga, guard us by your own yoga-māyā.

O wholly capable king of yogis! It is you who, for the good of the world, are the author and founder of the road of the science of yoga; for Lord Śaṅkar has always been held the first teacher of yoga. So, O Lord, being joined in yoga — that is, taking by the method of yoga a form that pervades every atom — guard us trifling worldly creatures at every moment with your yoga-māyā. || 12 ||

(13)

tvaṁ yoga māyārṇava kalpa vṛkṣo yakṣo gaṇair vandita pāda pīṭhaḥ,
mahendra śākhō 'mara rāja valkalo sūryendu tārā kusumair upetaḥ.

You are the wishing-tree risen from the ocean of yoga-māyā, your footstool worshipped by
the
hosts of yakṣas;
Mahendra is your bough and the king of the immortals your bark, and sun and moon and
stars are
your flowers.

O lord of yogis! You are as the wishing-tree born of that ocean which is yoga-māyā. As the churning of the ocean of milk brought forth the wishing-tree, so are you the wishing-tree born of that ocean which is the science of yoga. Yakṣas and kinnaras for ever bow at your footstool and worship there. Of this wishing-tree Śrī Mahendra Svāmī is, as it were, the fair bough; Indra, god of gods, is as it were the fair bark; and the sun and the moon and the stars, which are the standing witnesses of how far your power reaches, are the fair flowers of this wishing-tree that is your form. Bowing again and again before this divine, vast and all-pervading nature of yours, we obtain our heart's desires without ceasing. || 13 ||

(14)

tvaṁ haṁso 'si mahāyogin! haṁsa vaṁśa samudbhavaḥ,
haṁsārpita sarvasvo haṁsa vāhana sammataḥ.

You are the swan, O great yogin, sprung of the swan's own line;
your whole substance is offered to the swan, and you are dear to him whose mount is the
swan.

In this verse the word *haṁsa* is used in a double sense, and bears many meanings.

First: O most glorious, best of yogis! You are *haṁsa* — that is, you are Brahman itself. The Śruti says *haṁso haṁsaḥ*, “Brahman is of the form of the swan.” And you are born of the swan’s line, that is, sprung of the line of Brahman. Or else: blessed beyond all is that line in which you were born, a line spotless and stainless as the swan, and for ever ready at the swan’s own work of separating the milk from the water. And you have kept your whole substance offered up to Brahman. And *haṁsa-vāhana* — you are held in the highest regard by Brahmā, whose mount is the swan; for Brahmā spends his whole time in singing the virtues of Śrī Śambhu. Such is your unearthly and divine form as the swan. || 14 ||

(15)

*haṁsaṁ tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ yāmi haṁsa sāyujya kāmīyā,
tvat pāda sevanād brahman ātmā haṁsāyatām mama.*

To you the swan I come for refuge, longing for union with the swan;
by the service of your feet, O Brahman, let my soul too become a swan.

O Lord! I have come for refuge to that divine form as the swan which you took in order to give knowledge to Sanaka and the other Brahmā-born seers. In my heart too is the longing for the direct sight of Brahman, and it is to fulfil it that I have taken refuge. O Brahman, by the service of your lotus feet grant to my soul also the form of the swan, so that this life may come to its fruit. Or else: by my taking refuge in the shelter of your holy lotus feet, be gracious and make my soul stainless as the swan, and shining, and a taker of the essence, and skilled to tell what should be done from what should not. || 15 ||

(16)

*chaitanyāmṛta chandrikāyita tanuchchhāyo ‘si chhāyāprada,
chhāyā saṁśrita roga śoka śamakaraś śaṅkārakaś śaṅkaraḥ;
śaṅkātaṅkita mānasaiḥ sura gaṇaiḥ sevyatva vṛttikaraḥ,
śaṁ naḥ kin na dadhāsi nātha! mudito ‘bhṛtyeṣu bhadraṅkaraḥ.*

O giver of shade, the light of your body is as the moonlight risen from the nectar of consciousness;
you quiet the sickness and grief of all who take that shade — the maker of blessing, Śaṅkar himself.
The hosts of the gods, their minds shaken with alarm, take up the work of serving you:
why then, O Lord, do you not grant us peace — you who are glad, and the maker of good to your servants?

O giver of shade! The clear and blazing radiance of your holy body is as the moonlight of that moon of consciousness which has risen out of the nectar that is *chit*, the power of consciousness. The sum of it is this: the nature of Brahman is Being, Consciousness and Bliss; and of these, that nature of Brahman which is the power of consciousness is, as it were, an ocean in its depth. Out of that nectar-ocean of consciousness the moon has risen, and the beauty of your holy body is as its moonlight.

Your blessing-making form as Śaṅkar quiets root and branch the sickness and the grief of those creatures who take shelter under the canopy of so great a wishing-tree of consciousness. Whenever trouble comes upon the gods, then the gods, their minds seized with alarm, render full service to your auspicious form. O Lord, master who for ever works the good of your servants — why do you delay so long in being pleased with us and doing us good? O maker of blessing, be gracious and work with all speed the welfare and the keeping of creatures such as we, who are your servants. || 16 ||

(17)

*sad rūpo 'py asad rūpo sad asadbhir vikalpakāḥ,
nirvikalpaka vedyo 'si savikalpaka lakṣitaḥ.*

Of the form of being, and of the form of non-being; by being and non-being, the one who is conceived —
you are known in the trance without conception, and marked out in the trance with conception.

O God! Sometimes you dwell in the form of being, pervading all that moves and does not move; and sometimes, taking the form of non-being, you take the support of the formless mode and bring it to its fulfilment. Sometimes, to fulfil that wondrous being of yours which the Veda sets forth, you become knowable by *nirvikalpaka samādhi* — the trance in which no distinction is framed — being, according to the saying *sad asadbhyām anirvachanīyaḥ*, beyond both being and non-being and past all telling. And then again, to show forth the wonder of your own nature, you take on the visible embodied form that is known by *savikalpaka samādhi*, the trance in which distinction remains. || 17 ||

(18)

*vāṇīm madīyām tava gāna gānaiḥ karṇau cha me tvad gata sūkti sūktaiḥ,
netre madīye tava rūpa darśanaiḥ santarpayitum vyakta svarūpam āya.*

To satisfy my speech with the singing of your songs, and my ears with the fair sayings that tell of you,
and my eyes with the sight of your form — for this you have come into a manifest shape.

O you whose form is the universe! It is my settled conviction that you have taken on this supremely beautiful form, visible to the outermost eye, for this alone: to make my speech holy with the singing of your praises; to bring my ears to their fulfilment by the hearing of your lovely sayings; and to satisfy my eyes with that beauty of yours which enchants the three worlds. The Lord takes on a body for his play only for the good of his highest devotees. || 18 ||

(19)

*vyakta svarūpin! hṛdayāravinde tvām prāpya chātmā na kṣaṇam jahāti,
katham jahyāt parama preṣṭho 'sti nānyathā ātmā hi loke sutarām suvalabhāḥ.*

O you of manifest form! having found you in the lotus of the heart, the soul does not leave you for an instant.
How should it leave? There is no other so dearly beloved — for in this world it is the self that is dearest of all.

O you who bear a manifest form! Having seen you in the thousand-petalled lotus that is the heart, my soul does not wish to leave you for a moment, but wishes to play for ever in the sweetness of your beauty alone. And how should it leave you? Nowhere else in the world does it see any other form so full of gladness; for a man's own self is dearer to him than all things else in the world. You are the nature of the Supreme Self, and this creature of mine is but a portion of you. For the satisfying of the self, what form could satisfy it wholly if not the truth of the Supreme Self?

So says the Śruti: *na vā are patyuh kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati, ātmanas tu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati; na vā are jāyāyai kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati, ātmanas tu kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati* — and by such words of Śruti it is settled that a husband is not dear to his wife because he is a husband, but is dear because he is pleasing to her inmost self; and so a wife is not dear to her husband because she is a wife, but because she is pleasing to his own inmost self. In the same way, what other thing can the truth of the self love more than that truth of the Supreme Self of which it is a portion? And therefore, O Lord, you are the truth of the Supreme Self, and it is for this that my soul plays in you above all. || 19 ||

And so —

(20)

*suvalabham tvām vachasā grṇāmi suvalabham tvām manasā smarāmi,
suvalabham tvām śirasā namāmi suvalabham tvām śaraṇam vrajāmi.*

You, the dearly beloved, I praise with my speech; you, the dearly beloved, I remember with my mind;
you, the dearly beloved, I salute with my head; you, the dearly beloved, I come to for refuge.

O Supreme Brahman! Day by day I sing with my speech those dearest names of yours, most dearly beloved. In my mind I remember that dearest form of yours. With my head I salute daily what is dearest in you. And at every instant I offer up my soul at the refuge of you, the most dearly beloved. || 20 ||

(21)

*vrajāmi yadyaiva cha tatra tatra nityeṣv anityeṣu charācareṣu,
tavaiva rūpaṁ hṛdaye vasantam ādarśavad bhāntam anuvrajāmi.*

Wherever I go, there and there — among things eternal and things passing, among all that moves
and does not move —
it is your form alone that I follow, dwelling in the heart and shining like a mirror.

O Self of all! Wherever I go in this fathomless ocean of becoming, there I see that supremely beautiful figure of yours: in all eternal things, sky and the rest, and in all passing things, and in every creature still or moving. I see your nature blazing in the heart of the whole world, taking up every reflection as a mirror does, a form of the highest beauty; and beholding your most lovely figure everywhere, I bring my own being to its fruit. Bowing to that enchanting glimpse of you on every side, I am fulfilled and blessed beyond measure, according to the words —

*siya rāma maya saba jaga jānī,
karaũ pranāma jori juga pānī.*

Knowing all the world to be made of Sītā and Rām,
I make my salutation with my two hands joined.

|| 21 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Mystery.

Om

Salutation to the blessed Sadguru.

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Rescue of Those Who Take Refuge

Fourth stabaka

(1)

*anuvrajantaṁ madanāntaka tvaṁ dāsaṁ prapannaṁ śaraṇāgataṁ mām,
dīnaṁ cha dīnaṁ bhava dāva pīḍitaṁ kathaṁ dayāsāgara! tyaktum arhasi.*

Me, who follow after you — your servant, who has thrown himself down, who has come for refuge, O ender of desire;
poor, and poor again, scorched by the forest-fire of becoming — how, O ocean of mercy, can you
bring yourself to forsake me?

This is the Bouquet of the Examination of the Rescue of Those Who Take Refuge; in it the prayer for the protection of the suppliant is made with the whole substance of the heart.

O ender of desire! Birth after birth I have followed after you in search of you, changing my dress through many wombs; and I am the servant of your servants, and have fallen into that refuge of yours which gives fearlessness. My condition is a poor and abject one. Caught in the noose of Māyā the dancing-girl, I dance at her pleasure like a juggler's monkey, altogether in a state to be pitied, and scorched by the forest-fire that is the world. Seeing me brought so low as this, O ocean of mercy — you who are a very sea of compassion — why do you still forsake me? You are a fathomless ocean of mercy, and the loss of two or four small drops of it can make no shortfall in that fathomless and unspendable sea.

Therefore, O ocean of compassion, consider my condition and look at it. I am not one to be passed over by you; I have come to your refuge; be gracious, then, and protect me. || 1 ||

(2)

*vidhātṛ lipir apy api na kenāpi pramāṛjitā,
iti loka pravādo 'pi tvayaiva vitathaḥ kṛtaḥ.*

“Not even the Creator's writing has ever been rubbed out by anyone” —
even that saying of the world you alone have proved false.

O God of gods, Mahādev! Of all the descents and incarnations there have been on the face of the earth to this day, in none of them was there the power to lay a hand on Brahmā's writing. That is: the proverb current in the world — *vidhi kara likhā na koṁ meṭanihārā*, “what the Creator's hand has

written, none can erase” — this and sayings like it you alone have shown to be empty, by your divine power.

The sum of it is that with your powers and attainments — *aṇimā, garimā, laghimā, prākāmya* and the rest — you have in a single moment made paupers of birth after birth as rich as Kuber. Blessed is your generosity, your open hand, your grace; and it is this that moved the great poets to sing your praises so: *āśutoṣa tuma avaḍhara dānī, mo para kṛpā kariya jana jānī* — “swiftly pleased are you, and a giver beyond all measure; be gracious to me, knowing me for your servant.” That is: even the splendour and the knowledge and the wealth that are not written in a man’s fate, your grace bestows in a single moment. Of that same grace this creature is a beggar; rain therefore the nectar-drops of your grace on him too, and make him blessed. || 2 ||

(3)

*mṛtyuñjaya ‘si mṛtyos tvam jetā parama durjayaḥ,
mṛtyuñjaya rūpaṁ tvam mṛtyuṁ jetuṁ vayaṁ numah.*

You are Mṛtyuñjaya, the conqueror of death, unconquerable beyond all;
and we bow to that form of yours, the conqueror of death, that we may conquer death.

O Mṛtyuñjaya! Your very name is famous in the world as Mahāmṛtyuñjaya, which means “the conqueror even of the great death.” True to your name, you are wholly victorious over Yama and over Time itself; and being of great power in your own right, you are altogether unconquerable. Therefore we mortals, who live at every instant in the jaws of Time, and behind whom Yama walks for ever with his noose — we creatures of the world meditate and think again and again on your form as Mṛtyuñjaya, so as to win the victory over that untimely death; and again and again we bow to that most auspicious form of yours. || 3 ||

(4)

*jītvā jītvā punar api punaḥ yuddha mūrdheva tīrṇaḥ,
pītvā pītvā punar api punaḥ prāpta hālāhala ‘si;
dattvā dattvā punar api punar yakṣaṁ koṣaṁ dadāsi,
māyām etāṁ harasi na kathaṁ nātha te dāsa dāsīm.*

Conquering and conquering, again and again you come down as though upon the front of battle;
drinking and drinking, again and again you take the *hālāhala* poison;
giving and giving, again and again you give away the treasure of the yakṣas —
why then, O Lord, do you not take away this Māyā, who is the servant of your servants?

O Mṛḍa! In every age you conquer the demons on the field of battle again and again, and again and again come down to fight. The tales of the countless terrible demon-kings you have slain — Tripurāsura, Tārakāsura and the rest — are famous through the world.

O Nīlakaṇṭh! Again and again you drink *bhāṅg* and *dhatūrā* and other intoxicating things; and for the good of the world you drink down, laughing, even a poison of such fierce potency as the *hālāhala*, as though it were milk. O crown of givers beyond all measure! You are not content with granting your devotees riches and estates, sons and grandsons and every worldly splendour; when you are

pleased, you are gracious enough to grant them even the unspendable treasure of the yakṣas, as you have granted it many times to Rāvaṇa and to many another devotee.

O Lord, why then do you not drive away this most terrible she-demon Māyā, who is the maid of your own servants? She swallows us creatures of the world, brings us under her power, and makes us dance to her night and day; for without your peerless grace it is altogether impossible for the sorrows that Māyā breeds to be wiped out of a human life:

*rāma bhajana binu sunahu khagesā,
miṭāhiṁ na jīvāna kera kalesā.*

Without the worship of Rām, hear me, king of birds —
the sorrows of the living are never wiped away.

So Śrī Kāka Bhuṣuṇḍijī taught Śrī Garuḍajī: that without worship of the Lord it is altogether impossible for the sorrows of creatures to be brought to an end. Māyā does not overcome the true devotees of the Lord; rather, at the Lord's prompting, that same Māyā who is the terror of the world shows the devotee the right road, in the form of the higher knowledge. Such is the splendour of the Lord's unearthly and divine power. Prompt then this Māyā, who is your handmaid, to help us in the form of that higher knowledge; for your greatness is famous through the world:

*garala sudhā ripu karaṁ mitāi,
gopada sindhu anala sitalāi.*

Poison turns to nectar, and enemies to friends;
the ocean shrinks to a cow's hoofprint, and fire turns cool.

By your grace alone even deadly things like poison become the sustainers and helpers of human life. || 4 ||

(5)
*dadāsi prapannān eva dhana dhānya parigrahān,
apraṇatānām api harasi bhoḥ! kālā kaṣṭam daridram.*

To those who take refuge you give wealth and grain and household;
and even from those who never bow to you, O Lord, you take away death's torment and their poverty.

O crown of givers! To your devotees who bow before you, you give wealth and grain and the fair splendours of a household — that is your way. But this is your supreme generosity: that from those who do not bow to you even in a dream, you take away the torment of death and their poverty as well. O God, you are unceasingly bent on the good of the world; and those creatures who, driven by your Māyā, forget your nature altogether — even them, as father of the world, you never forget. Even great sinners, the base, the unjust and the cruel, you count bewildered creatures, and treat them too with full grace. And why should you not? It is for that very reason that you are called Bholā Bhaṇḍārī, the simple-hearted treasurer, and Viśvabhartā, the sustainer of the world. Blessed is your unearthly greatness, and blessed the singing of your matchless virtues. Where in this human tongue is there strength enough to tell the tale of your virtues as it truly is? || 5 ||

(6)

*viśvopakāra nirato viśvasya paripālakaḥ,
na te īrṣyā madodgamaḥ svapne 'pi parilakṣyate.*

Bent on the world's good, the keeper of the world —
in you no rising of envy or of pride is to be seen, not even in a dream.

O destroyer of desire and the rest! You are for ever bent on the good of the whole world, and you are the one sustainer of the entire universe. Never in your mind do you let rise, even in a dream, envy toward anyone, or arrogance in your own power, or the appetite for display. Your nature is to be gracious to every living thing, and to deliver and sustain every living thing. || 6 ||

(7)

*pūrṇasya te nāsti hi bheda bhāvo pūrṇo hi pūrṇān kuruṣe manorathān,
rathāṁś cha vājīn sakalān bibharṣi bibharṣi nāgān api nāga saṅghān.*

In you, who are full, there is no thought of difference; being full, you make full the desires
of the heart.

You sustain all chariots and horses; you sustain the elephants, and the hosts of serpents too.

O you whose nature is fullness! You are for ever full; and being full, it is utterly impossible that the appetite for making differences should arise in your heart, for such trifling feelings arise only in trifling hearts. Where has the rush of the wind strength enough to shake the Himālaya? Being full in yourself, you fulfil at every instant the desires of your peerless devotees.

Because the light of knowledge burns brighter in the human heart, men can at least pray to you now and then; but you are all that moves and does not move, down to chariot and horse and elephant, to the fly and the ant, and you feed and sustain them all. The belly of the elephant, which is satisfied only by a *maṇ* of food, you fill with the same gladness; and the ant, which is satisfied by a single grain, you satisfy in the same absorbed delight. You must give satisfaction to all; and so you are for ever bent on the perfect satisfying of the whole world. || 7 ||

(8)

*tvām kālam āhuḥ prakṛteḥ param vibhuṁ kechit kṛtāntam apare yamaṁ cha,
nūnam kṛtānto 'si kṛtena teṣāṁ ye tāvakāś teṣu na tvam kṛtāntaḥ.*

Some call you Time, the all-pervading, beyond Nature; some call you the Ender, and some call
you Yama.

To them, by their own deeds, you are indeed the Ender; but to those who are yours, you are
no
Ender at all.

O Lord! Great men point to that boundless nature of yours which is beyond Nature, and name it Time. And rightly so; for in the great dissolution you not only destroy the whole world with the flame of your third eye, but you are also the one and only cause of the destruction of Yama and Varuṇa and Kuber and all the guardians of the worlds. Your nature is all-pervading. Some hold you to be Kṛtānta, the Ender; others hold you to be Yama himself. O boundless one, to them you are assuredly the Ender; but to those who are your own peerless servants, and who meditate on you in the form of Śiva whose

very figure is blessing — to them your nature is full of blessing, working their good, and giving them joy. The verse that follows will make this plain. || 8 ||

(9)

*teṣāṁ kṛte tvam priya vallabho 'si preṣṭho 'si ānanda mayo 'si nityam,
yathā hi saimhī sukarāla daṁṣṭrā jahāti bālān ayane karālatām.*

For their sake you are the beloved, the dearest of the dear, and eternally made of bliss;
as the lioness's most fearful fangs lay their terror aside when she carries her young.

O most beloved! To those devotees of yours your nature is for ever most dear, most beloved, dearer even than what is dear, and full of bliss. Just as the lioness's terrible fangs, though they are the very shape of death to deer and other creatures, lay their harshness aside and take on a complete softness when she takes her cubs into her mouth to carry them from one place to another.

The sum of it is this: when your devotees give up this body of the five elements, then, because they have meditated without ceasing on your form, they see even Yamarāj — come to carry off their breath — within your own form, and so they feel nothing but complete gladness at the hour of death. (For their inward habit grows so settled that the awareness begins to dawn on them of *sarvaṁ viṣṇu-mayaṁ jagat*, “the world is all made of Viṣṇu.”)

The comparison is this. The lioness's hard fangs, which are wholly harsh and terrible for the chewing of other creatures — those same fangs, when her cubs are born and before they have learned to walk, take them into her mouth and carry them from one place to another, and at that time they do not prick the wholly tender skin of her young in the least. In the same way, those who hold you to be Yama, and who fear and tremble at the death you send, see only that terrible form of Yama in you; but those who are your most loving devotees receive whatever most precious thing you give as your gift and set it gladly on their heads — and just so they are always ready to accept gladly even the death you send, counting it a most precious present come by your own will.

Their conviction stands firm: my Lord is for ever full of blessing, the maker of blessing, unceasingly bent on the welfare of his devotees; every thing sent by him is most dear to us. And so they stand girded to embrace even that sorrowful death with the highest joy. For such peerless devotees of yours, even Yama's fierce torments, because they come by your will, seem as soft as that — just as the lioness's terrible fangs seem soft and full of joy to her suckling cubs. For as the lioness's helpless cub can think nothing at all of its own gain and loss, but rests untroubled and unafraid in its single-hearted reliance on its mother's mercy, so the devotee too takes no care whatever for his own welfare and keeps his eye on your compassion alone. Therefore in every condition you yourself think for their welfare, and never in any condition let them be grieved even a little. Blessed is your tenderness to your devotees! Blessed the power by which you rescue them! Make us too worthy of that same mercy, and be gracious to bring our lives also to their fruit. || 9 ||

(10)

*tathaiva bhaktās tava saumya rūpaṁ śāntaṁ smitāvadāta mandahāsam,
kvachid śivaṁ tvāṁ kvacha viṣṇuṁ ādyaṁ kvachich cha śārvīm praṇavaṁ kvachich cha.*

And so your devotees meditate on that gentle form of yours, at peace, bright with its faint smile —

here as Śiva, there as the primal Viṣṇu, here as the Goddess, and there as the syllable Om.

O you who are made of mercy! Just so, your most beloved devotees meditate on that supremely gentle form of yours, which is a storehouse of the highest peace, and in which the sidelong loving glance and the trace of a smile bring the devotee's mind under their power. That sweetest figure of yours they meditate on here in the form of Śiva, there in the form of Viṣṇu; here they behold it in the form of Mahālakṣmī, Mahāsarasvatī and Mahākālī; and there men who know Brahman meditate on it in the form of Omkāra. O you who are the highest blessing! Let them satisfy themselves by seeing you in however many forms, each according to the taste of his own heart — in truth you are one only. It is solely because the tastes of your devotees differ that you grant them your sight in this separate form and in that, and so make them glad and bring them to their fruit. || 10 ||

(11)

*yatheṣṭa devaṁ suvilokya tṛptāḥ prasanna chittāḥ paramotsukāś cha,
bālāḥ yathā svāṁ janānīm kṣudhārtās tathaiva te pāda talam viśanti.*

Satisfied by the sight of the god of their own choosing, their minds glad and their longing at its height,

they enter beneath your feet as hungry children go to their own mother.

O keeper of the household of those who bow to you! Those peerless and loving devotees of yours are satisfied by meditating on you in the form of their own chosen deity. Their minds are made glad, and they long above all things to reach your refuge. As a child tormented with hunger goes with utter eagerness into the lap of the mother who has come back to him after a long while, and clinging to her is drowned in gladness — and in the hearts of such children not the least trace of any other appetite is to be seen — just so your lovers, having found the lap of your refuge which is the highest bliss, are drowned and dissolved in gladness at your holy feet alone: *yaṁ labdhvā chāparaṁ lābhaṁ manyate nādhikaṁ tataḥ*, “having gained which, he counts no other gain greater than that” [Gītā 6.22]. For nowhere else at all is there gladness or gain greater than that supreme gain. || 11 ||

(12)

*teṣāṁ tvaṁ tvad bhaktānām mamāpi manda bhāgyasya,
yoga kṣema karo hy asi yoga kṣema karo bhava.*

For those devotees of yours you are the bringer of gain and of its keeping;
for me too, ill-fortuned as I am — be the bringer of gain and of its keeping.

O *pārijāta* of the devotee's heart! The whole burden of the welfare of those peerless and loving devotees — their feeding, their protection, the watching over them — you take into your own boon-giving hands, according to that lovely word of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā:

*ananyāś chintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate,
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yoga kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham.*

Those who think on me with no other thought and worship me all about,
for those ever-devoted ones I carry the getting and the keeping. [Gītā 9.22]

O you who are made of mercy! I too am a creature of poor fortune. Take the burden of my getting and keeping also into those same merciful hands, and so favour me. For —

*dīna bandhu dūsaro kahū pāvō? ko tuma binu para pīra pāi hai?
kehi dīnatā sunāvō. prabhu akṛpālu, kṛpālu alāyaka, jahā tahā chitahiṁ ḍolāvō;
dvai samujhi suni rahō mauna ho, kahi śrama kahā gavāyō.*

Where shall I find another friend of the poor? Who but you feels another's pain?
To whom shall I tell my wretchedness? Here a master without mercy; there one merciful but
unable —
and wherever I let my mind wander, it is one or the other. Understanding this, I hear and stay
silent: why waste the labour of speaking?

O Lord! Where shall I find another friend of the poor such as you? O Lord, who but you is
grieved by another's — the devotee's — grief? Before whom, then, should I go weeping the tale of
my wretchedness? Wherever I let my mind wander, in one place I meet masters who have no mercy
in them, and in another I meet those who are merciful indeed, but unfit — that is, unable. Hearing
and understanding this, I simply keep silent; for why should I lose my own secret by speaking before
such as these? (The secret would be out, and nothing would come of it either.) || 12 ||

(13)

*bhaktānāṁ anuraktānāṁ śāntānāṁ sama chetasām,
ātma tattva prakāśena yoga kṣema karo bhava.*

For your devotees, who love you, who are at peace and even of mind —
by the shining out of the truth of the Self, be the bringer of gain and of its keeping.

O bee at the lotus of the devotee's heart! We creatures of the world are unceasingly in love with
your holy lotus feet, and are your peerless servants. Because we have won some little taste of the
sweet juice of your lotus feet, we are possessed of a quieted disposition and are steeped in the feeling
of evenness. Be wholly gracious to us: grant us the divine light of the truth of the Self, and so be
gracious to furnish us with our getting and our keeping.

The word *yoga* in such places is used for the winning of what has not been won, and the guarding
of what has been won is called *kṣema*. So: bring us to the winning of that truth which is the knowledge
of the Self, which we have not won; and have the compassion to undertake yourself, out of your own
abundance, the guarding of the knowledge of the Self once won. || 13 ||

(14)

*tvam ātma tattvāmṛta pāna tuṣṭo puṣṭaḥ paraṁ sad guṇa bhakti rasa pravāhaiḥ,
rādhā 'dharāmṛta sudhā rasa chañcharikāṁ śrī kṛṣṇa chandra bhramaraṁ hṛdaye bibharṣi.*

Content with drinking the nectar of the truth of the Self, nourished by the streams of the
juice of devotion to the qualified God,
you bear in your heart that bee, Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, who hovers for the nectar of Rādhā's lip.

O bee at the honey of the juice of devotion to the qualified God! You are glad of mind, drinking night and day the nectar-juice which is the knowledge of the truth of the Self; and you are nourished to the full by tasting the supremely sweet ambrosia of the worship of the Lord in his qualified form.

For the tasting of the nectar of the lip of Śrī Rādhārānī — the peerless beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, the Lord who is the Supreme Person of the divine play; she of a beauty beyond reproach, of great good fortune, dearer than life to the Lord — you bear for ever in the lotus of your heart that most cunning bee, Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra himself, in the form of a black bee.

The intention of this appears to be as follows. Because you are the peerless devotee of Śrī Rādhājī, and because the holy figure of Śrī Priyājī is enthroned unbrokenly in the lotus of your heart, therefore Śrī Vṛndāvanachandra — dearer than life to Rādhā — being of himself made subject to the love of his own beloved, dwells without ceasing in that grove of Rādhā which is your heart, and keeps you overwhelmed with bliss. And so the good fortune of your devotion is beyond the reach of speech. Blessed is that heart of the supreme devotee, in which the Divine Pair are for ever enthroned and which they keep ablaze at every instant with a splendour that enchants the three worlds! To tell of it in speech is altogether impossible. || 14 ||

(15)

*kadā 'pi rāmaṁ śrī lakṣmaṇaṁ tvaṁ sītā latā 'liṅgita sarva gātram,
yogīndra dhyānāmṛta pāna pātraṁ yogāsanastho hṛdaye bibharṣi.*

Sometimes, seated in the posture of yoga, you bear in your heart Rām and Śrī Lakṣmaṇa — him whose every limb is embraced by the creeper that is Sītā, the cup from which the lords of yogis drink the nectar of meditation.

O you who play in the mountain caves of Kailāś! Śrī Śambhu! Sometimes, seated on the yoga-āsana, you hold in your heart the figure of Śrī Raghunandan and are made supremely glad — Śrī Rām, the darling of Ayodhya's lord, the Supreme Person who keeps the bounds of right, all whose limbs are embraced by Śrī Jānakījī, the mother of the world, and beside whom stands his follower and devotee Lakhaṇlāl; whose mind-enchancing beauty is the very cup of nectar from which the kings of yogis drink in meditation. || 15 ||

(16)

*tvāṁ śaṅkaraṁ śaṅkaraṁ mūrti śālinam śrī rāma sītāṅkita sarva gātram,
śrī kṛṣṇa rādhāṅkita romarājīm prabhuṁ bhaje haiḍakkhān vāsinam.*

You, Śaṅkar, maker of blessing, glorious in your form, your every limb marked with Śrī Rām and
Sītā,
the very hairs of your body marked with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā — you, my Lord, dweller in
Haiḍākhān, I worship.

O Lord! You are the visible figure of Śrī Śaṅkar, giver of fearlessness, who works the good of the world; and your every limb is marked with the forms and the names of Śrī Rām and Sītā. Every hair of your body is marked with the forms and names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhājī. On such a Lord — the

dweller in Śrī Haiḍākhān, the descent of Śrī Śaṅkar, the very figure of Śiva, Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar — we meditate without ceasing, remembering him and singing his name, and so make our souls glad.

From these three verses it is plain that this hymn to the Lord is, as it were, the most holy and beautiful stream of a *triveṇī*, a confluence of three rivers; and bathing in it, a man comes of himself into every gladness. One of its streams is devotion to Śrī Rām; the second stream is devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and the third is steeped in the flowing juice of devotion to Sadāśiva. For the deliverance of creatures caught in the quarrels of the sects is hard to come by, their view having grown very narrow and cramped. So all three principles flow equally in this confluence, and are able to make its stream supremely holy, giving of happiness, and wholly capable of washing away the heaped-up sins.

Further: this fact fully confirms the opening move made in the root-verses of this holy work — *nānā mata samudbhūtaṁ jīva jyotipradāyakam* (“risen out of the many doctrines, the giver of light to the soul”: verse 4 of the Bouquet of the Examination of Essence). And indeed, if the matter be looked at truly, it is altogether impossible for the human heart to obtain full peace without the worship of all three principles; for the fashioning of humankind and of the body is the outcome of the mingling of the three *guṇas*. Therefore, with all the differences of time, of nature, of temper and of the mind’s inclination, the complete satisfying of the mind is possible only by bathing at this confluence.

So, O company of faithful devotees, do you too take without ceasing the joy of this most holy bathing at the confluence, and see how much peace there is in it, how much gladness, and how much strength. It will show itself to you of its own accord within a few days; for to show the sun no other light is needed — the sun is a mass of self-shining fire and of the highest brightness. || 16 ||

(17)

*līlāṁ tvadīyāṁ hṛdayāravinde saṁsmṛtya cheto mama te sulāgṇam,
antargataṁ guptaṁ tamaṁ rahasyaṁ na gopayanty ātmajaneṣu santaḥ.*

Remembering your play in the lotus of my heart, my mind has fastened itself to you;
and the good do not keep hidden from their own people even the innermost and most secret
mystery.

O you who possess the splendour of Sat-Chit-Ānand! Remembering your most holy acts in the lotus of my heart, my restless mind has become wholly absorbed at your holy feet. Be gracious, then, to reveal even those most secret mysteries that lie in the hearts of the great — both to make my pen succeed, and for the delight of your devotees’ minds; for the good do not keep even the most secret truth hidden from their own. || 17 ||

(18)

*ātma svarūpo ‘si mahat svarūpin! mahat svarūpaṁ nahi netra lakṣyam,
lakṣyatvam āyāti sudīvyā dṛṣṭyā tvat pāda padmārchita pāda sevanāt.*

You are the very nature of the Self, O you of the mighty form; and that mighty form is no mark
for the eye.

It comes to be seen by a most divine sight — won by serving the feet of him who worships
your
lotus feet.

O you who possess the mighty form! You are the changeless Sat-Chit-Ānand nature of the Self. That vast form of yours is altogether impossible to be seen by these eyes of flesh; only the lords of yogis, sunk in the samādhi of meditation, can see it. But by the fair and divine sight that is won through serving the lotus feet of your suppliant at your holy feet — that jewel among disciples, the supreme devotee, Śrī Mahendra Svāmījī Mahārāj, blessed in his very name — that divine form of yours comes at once into view. || 18 ||

(19)

*tvat pāda reṇū kṛta divya añjano yad yat prapaśyāmi likhāmi tat tat,
satyaṁ śapāmi nayanaiḥ svakīyair yad vatta kiñchid yadi kalpayāmi.*

With the divine collyrium made of the dust of your feet, whatever I see, that and that I write.
I swear it truly by my own eyes, if I have invented anything at all.

O divine figure! Having scoured my eyes with the collyrium that is the divine dust of your holy lotus feet, whatever I see with eyes so anointed, that and only that I set down with my pen. As Śrī Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsī Mahārāj described the surpassing power of the most holy dust of the guru's feet:

*guru pada raja mṛdu mañjula añjana,
nayana amiya dṛga doṣa vibhañjana.*

The dust of the guru's feet is a soft and lovely collyrium,
nectar for the eyes, the breaker of every fault of sight.

By that same divine and sovereign remedy a divine light has come into my eyes also, by your grace. I declare it truly, swearing by my own eyes, that there is not the least trace of invention in it. || 19 ||

(20)

*kalpanātīta! kalpānte tvam eko jyoti rūpa dhṛk,
saptarṣibhiḥ sevyamānaḥ brahma jyotiḥ svarūpa dhṛk.*

O you beyond all imagining! At the end of the aeon you alone remain, bearing the form of light,
served by the seven seers, bearing the very form of the light of Brahman.

O you beyond all imagining! Supreme Brahman, far past the reach of thought — at the end of the aeon, at the setting of this creation, you alone will remain, having taken the form of light. At that time the seven seers will be given to your praise and your service, and you will be enthroned, bearing only the form of the light of Brahman, while all cause and all effect are dissolved into the eternal. || 20 ||

(21)

*punaḥ sṛjana chintāyām magno patha pradarśakaḥ,
kalpādaḥ brahma rūpeṇa śāstā veda svarūpa dhṛk.*

And again, to the one sunk in the care of creating, you are the shower of the road;
at the aeon's beginning, in the form of Brahmā, the teacher, bearing the very form of the Veda.

O helmsman of the making of the world! And again, according to the Vedic Śruti *yathā pūrvam akalpayat*, "as before, so he shaped it," you show the road to the Creator sunk in the care of creation;

and at the beginning of the aeon, taking the form of Brahmā and bearing the divine knowledge of the Vedas, you spread abroad that divine knowledge of the Vedas. || 21 ||

(22)

*veda vedyo vedajño veda vedita veditaḥ,
veda vāda rato vedān prachāreṇa prayokṣyasi.*

Known by the Veda, knower of the Veda, known by what the Veda has made known;
given to the discourse of the Veda, you will set the Vedas to work by their spreading abroad.

O you who are the whole substance of the Veda! Your nature is knowable by the Vedas, and you are yourself the storehouse of the Vedas' true knowledge, and it is by the Vedas that your real nature is known. Being such, you give yourself to the discourse of the Veda, and at the beginning of the aeon you spread the Vedas fully abroad, and so send out once more into the world the light of divine knowledge. || 22 ||

(23)

*jīvo 'yaṁ bahu roga śoka grasitaḥ gehe vasan karma phaleṣu tuṣṭaḥ,
māyā ramya parayā bahu vitta kāmīyā tvad rūpa dvārāvatiko supekṣitaḥ.*

This creature, seized by many sicknesses and sorrows, dwelling at home, content with the
fruits
of his deeds,
was sent by the lovely Māyā, out of her longing for much wealth, to that Dvārakā which is
your
form, and there awaited.

O Lord, crown of givers! This ignorant creature of mine, dwelling in his house and afflicted day and night with many sicknesses and sorrows, was nevertheless content: he took whatever little food came to him as the fruit of the deeds of his former births, and was satisfied with such gain as there was. But by that wife who is Māyā he was compelled, out of the longing for much wealth, and sent off to that city of Dvārakā which is your form.

The sum of it is this. The devotee makes his humble plea to the Lord: O Lord, this Sudāmā the brahmin, who is my soul, was glad at heart in his own house, enduring the pleasure and pain born of the fruit of his deeds, and counting whatever came to him by the Lord's will or by begging as the fruit of his own actions. But as Sudāmā's wife urged Sudāmā and sent him to Dvārakā to his old friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa, just so this Sudāmā who is my soul was content with the fruits his own deeds had earned him — and then, O merciful one, this wife who is Māyā urged him and sent him to that old friend of the soul who is you, Brahman, in that Dvārakā which is your form. || 23 ||

(24)

*svakṛtya taṇḍula kaṇān ati kṣudra mūlyān dhṛtvā sva kukṣau sthiram etat agra dṛṣṭiḥ,
śanaiḥ śanair aśaṅkita dṛṣṭi pātais tvat pāda dvārāvatikāṁ praviṣṭaḥ.*

Holding at his side those grains of rice which are his own deeds, of a value very small, his
gaze fixed steady ahead,
slowly, slowly, with glances that could not shake off their misgiving, he entered that Dvārakā
which is your feet.

O most compassionate one! Then that Sudāmā the brahmin, who is the soul, tied up in his bundle those grains of rice which are his deeds, whose worth is very small indeed, and holding his gaze empty — that is, fixing the sight of his inward understanding steady upon the place he was making for — and looking this way and that with a glance full of misgiving, he came to that Dvārakā which is your holy feet. That is: as Sudāmā's wife sent the parched rice with him to be arranged as a present before the Lord, just so this wife who is Māyā tied up the parched rice of the good and evil deeds this creature had done, and gave it to him to arrange as a present before that Supreme Brahman.

Then, pressing that bundle under his arm, meditating with a steady gaze on your holy feet, and looking about him with a doubting eye — *I am a heap of sins; is nobody watching me? Will my old friend know me again? With what face shall I meet him? I never once so much as remembered him before* — and framing all manner of resolves and doubts out of such longings, he entered that city of Dvārakā which is nothing other than your form. || 24 ||

(25)

*āsādyā tatraiva cha pūrva dṛṣṭam mitraṁ svakīyaṁ nayanābhirāmam,
rājñāṁ mahaiśvarya samanvitaṁ prabhuṁ kṛṣṇa bhavantaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapannaḥ.*

And reaching there his own friend, seen in a former time, the delight of his eyes,
the Lord endowed with the great sovereignty of kings — he took refuge in you, in Kṛṣṇa.

O Supreme Self! There he came into the refuge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa — that is, of your own form — his inseparable friend of birth after birth in a former time, giver of joy to the eyes, adorned with all the sovereignty of kings and enthroned in the fullness of power. || 25 ||

(26)

*smaratā pūrvaṁ sakhyaṁ cha sa tvayā pūrṇa satkṛtaḥ,
tasya kakṣe sthitān bhoga chiḍukān ādāya bhakṣatā.*

Remembering the old friendship, he was fully honoured by you,
who took the parched rice that lay under his arm, and ate it.

O shoreless ocean of compassion! Remembering your former friendship, you did full honour to that Sudāmā who is the soul; and you snatched from him the parched rice of his deeds, tucked under his arm, and ate it. That is: the soul is a portion of Brahman; and when the portion that is the soul came to him whose portion it is, he knew it again, and was gracious to this creature. Those grains of rice which were its deeds — for the enjoying of whose fruit, good and evil, it would have had to go once more onto that stage which is the world — those he ate, and so delivered it with his whole being. || 26 ||

(27)

*tvayā mitratva sauhārdaṁ pūrṇaṁ rūpeṇa darśitam,
kathaṁ na labhatāṁ siddhiṁ dhana dhānya gajān śriyam.*

The warmth of friendship you showed him in its fullness:
how then should he not obtain attainment — wealth, grain, elephants and splendour?

O ocean of mercy! You showed him the warmth of friendship in its fullness. Having won a lord of the three worlds like you for a friend, why then should he not become worthy of wealth, of grain, of

elephants and of Lakṣmī? And why should he not be the one vessel of all the attainments? That is: at once he became as rich in splendour as his friend, Brahman himself. || 27 ||

(28)

*sauvarṇān śāta kaumbhāśś cha vāsāṁsi vividhāni cha,
dāridryaṁ bhakṣitaṁ tasya tvayā taṇḍula rūpa dhṛk.*

Ornaments of gold and of fine gold, and garments of every kind —
for his poverty, which wore the shape of grains of rice, was eaten by you.

He became lord of ornaments of gold and pure gold of every kind, of garments of every kind, and of splendour. For when you had eaten up his poverty, which stood there in the shape of grains of rice, how should he not become possessed of great splendour? That is: a man's own deeds are the chief cause of his bondage. When by the grace of Śrī Śiva-Brahman his very deeds were destroyed, then he became the visible and pure form of that Supreme Brahman whose portion he is — that is, that brahmin who is the soul became Brahman, and so became the full vessel and sharer of all the splendour and sovereignty of Brahman, and was blessed beyond measure. || 28 ||

(29)

*so 'haṁ tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ yāmi rakṣa mām sarvato bhayāt,
tvayi drṣṭe na draṣṭavyaṁ mayā 'nyasya malinaṁ mukham.*

That same I come to you for refuge: guard me from fear on every side.
Having seen you, I need never look on any other's soiled face.

O God of gods! That same I — Sudāmā, who is the soul — have come to the refuge of you, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who are Brahman. O treasury of mercy, guard me on every side from this terrible fear of the world. Having won, with a whole and single heart, the refuge of your holy lotus feet, I have no need left to look on the face of any other ordinary person, or of any lesser god, nor to make my prayer to them. And now that I have come with my whole being into your refuge, say yourself —

*deva dūsaro kauna dīna ko dayālu!
sīla nidhāna sujāna-siromani saraṇāgata-priya pranata pālu.*

O God, who else is merciful to the poor?
Storehouse of gentleness, crown of the wise, lover of those who come for refuge, keeper of
those who bow. || 1 ||

*ko samaratha saravajña sakala prabhu, siva saneha mānasa marālu;
ko sāhība kie mīta prītivasa khaga nisichara kapi bhīla bhālu.*

Who is so able, who all-knowing, who lord of all — the swan on the Mānasa lake of Śiva's
love?
What master, overcome by love, has made friends of bird and night-ranger, of monkey, forest
tribesman and bear? || 2 ||

O God, who but you is merciful to the poor? You are the storehouse of gentleness, the crown of those who know, the beloved of those who come for refuge, the protector of those who take shelter.

Who is so able as you? You know all things; you are the master of all that moves and does not move; and you are the swan that plays on the Mānasa lake which is Śrī Śivajī's love.

So now, good or bad, holy or a heap of sins — such as I am, I am yours. You alone are my protector; and for that reason, protect me: deliver me with my whole being. || 29 ||

(30)

*chandraś chandra kalānvita śaśidharaś chandrapradaś chandradrk,
sūryaḥ sūrya maheś cha sūrya nirataś sūrya prabhā dāyakaḥ;
agniś chaiva agni bāṇa nirato āgneya sṛṣṭi kārakaḥ,
kham vāyur jala medanī maya tanuḥ pāyāt sadā śaṅkaraḥ.*

The moon, and crowned with the moon's crescent, bearer of the moon, giver of the moon,
moon-eyed;
the sun, and great lord of the sun, given to the sun, giver of the sun's own brightness;
fire itself, given to the arrow of fire, maker of the creation born of fire;
whose body is sky and wind and water and earth — may Śaṅkar for ever protect us.

O Sadāśiva of the eight forms! You are the very form of the moon. Whatever coolness there is in the moon, whatever gladdening, whatever light, is the fruit of your grace alone; you are the moon itself. *(Once Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadāśiva granted his sight in the very form of the moon to a physician of the village of Malaūch, in the Almoṛā district, at a place called Jhāraū.)* And you are crowned with the moon's crescent, wearing the moon's digit on your brow as an ornament — and for this the world calls you Śaśidhara, bearer of the moon. And you are *chandraprada*, the giver of that cool and shining knowledge. And you are *chandradrk*, moon-eyed: that is, the left eye of your vast form is the moon-god. *(Śrī Mahārāj once graciously granted to a Śāstrī of Malaūch, who was a good physician, at the age of eighteen or nineteen, the direct sight of his moon-eyed form, for five minutes together.)* Both of these were direct experiences, felt by those two worthy men themselves, and received by his grace.

O you whose form is the universe! You are the very form of the sun, and the fire within the sun is your own visible nature, by which the sun lights the whole world and lights its own form as well. And you are given to the sun: *yad āditye pratapati tat tejo viddhi māmakam*, “the fire that burns in the sun — know that to be mine”; you are absorbed in the meditation of that fire of yours which sits enthroned within the sun; and by your grace you are the giver of light to the sun itself.

You are fire itself. And it was for this that thousands of men and women, in the austerity of the five fires, saw you with wonder-struck eyes upon the blazing pyre of fire in the very form of fire, and so made their lives fruitful.

And you are ready in the use of the arrow of fire. *(People held the belief about Śrī Sadgurudev that he was some great one of the age of the Mahābhārata; and so a devotee once put a question to Śrī Mahārāj about the fire-arrow — that in truth the fire-arrow is used for the making of a creation born of fire: was this so? Śrī Mahārāj, being a lover of his devotees and generous beyond measure, said to him with a slight smile: bring me a straw. The man brought an ordinary straw from close at hand; and Śrī Gurudev at once charged it with a mantra and threw it — and immediately the blazing flames of fire began to rise on every side in the forest. Then, on the devotee's frantic prayer, he sprinkled water charged with a mantra from his water-pot, and quieted the fire at once.)* For this reason both the

epithets are true and are made good: “given to the arrow of fire,” and “maker of the creation born of fire.” And you are the maker of that creation of works which is accomplished by fire.

May Śrī Śaṅkar in the form of Gurudev, who bears the form of sky and wind and water and earth, protect us always. || 30 ||

(31)

*ojasvaro 'lakṣya gatiḥ svatantra saṁlakṣya rūpī iṣṭām,
śaraṇāṁ te sam anuprāptaḥ evaṁ lakṣyaṁ prāptavān dhvāntaḥ.*

Full of power, your going unseen, free in yourself, yet showing forth your form to be seen —
he who reached your refuge, though in darkness, so obtained the goal.

O all-pervading Śrī Siddha Siddheśvarādhiśa! Your going is unseen by any living thing, and your works too are past the reach of the understanding. Only lately you granted your visible sight to a European devotee named Nils Olof Chrisander, and gave him a command; whereupon he set out at once from where he was and came into your fearless refuge, and immediately, by the mere sight of you and by your compassion, he obtained the attainment of his goal.

Śrīman Munīndrajī Mahārāj is a supremely perfected Sadguru. By his holy appearing the good of countless creatures has been worked, and many unearthly things are heard of him from his devotees.

Śrī Sadgurudevji's rain of the nectar of compassion — causeless, for the good of creatures scorched by the three afflictions — is unbroken, ceaseless and without pause; and in endless ways the work of delivering endless creatures is going forward. Here is a true happening of only a few years ago, and well known to all. Though Śrī Mahārājji has been hidden from sight these thirty years, still he graciously continues to grant his sight to devotees and to faithful seekers.

There was a most accomplished European gentleman whose name is Śrī Nils Olof Chrisander. He was a world-famous actor of the country of Sweden, a director of Germany's renowned Universal Film Company, a generous giver and a philosopher. He was perfected from his birth, and his spiritual movement was of a high order.

In America, where he had been living some years, he was held in great honour, and his words were counted the words of a perfected man; he ate no meat. At the age of fifty-seven or fifty-eight he had the sight of Śrī Munīndra, the Bābā of Haiḍākhaṇ, in his bedchamber at Moscow, the capital of Russia. At that same time Śrī Munīndradev granted his sight to the gentleman's wife also; she was at that time in Leningrad. When the two of them met the next day, the experience of each was one and the same.

Their inward movements began to strain toward the sight of the yogi. This is the one mark of a purified heart: that it fastens on the Lord's holy feet. Śrī Bhagavān is *pāvanāṁ pāvanānām*, the purifier of the pure; and so a pure heart can take no rest until it has obtained the supremely pure Lord. The stilling of hunger will come only by eating; and by this same rule the Swedish gentleman named above came also to India. He spent some time at the Śrī Aurobindo Āśram in Pondicherry as well, but in this sojourn he did not find complete satisfaction. By a prompting he did not know, he came to Almorā, and lived about two years in a lonely place called Kasārdevī.

There he had the sight, several times over, of Śrī Sadgurudevji Mahārāj — the same whose sight he

had had at Moscow — and having found the Sadguru of his birth after birth, he was blessed beyond telling. He made a beautiful and artful figure in plaster. In memory of this happening, that sweet and compelling figure is kept safe to this day in a house of standing at Almoṛā. On the twenty-sixth of April, 1946, that European gentleman left Almoṛā.

Such happenings have taken place until now, and are taking place, by the mercy of Śrī Mahārājī, past all counting. Not everyone has knowledge of it. As the Lord is endless, so too are his acts endless and unearthly. || 31 ||

(32)

*satyo loka pravādo 'yam tvayā satyaḥ kṛtaḥ kṣaṇāt,
kṣaṇena guru sānnidhyāj jano 'mṛtam avāpnuyāt.*

True is this saying of the world, and you have made it true in a moment:
that in an instant, by the nearness of the guru, a man may obtain the nectar.

O great Lord! That in a single moment, by the grace of Śrī Sadgurudev, a man obtains the nectar (the sight of the Self, or liberation) — this true saying, current in the world, you have made good by delivering even devotees living in far countries. || 32 ||

(33)

*tavaiva charaṇeṣu samāpya bhautikaṁ dehaṁ gato 'sau padam avyayaṁ kṣaṇāt,
satyaṁ dayāṁ te 'mṛta tattva samplutāṁ saṁsāra mūrti nirateṣu kuruṣva yogin.*

At your feet alone he finished with the body of the elements and went in a moment to the undecaying state.

Truly, O yogin, pour out that mercy of yours, steeped in the truth of nectar, upon us who are given over to the shapes of the world.

That most fortunate Chrisander, at your holy feet alone, destroyed the material character of his own being and became heir to the undecaying state of Brahman. That is: once the light of the direct sight of the Lord and of the experience of the Self has awakened in a man's heart, then though he may go on with the journey of life in the world for some days more in this body of the five elements, still he moves about in the state of one liberated while living, empty of any pride in the body; and he becomes fully heir to the supreme state on that very day when the boon-giving hand of the Sadgurudev adorns his head.

Truly, O Lord of yoga, your compassion is made of the very truth of nectar; by it, in a moment, the taste of deathlessness is felt in this life. Be gracious and turn that compassion to the delivering of us worldly creatures, who are the playthings of the world's splendours — of wealth, of authority, of coins of gold and silver — so that we ignorant ones may be wholly delivered. Who but you is of such supreme power that he could become our protector? To whom else could we go, and tell our pitiable state, and find peace? || 33 ||

(34)

*sa eva dhanyo 'sti manuṣya loke rūṣā pravāsī sad olaf nīlsaḥ,
yat kauśalopārjita chitra vidyā prasādato netra chaṣaiḥ pibāmaḥ.*

Blessed indeed in this world of men is that good Olof Nils, the traveller from Russia,
by the grace of whose skill in the art of image-making we drink with the cups of our eyes.

O friend of the afflicted! Blessed in this world of men is that Śrī Nils Olof Chrisander, who came from Russia all the way to your refuge, and who by his faith and devotion became a vessel of your compassion. By the grace of that most fortunate man's skill in the craft of image-making, even ill-fortuned people such as we bring our eyes to their fulfilment by the sight of your most beautiful image; and drinking with the cups of our eyes the sweetness of your divine form, we make our birth fruitful. How else should we have been able to look upon that beauty which is adorned with your supremely divine body? Since that great man made your most beautiful image, we too drink the nectar of the sight with the cups of our eyes, until we are satisfied, and shall go on drinking it. For this that traveller is worthy of our thanks in full measure. || 34 ||

(35) – (36) a pair

*tvam chāpi dhanyo 'si mahāprabhāva! prakāśitum yoga patha prabhāvam,
prārambhike vārdhaka rūpa dhārī dvitīya chitre taruṇo babhūva;
chitre tṛtīye cha śīśu svarūpo svarūpavāñ chandra kirīṭa juṣṭaḥ,
bhakta prasādāya sva yoga siddhiṁ prakāśayāmi loka hitābhilāṣayā.*

And you too are blessed, O you of great power, for showing forth the power of the road of yoga:

in the first picture bearing the form of age, in the second picture become a young man;
and in the third picture in the form of a child, beautiful, wearing the moon for a crown —
showing forth the perfection of your own yoga, to favour your devotees and out of longing for
the world's good.

O you of great power! It is you above all who are worthy of thanks; for in order to make plain the boundless and unearthly power of the road of yoga, in the first photograph your form was one that showed a man of ripe years, wearing the ear-flapped cap, the *kurtā* and the *dhotī*.

The very next moment, when the second photograph was taken in that same condition, a most wonderful thing happened: a picture came out full of the character of youth and of the highest beauty. In the photograph the body appeared bare, with the sacred thread showing plainly upon it; adorned with the splendour of the highest beauty, graced with the moon's fair crest-jewel, garlanded, showing forth your own nature as Chandraśekhara himself. By causing such a picture to be made, out of a feeling of grace toward your devotees, you showed forth the very furthest reach of your perfection in yoga, out of longing for the good of the world — so that in the hearts of creatures caught in this terrible Kali age no feeling of unbelief toward faith should be able to rise, and so that the generations to come might put their trust in the science of yoga and work out their own good.

At one time Śrī Paṇḍit Jvālāprasannaṇḍī Jośī, Major Basu, and Mahāmahopādhyāya Śrī Ādityarām Bhaṭṭāchārya, M.A., came from Prayāga into Śrī Mahārāj's service for his sight, and with them at that time was a Pārsī photographer named Rustam. At that time, at Ādityarām Bhaṭṭāchārya's urging and on Major Basu's most earnest prayer, Śrī Mahārāj was gracious to them and gave leave for a picture to be taken, for the good of the world. Those worthy men had two copies taken together by the well-known Pārsī photographer Śrī Rustam, so that if the first copy were spoilt they could make the most beautiful picture from the second. When the pictures were developed, both pictures were adorned with a different age, a different posture and a different beauty.

Blessed is the unearthly and unheard-of wonder of the Lord of yoga and of yogis! By this it is proved how many forms the king of yogis can change through in a single moment. Many such wonders have thousands of men seen in Śrī Sadgurudev. At one and the same time, in many places, with many men, at a distance of thousands of *kos*, his sight and his speech and wonders past counting have been seen with men's own eyes.

Blessed is your power and your capability! And why should it not be so, O God? — for you are the divine descent of Lord Śaṅkar himself. || 35 || 36 ||

(37)

*tava prabhāvāch charitaṁ te sugúptaṁ prakāṭi kṛtam,
kṣantum arhasi deveśa! bhaktānām hṛdaya śāntaye.*

By your own power your most secret acts have been made open;
forgive it, O Lord of gods, for the quieting of your devotees' hearts.

O Lord of gods! It is by your power and your grace alone that your most secret acts have been made open. Such an attempt as this has been made on a prompting received for the peace and the gladness of your peerless devotees' hearts. Therefore, O God of gods, be gracious to forgive this boldness. || 37 ||

(38)

*bhaktāḥ rahasyaṁ jñānti sugúptaṁ tvad hṛdi sthitam,
yathā tvaṁ vai vijñāsi teṣāṁ hṛdaya saṁsthitāḥ.*

Your devotees know the secret, hidden deep, that lies in your heart,
even as you know theirs, being seated in their hearts.

O you who dwell within! Your supreme devotees know, by your grace, even the most hidden secret that lies in your heart. As you, enthroned night and day in their hearts, know every matter of their hearts, so by your compassion do they also know your hidden secrets and your *līlās*. || 38 ||

(39)

*nāmnā tvadīyena sadā sadāśiva! trailokya saṁkṣobha nivāraṇaṁ kṛtam,
ko nāma ādhir bhavam ādrśāṁ vibho! nivāraṇe yasya kṛtaḥ samādhiḥ.*

By your name alone, O Sadāśiva, the shaking of the three worlds is always stilled.
What then, O all-pervading one, is this trouble of such as we, for whose stilling you have gone into samādhi?

O Sadāśiva! Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! By the mere taking of your name, even once, the sufferings of all the three worlds are stilled in a moment.

O all-pervading Lord of all! What great trouble of mind is there in poor creatures such as I, that you should be sunk in samādhi and delay its stilling? Therefore, O God, delay no longer; be gracious with the utmost speed, take away our poverty and our sorrows and our doubts, and grant us happiness and substance, and that highest peace which is born of the knowledge of the Self. || 39 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Rescue of Those Who Take Refuge.

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Delight

Fifth stabaka

(1)

sāmprataṁ sādhu veśas tvaṁ līlā dhāma rataḥ prabho!
yateḥ prachchanna veṣeṇa loke charasi suvrata!

Even now you go in the dress of a holy man, given to the abodes of his play, O Lord;
in the hidden garb of an ascetic you walk the world, O keeper of the fair vow.

This is the fifth cluster of blossoms, named the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Delight. In it is described how Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadgurudev, taking on the dress of an ascetic, watches the *līlās* of Śrī Rām — the darling of Ayodhyā's lord, the Supreme Person who keeps the bounds of right — and is at every instant overwhelmed with bliss in Avadh.

O keeper of the fair vow, who keeps the most beautiful vow of yoga, samādhi and austerity! Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! Even at this time you take on the fair dress of a holy man and wander through the world in the hidden garb of an ascetic, tasting the sweetness of the Lord's divine form, his abode, his play and his name. Sometimes you take your joy of the most sweet acts of Śrī Rām at Ayodhyā, at Chitrakūṭ and elsewhere; sometimes you reach Ānandavan, which is Kāśī, and are drowned in the bliss of the truth of Śiva; and sometimes you come to Vṛndāvan and, tasting the joy of the *rāsa*-play of the truth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person of the divine play, you make your eyes fruitful with the sight of the most dearly beloved. || 1 ||

(2)

pramodānanda vṛndāyāḥ vaneṣu viharan kramaiḥ,
nirvāṇaṁ tṛṇavat tyaktvā parānandam upāsase.

Wandering in turn through the groves of Pramoda, Ānanda and Vṛndā,
you cast away *nirvāṇa* like a straw and worship the highest bliss.

O root of bliss! Sometimes you wander in the Grove of Delight — that is, in Avadh — tasting the sweetness of the *līlās* of the Lord Śrī Rām, the Supreme Person who keeps the bounds. Then for a time you come to Ānandavan, the Grove of Bliss — that is, to Kāśī — and, walking there, take your joy of the juice of your own truth as Śiva. Then you reach Vṛndāvan, and watching the *rāsa* plays in Braj, the land where your most dearly beloved, the Supreme Person of the divine play, took his pleasure, you are drowned in bliss. And so, absorbed in the tasting of the Lord's abodes, his plays and his forms, you count liberation as trifling as a straw, and lie night and day sunk in the tasting of the qualified form of the Supreme Brahman, moving about in a state of self- forgetting rapture. || 2 ||

(3)

*vana trayānanda sukhaṁ kva nandane kva mandare rāsa rasā 'nubhūtiḥ,
līlā rasāsvādana lubdha! chetaḥ ānanda vṛnda pramodeṣu siñchasi.*

Where in Nandana is the happiness of the three groves' bliss? Where on Mandara the experience of the *rāsa*'s juice?
O you who covet the tasting of the juice of his play — you water your mind in Ānanda, in Vṛndā and in Pramoda.

O all-present Lord! Where in that Nandana grove of the gods could there be found the joy of those groves marked by the Lord's own feet, which the Supreme Person of Right and the Supreme Person of Play made the chief abodes of their play? Nandana is only the pleasure-ground of the ordinary gods, while these three great groves have been the playing-field of the God of gods, the lord of the three worlds. And where on that Mount Mandara, the dwelling-place of the gods and of their king, could the Lord's divine *rāsa*-plays, made wholly of bliss, be come by? For this reason you water your mind, utterly enchanted with the tasting of the Lord's play, by beholding the Lord's splendours face to face in the Grove of Delight, the Grove of Bliss, and Vṛndāvan.

That is: in these divine abodes the Lord's divine plays, made of the highest bliss, still go on at every instant without ceasing; but those divine plays cannot be looked upon with the eyes of flesh. Great men on whom the Lord's full grace rests still taste them at all times with divine eyes. Drawn by those same nectar-filled plays of the Lord, Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar, the descent of Śrī Śaṅkar, takes on the hidden dress of an ascetic and wanders watching them as he pleases. || 3 ||

(4)

*rūpasya nāmno mahimnāṁ sudhāmnāṁ līlāvatārasya kṛtīn kṛtārthayan,
nagno 'py anagno nayanābhirāmo rāmaṁ pramodādhīpatīm didṛkṣasi.*

Bringing to their fruit the works of the descent of play — of his form, his name, his greatness, his fair abode —
naked and yet not naked, a delight to the eyes, you long to see Rām, the lord of the Grove of Delight.

O ender of desire! Out of the longing to bring to their fruit the divine plays of the Lord's most beautiful form, of his most holy name, and of the abode which is the dwelling-place of his very body, you — though sky-clad — put on the loincloth and such garments as cover you, and taking the fair dress of a holy man, a delight to the eyes, you behold in the Grove of Delight the beauty of Śrī Rām, the darling of Avadh's lord, the Supreme Person of Right; and so, bringing yourself to your fruit, you are drowned in bliss.

In the world these four things — the Lord's form, name, play and abode — are held to be the chief of all. It is in the tasting of these four that the supreme devotees taste bliss at its furthest reach. || 4 ||

(5)

*rūpaṁ yadiyaṁ nayanābhirāmaṁ pratikṣaṇaṁ tvaṁ hṛdayāravinde,
dhyānāvaruddhair indriya pāna pātraiḥ pivaṇ nitāntaṁ nahi tṛptim eṣi.*

That form of his, the delight of the eyes, you drink at every instant in the lotus of your heart,
with the drinking-cups of your senses stopped fast in meditation — and drinking, you never come to your fill.

O destroyer of the pride of the god of love! That unearthly and divine form of Śrī Rām, the Supreme Person of Right, the prince of Avadh's lord — you drink it night and day in the lotus of your heart with those drinking-cups which are your senses, stopped fast in meditation and turned inward; and so you are drowned in bliss, and drinking and drinking you are never sated. || 5 ||

(6)

*tad eva rūpaṁ śiva dhyātu kāmāḥ digambaro darśana mātra bhikṣukaḥ,
sāketa dhāmādhipa prāṅgaṇe sthito dṛṣṭā pivaṇ mokṣa sukhaṁ vinindasi.*

Longing, O Śiva, to meditate on that very form — sky-clad, a beggar asking only for the sight —
you stand in the courtyard of the lord of Sāketa's abode, and drinking with your eyes, you scorn the happiness of liberation.

O Śiva, worker of the world's good! Out of the longing to meditate on that most beautiful nectar of a face, the “purifier of the pure,” at the end of every Tretā age you come sky-clad, with the skull as your begging-bowl arranged in your hand, into the courtyard of Śrī Daśarath, the lord of Ayodhyā and master of Sāketapur, in the form of a beggar; and drinking with your eyes the sweetness of the child-figure of your own supremely worshipful chosen deity, you make light of the happiness of liberation. That is: set beside the sight of the Lord's form, liberation has no value at all.

*sadguruḥ sad guṇodhāro dhyāna gamyaḥ sadāśayaḥ,
satyaṁ paraṁ chidānandaṁ saṁsmarāmi hi sarvadā.*

The Sadguru, the upholder of true virtues, reached by meditation, of ever-noble purpose — the true, the supreme, the Consciousness-Bliss: on him do I always meditate.

— Śrīmad Yogāchārya Śrīman Mahāmunīndra Sadguru Śrī Haiḍākhān-vāle Bābā, adorned with every excellence.

The authors of the scriptures have pointed it out in many places: *viluṭhati charaṇāgre mokṣa sāmrajya siddhiḥ* — “the attainment of the empire of liberation rolls at their feet,” that is, the Lakṣmī of the empire of liberation is for ever spurned at the feet of the Lord's supreme devotees. By such words it is known to the whole world that the Lord's supreme devotees never so much as wish for liberation. They are the drunken bees of the sight of the Lord's holy feet, of the remembrance of his plays, and of the juice of his name. Their inward longing is only this:

*divi vā bhuvi vā mamāstu vāso narake vā narakāntaka! prakāmam,
avadhīrita śaradāravindau charaṇau te maraṇe 'pi chintayāmi.*

In heaven or on earth or in hell, O slayer of Naraka, let my dwelling be where it will:
your feet, which put the autumn lotus to shame — on those I shall meditate even in death.

Those peerless devotees of yours wish, even at the hour of death, for your sight and for the direct beholding of your plays. Though it were a hell deeper than hell, there itself they taste happiness. And so, since Lord Śaṅkar is the very first among the king-devotees, why should he not make light of liberation beside the sight of the Lord? For such connoisseurs of the Lord's grace have only this one aim:

*aratha na, dharama na, kāma ruchi, gati na chahaū nirvāna,
janama janama, rati rāma pada, yaha varadāna na āna.*

Not wealth, not merit, not the taste of desire; I ask no state, not even *nirvāṇa*:
birth after birth, love for Rām's feet — this boon and no other.

What that supremely beautiful form is, the verses that follow describe. || 6 ||

(7)

*śyāmaṁ sunāsaṁ sukapola chakṣuṣaṁ sukāka paśchāvṛta chāru kuṇḍalam,
nagnaṁ manoḥjñam kaṭi kiṅkiṇī yutaṁ ratna prabhā śobhita hema nūpuram.*

Dark of hue, fine of nose, fair of cheek and eye, his lovely earrings half hidden by the side-locks;
naked and enchanting, a little girdle of bells at his waist, gold anklets shining with the light of gems.

This is the form of “the child-figure of Rām, whom Śaṅkar meditates upon” — the form in whose worship Lord Śaṅkar lies absorbed, and in whose beauty Śrī Kāka Bhuṣuṇḍijī, the chief teacher of the science of devotion, lies rapt day and night.

Śyāma: that is, of a dark hue possessed of the highest beauty, and with a smoothness in it; and on his face a nose most fair, like a parrot's beak; and cheeks that are the treasury of the highest loveliness; and eyes wide as the petals of the blue lotus, white and dark and touched with red, curving and full of sweetness; and ears adorned with beautiful jewelled earrings, in which form the beauty of the earrings is fully covered over by the side-locks of his hair; and — being in the form of a child — set off by that enchanting naked figure; and at the waist adorned with a most lovely gem-set girdle of gold; and on the holy feet wearing charming anklets, ablaze with the lustre of jewels. || 7 ||

(8)

*itas tato chañchala pāda kṣepaiḥ krīḍāpara krīḍanakāri chittam,
saumitri śatrughna parīta dehaṁ bharatena bhrātrā saha moda mānam.*

With restless little steps this way and that, his mind bent on play and on his playthings;
his body ringed by Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, taking his joy with his brother Bharat.

Busy at his play in the courtyard of Avadh's lord, with the steps of those restless lotus feet falling this way and that; his mind taken up with toys, in that lightness which comes easily with a child's nature; with Śrī Lakhanlāl and the darling Śrī Śatrughna following at his heel like his own shadow; and glad at heart, joined in a child's play with Śrī Bharatlāl, the very figure of love for Śrī Rām. || 8 ||

(9)

*ekatra bhrātṛṇ sva hṛdā svajantam anyatra bālochita dharṣayantam,
paratra bālaiḥ saha nartayantam vedānta tattvaṁ nayanair niraikṣiḥ.*

Here embracing his brothers to his heart, there bullying them as a child will,
and elsewhere dancing with the children — the very truth of Vedānta you looked upon with
your
eyes.

O Maheśvara! In the courtyard of Mahārāj Daśarath you are brought to your fruit by the sight of your most beloved Lord and worshipful deity — here embracing his brothers Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna to his heart with love; there you are struck with wonder at the sight of the Lord routing them and frightening them with a show of feigned anger, in that play which comes easily to childhood; and in another place you are thrilled and struck still, seeing him joined with his brothers in the play of dancing. And so, beholding the very truth of Vedānta, that Supreme Brahman whom even the meditation of yogis cannot reach, absorbed in a child's frolics, you make your eyes fruitful in Avadh with the sight of him. || 9 ||

(10)

*śrī kośalendrasya samāna pātre ekatra rājñā saha bhojayantam,
dadhy odanāvilagna mukhāravinda dantān smitaiḥ pūrṇa pradarśayantam.*

Eating from one dish with the lord of Kośala, at one place together with the king,
his lotus face smeared with curd and rice, showing all his teeth in his smiles.

Seated in one place with the most fortunate king of kings, Śrī Daśarathjī the lord of Avadh, in the Mahārāj's own welcoming dish, taking the joy of the royal meal; and in that lotus face smeared with curd and rice, showing again and again in full the fair buds of his teeth in a slight smile — so you take the joy of the most sweet sight of your worshipful one.

By nature a child's face is of itself utterly lovely; and when, crowing with gladness, he shows his fair little teeth to his mother and father, then in the heavenly hearts of the mother and father the very reflection of heaven is mirrored. And when the lord of the three worlds himself takes on the form of a child and smiles to gladden his parents and the devotees who have come for his sight — then, if the splendour of the whole created universe were laid down as an offering before that smile, it would still be utterly trifling.

Blessed, O Lord, is your Māyā! For it was by this that you brought about — according to the word *svīyayā māyayā 'jo 'pi svayam eva vimohitaḥ*, “by his own Māyā even the unborn one was himself bewildered” — that Śrī Brahmājī was enchanted by the very Māyā he had fashioned. This is the greatest instance of all of your tenderness to your devotees: that for the satisfying of a devotee's mind you become in one place a son and in another a father; in one place a friend, and in another you become even an enemy, and so bring them to their fruit. But your peerless king-devotee Sadāśiva is satisfied by tasting you in whatever form you come into the world. The name of this is the oneness of the heart of the devotee with the heart of the Lord.

Blessed are you; and blessed too your Māyā, and all your supreme devotees are worthy of thanks. Nor is this much of the play enough — see yet another form of your world-enchancing play. || 10 ||

(11)

*punaḥ punaḥ kāñchana dhānya pātryā kākāya grāsaṁ dadataṁ sudhīndram,
kākasya sāmīpya bhayena bhītyā nṛpasya kaṇṭhārpita bāhu pāśam.*

Again and again, from the golden bowl of grain, giving a mouthful to the crow — he, the lord
of
the wise;
and then, in fear at the crow's coming near, throwing the noose of his arms round the king's
neck.

O you whose eyes are the *chakor*-bird to the moon that is Rāmachandra's face! While eating together at one meal with his revered father Śrī Daśarath, he saw Kāka Bhuśuṇḍi, who had taken the form of a crow and waited in longing for the leavings of his own blessed food; and knowing at once the longing of that devotee's mind, he gave him a mouthful from a golden bowl. Then, to keep up the worldly propriety of a child, when the crow that was Kāka Bhuśuṇḍi came near to take the little grain of blessed food, he became overcome with fear like an ordinary child and clung to the neck of his loving father.

At that beauty of the child Rām, O Śrī Śiva, descent of the perfected! you are overwhelmed with bliss — that blessed is the Māyā of that lord of Māyā, at the mere play of whose eyebrow the three worlds tremble, and who is the very Death of death: that Supreme Brahman is today playing in Daśarath's courtyard and being frightened in this way by a crow. Blessed, O Lord, is your Māyā that enchants the three worlds! || 11 ||

(12)

*dṛṣṭvaṁ bhakti rasāsvāda saṁsikta hṛdayo bhavān,
hṛdayasthaṁ priyaṁ nityaṁ pramode vīkṣya modase.*

Beholding this, your heart is watered with the tasting of the juice of devotion;
and seeing in the Grove of Delight the beloved who dwells for ever in your heart, you rejoice.

O ender of Tripura! With your heart thus watered by the tasting of the juice of devotion, you see in the Grove of Delight that child-beauty of your most beloved, the son of Avadh's lord, which puts ten million gods of love to shame and which dwells in your own heart; and in the gladness of that sight you are made supremely glad, and thrill, and rejoice. For your worshipful chosen deity is none other than Śrī Rām in the form of a child, as you yourself described from your own lips in the Śrī Rāmcharitmānas:

*iṣṭadeva mama bālaka rāmā,
śobhā vapuṣa koṭi śata kāmā.*

My chosen deity is Rām the child,
the beauty of whose body is a hundred million gods of love.

|| 12 ||

(13)

*vaidehasya marave svakīya dhanuṣo dāḍhyaṁ nabhitānana
śaktiṁ tasya samāpayan nayanajais tair ugraiḥ sphuliṅgair muhuḥ;
bhaktuṁ tad dhanuja āsane samuditaṁ rāmākhyā chandraṁ mudā
netrābhyāṁ prapiban naman sumudito dhanyo 'si bhoḥ śrī śaṅkara!*

At Videha's sacrifice, your face afraid for the hardness of your own bow,
you made an end of its strength, again and again, with the fierce sparks born of your eye;
and as the moon called Rām rose gladly from his seat to break that bow,
drinking him in with both eyes and bowing — most glad — blessed are you, O Śrī Śaṅkar!

O bearer of the Pināka! At Mahārāj Janak's sacrifice of the bow, seeing the Lord's tender loveliness against the hardness of your own Śaiva bow, your face grows afraid: *this bow of mine is utterly hard, and the emperor of my heart is most tender; may it never happen that a wrench should go through that soft wrist.*

Blessed, O loving heart! And why should it not be so? It is needful in this world that a lover's heart should be always full of misgiving and of good wishes toward the one he loves; and you are present here as a watcher, in the very dress of a human ascetic. So it is needful that feelings proper to a human heart should rise in that heart. And why not? Truly it has been said: *yaha prema ko pantha karālau hai rī, taravāra kī dhāra paidhāvano hai* — “this road of love is a fearful one; it is a walking upon the sword's edge.”

Truly this road is a strange one. And so your face is for a moment as though seized with fear; and therefore, with the fierce sparks of fire that came out of your third eye, you made an end in a single moment of the strength and the hardness of that bow. And then, as Śrī Rām — a very moon — rose from his seat to break that bow, you drank the nectar of his beauty with the cups of your eyes, and bowing to him in your own mind you were made glad. Blessed are you, O Śrī Śaṅkar; and blessed too is that unearthly devotion and love of yours toward your worshipful one.

The meaning is this: in the Lord's abodes of play all the Lord's plays go on without ceasing, but they cannot be seen with the eyes by men wrapped in Māyā and ignorance. So, when Sadāśiva in the hidden dress of an ascetic beholds in the Grove of Delight the play of the sacrifice of the bow, what is the state of his heart? That is what both the verse above and the verse below describe. || 13 ||

(14)

*āśāgrasta mahīśa kāla bhujagīṁ vaideha netrotsavām
vaidehyā nija pāṇinā sugrathitām māṅgalya mūrti srajam;
sattvodreka samānvitair nija karaiḥ kaṇṭhe priyasyārpitām
bhūyo vīkṣya suvোধito nija hṛdānandena dhanyaḥ śivaḥ!*

To the kings gripped by hope, a serpent of death; to Videha's eyes a festival;
the garland whose very shape was blessing, woven fair by Vaidehī's own hand,
laid on the beloved's neck by hands trembling with the rush of pure feeling —
beholding it again, awakened, blessed with the bliss of his own heart, is Śiva!

Now, how do you look upon the self-choosing made by the lotus hands of Śrī Janak's daughter, after Śrī Rām's victory at the sacrifice of the bow?

O giver of fearlessness! That bridal garland seemed so terrible to the hearts of the kings who had come longing to marry Śrī Jānakī that it was as though it were a serpent of Death; while to the eyes of Vaideha, King Janak, it seemed by its mere sight to be a joy, wearing the shape of the highest blessing. That most fortunate garland, whose very form was blessing, Śrī Janak's daughter had woven and made with her own lotus hands; and with those lotus hands — the root of all blessing, and marked, through the overflow of pure feeling, with stillness, with sweat and with the standing of the hair — she laid it upon the breast of her most beloved Śrī Rām.

At that moment, beholding the loveliness of the Divine Pair, Śrī Rām and Vaidehī the daughter of Janak, you were being made supremely glad in your own mind. And then the loving glance of Śrī Rām, the emperor of your heart, fell at that moment upon you, who are his whole heart — and at that, overwhelmed with love, you forgot all sense and understanding and were drowned in an ocean of bliss. O Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva, what other creature is there in the world like you, who could become worthy of such thanks? You alone are blessed beyond measure. Where on Kailāś could this bliss be had? It is to obtain this that you make the journey to the Grove of Delight again and again, and are made glad. || 14 ||

(15)

*rathena yāntaṁ janaka pratijñā saṁrakṣaṇārthāya vrataṁ tapasvinām,
prajānanair aśru mukhair nirīkṣitaṁ svayaṁ nirīkṣyāśru mukho viraktaḥ.*

Going in the chariot, to keep his father's vow, taking the vow of ascetics;
watched by the people with weeping faces — and watching, you too were tear-faced, though
free
of all attachment.

O ender of Tripura! Sometimes, receiving the sight of Śrī Rāmachandrajī as he goes to the forest to keep the vow of his revered father and to guard the bounds of right, your face fills with tears and you are made frantic.

In that scene, Śrī Rāghavendra Sarkār, to keep the vow of his revered father, is seated in the chariot with Śrī Janak's daughter and Śrī Lakhanlāl, and — to keep the ascetic's vow — has put on garments of bark and is setting out for the forest. And the people, young and old, men and women, utterly stricken, are gazing at his beauty with eyes full of tears and praying:

*yāchito no nivartasva haṁsa śukla śiroruhaiḥ,
śirobhir nibhṛtāchāra mahī patana pāṁsulaiḥ.*

Entreated by us, turn back — by these heads whose hair is white as a swan's,
heads made grey with dust from falling again and again to the earth in silent reverence.

That is: O Lord, we old men of Avadh are laying our heads, white as swans, upon the ground and praying to you; accept our prayer and come back; by our bowing full-length upon the earth again and again our heads are grown dusty; be gracious to our pitiable state and return to the palace.

Seeing the men and women give such proof of their love — though you are free of all attachment and neither joy nor grief ever touches you, still, at the sight of the people of Avadh's heartfelt love for

their Lord, a flood of loving tears wells up in your eyes; and with eyes full of the tears of bliss you take the joy of the sight of your Lord. || 15 ||

(16)

*vane vrajantīm bharatasya vāhinīm dr̥ṣṭvā bhayād bāndhava saṁgrāhe ratam,
nijeṣṭa saṁrakṣaṇa vihvalāntaram guhaṁ vilokyaiva mudā suvihvalaḥ.*

Seeing Bharat's army marching into the forest, and Guha in his fear busy gathering his kinsmen,
his heart beside itself for the guarding of his own beloved — beholding him, you too were overcome with joy.

O Īśāna! At one time, beholding that love-stricken scene of the play with Guha, king of the Niṣādas — a scene with a power altogether without equal to raise love and frenzy in the hearts of devotees — you too lose your senses.

Seeing the army of Śrī Bharatlāl, going into the forest to entreat the Lord Śrī Rāghavendra Sarkār, and seeing how full of strength it was, an upheaval broke out in the heart of that loving devotee, the king of the Niṣādas. Drunk with fear and with love, and though he was king of the Niṣādas himself, he went from house to house among his kinsmen and strove with the utmost care to gather them together, praying to them all in words full of humility and of warlike feeling: *āja kāja baṛa mora* — “Brothers, in all my life today is the most weighty business I have ever had with you. May it never happen that you show the least slackness in this work of the utmost weight, and that by even a few of the warriors of this terrible army reaching him who is my whole life, the treasure of my life should have to face danger. If that were to come about, then the very birth of me, his servant, would be wasted.”

Beholding the love-stricken state of the heart of such a one as Śrī Guharāj — who with a frantic mind was wholly given to the gathering of his household, his relations and his people — you too are overcome with love and with bliss. || 16 ||

(17)

*jānāsi mārḡam khalu prema panthinām śirīṣa puṣpād api pelavām sthitim,
itīva śīghraṁ śakuna svarūpa dhṛk mano vyathāṁ tūrṇam apākaros tvam.*

Surely you know the road of those who walk the path of love, and their condition, more delicate
than the *śirīṣa* flower;
and so, swiftly taking the form of an omen, you took his heart's pain away at once.

O royal swan on the Mānasa lake of Rāghava! Because you are the very first teacher of the juice of devotion, you know well the road of those who travel the path of love. That the state of their hearts is more tender even than the *śirīṣa* flower — this too you know well. And it is for this reason that you, as it were, took on the form of an omen — a sneeze — becoming the omen yourself, and took away the pain of his mind that very instant.

That is: you know well the secret of those heavenly materials out of which God fashioned the lover's heart; and so a misgiving was bound to come to you, that this true devotee of the Lord is

frantic in the guilelessness of his feeling — may he not go mad, or may his heart not suffer some heart-cutting agony from a sharp blow. For this reason you took on the form of an omen and at once sent courage flowing through his frantic heart.

Blessed is your tenderness to your devotees! You do not taste only the divine plays of Śrī Bhagavān in the Grove of Delight, in Avadh; rather you nourish your heart with the plays of his peerless devotees also. || 17 ||

(18) – (19) a pair

*samāgatāyāḥ bharatasya vāhinaiḥ gajāśva pattī charaṇotthitaṁ rajah,
vilokya raudreṇa rasena samplutaṁ raṇonmukhaṁ rāvaṇa nandanāndanam;
chāpeṣu tūrṇiṣu mano dadhānaṁ gauram surakta viśāla netram,
sulakṣmaṇaṁ lakṣaṇa śobhi gātraṁ vākyair aśāntaṁ ramaṇaṁ vidadhvāsa.*

Seeing the dust raised by the feet of elephants, horses and footmen of Bharat's advancing army,
and Lakṣmaṇa — slayer-to-be of Rāvaṇa's son — flooded with the fury of battle and turned toward war,
his mind set on bow and quiver, fair of skin, his wide eyes reddened,
his every limb glorious with the auspicious marks — and the beloved quieting him with words.

O Manyu! Seeing the dust raised by the feet of the elephants and horses and marching soldiers of Śrī Bharatlāl's army, as the story goes on, Śrī Lakṣmaṇalāl's figure has filled with the fury of battle; he has made himself ready to fight, and has set to gathering and arraying quiver and bow. And though his colour is fair, through the excess of his rush of anger not only has redness run into his eyes, but his whole face has become filled with red. Every limb of his is glorious with firm and beautiful marks. Such is Śrī Lakṣmaṇalāl, who was to slay Rāvaṇa's son Meghanāda; and seeing the beloved, the Supreme Person of Right, quieting that rush of anger with words full of steadiness and discernment, you long to make your eyes and your very being fruitful by beholding him on the mountain of Chitrakūṭ. || 18 || 19 ||

(20)

*chitrakūṭāchala kāntāre praṇamantaṁ purāgatam,
māṭṛ saṁkleśa saṁkliṣṭa mānaśaṁ dīna chetasam.*

In the forest of Chitrakūṭ's height, bowing, come from the city,
his mind wrung by his mother's doing, his heart cast down.

O God! Thereafter, in the forest of the mountain Chitrakūṭ, he comes from the city of Ayodhyā and bows; his mind is utterly shaken with the grief born of mother Kaikeyī's deed, and in his heart a stream of abject feeling flows on without a break. || 20 ||

(21) – (22) a pair

*bhrātur variṣṭhasya hite 'nuraktaṁ bhaktaṁ prapannaṁ śaraṇāgataṁ cha,
hārdīṁ daśāṁ svām vinivedayantam aśru pravāhārdita klinna gātram;
aneka saugandhya nidarśanena daśāṁ svakīyāṁ vinivedayantam,
ārtaṁ subandhuṁ bharaṭaṁ prapannaṁ sva pāduke kṣema kare dadantam.*

Devoted to his eldest brother's good, a devotee, thrown down, come for refuge,
telling out the condition of his heart, his limbs wet and softened with the flood of his tears;
with many an oath declaring his own state —
and to Bharat, stricken, a good brother, taking refuge, he gives into his hand his sandals,
which are blessing.

O most compassionate one! Bharatlāl is given in thought, word and deed to the good of his elder brother; he is an emperor among supreme devotees; and having offered himself up with his whole being he has come wholly into the refuge of Śrī Rām, the dweller in the forest. Besides this, he is set on declaring in stricken feeling the inmost condition of his heart, and every limb of him is wet with the unceasing flood of his tears; he is set on declaring his pitiable state to his most beloved with many an oath. Beholding the beauty of the Lord as he takes pity on such a brother — Bharat, stricken and come for refuge — and gives him the sandals that work his welfare, you are made glad indeed. But more than that — || 21 – 22 ||

(23)

*pādukālamba samprāptyā stambha romāñcha samplutām,
bharatasya daśāṁ dṛṣṭvā prema vihvala lochanāḥ.*

At the winning of the sandals for his stay, flooded with stillness and with the standing of his hair —
beholding Bharat's condition, your eyes were overcome with love.

Seeing the love-stricken state of Bharatlāl, king among devotees — who set upon his head the sandals of the feet won by the compassion of Śrī Rājarājeśvar, and was filled with stillness and sweat and the standing of his hair — your eyes too fill with the tears of love; and overwhelmed with bliss you become wholly absorbed in the praise of the unearthliness of a devotee's heart. || 23 ||

(24)

*mastake tasya samveśya svakīyaṁ nirbhayaṁ karam,
sāketa puram preṣantaṁ vilokya mudito mune!*

Setting upon his head his own hand that gives fearlessness,
and sending him to the city of Sāketa — beholding it, you were made glad, O sage!

O best of sages! Seeing Śrī Rām lay his boon-giving hand, which grants fearlessness, upon the head of Śrī Bharatlāl — the brother-devotee, the very figure of love for Rām — and reason with him and send him back to the city of Sāketa, you are again filled full with gladness. || 24 ||

(25)

*kadāpi rāmeṇa saha sītayā vane saumitriṇā chānupatham padānvitam,
dṛśā pivan daṇḍaka kānanāvanau hṛdayāravinde suvichārya hr̥ṣṭaḥ.*

Sometimes, with Rām and with Sītā in the forest, and Lakṣmaṇa following in the path behind them,
you drink them in with your eyes on the floor of the Daṇḍaka wood, and pondering them in the
lotus of your heart, you rejoice.

O you who wear the moon at your crest! At some time the longing wakes in your heart for the sight of Śrī Rām as a traveller of the Daṇḍaka forest. At that time, in front goes Śrī Rām, the Supreme Person of Right; behind him the daughter of Videha; and behind them both, keeping their footprints to his right and following in every step, Śrī Sumitrā's son. Pondering in the lotus of your heart the lovely radiance of those three travellers, you are made glad. || 25 ||

(26)

*chhaviṃ tadyām nayanābhirāmaṃ hṛdā vahan bālakavad vicheṣṭase,
tat pāda padmāṅkita dhūli dhūsaro bhasmāṅga chihnam dviguṇam vibharṣi.*

Bearing in your heart that beauty of his, delight of the eyes, you behave like a child;
grey with the dust marked by those lotus feet, you wear the ash-marks of your body doubled.

O you who wear the moon as your crest-jewel! Bearing in your heart that fair beauty of Śrī Rām and Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, the supreme treasure of your heart, you sometimes become so drowned in love that — as children, given up to play, roll about in the dust — just so, by rolling in the dust of that Daṇḍaka forest marked by the lotus feet of your most beloved, your body becomes grey with dust, and you wear the ash-mark of your limbs doubled over again.

That is: in the furthest reach of the helplessness of love, when you count the ground of the Daṇḍaka forest most holy because it is marked by the beloved's feet, and roll about in it, then the ash-paste worn upon your body appears wholly deepened by the greyness of the dust.

Blessed is your love and your affection! It is by this that you have kept your most beloved Rām so wholly subject to you that he does not go anywhere else even for a moment, leaving your heart, but remembering you alone, sits enthroned without ceasing in the temple of your mind. || 26 ||

(27)

*tvāṃ vīkṣya kāntaṃ nayanābhirāmaṃ rāmo 'pi chitte muditaḥ smitekṣaṇaḥ,
pṛṣṭo 'pi patnyā nija hāsa kāraṇaṃ vyājena śaṅkā nudate kathañchana.*

Beholding you, beloved and a delight to the eyes, Rām too is glad in his mind, his glance smiling;
and though his wife asks him the cause of his laughter, by some pretext he puts her doubt away.

O bee at the lotus of Raghunandan's heart! When Śrī Rāmachandra sees in the forest this love-drowned state of yours, so delightful to the eyes, then he is exceedingly glad within himself and falls

into a state full of laughter's savour. At that time mother Śrī Sītā — absorbed in her meditation, pondering without ceasing on the heartfelt gestures of her beloved — asks her beloved the cause of his laughter: "O Lord, as we journey along the road in this lonely forest, what has suddenly made you laugh?" And answering her, the Supreme Person of Right, to put away his wife's doubt, makes it out that the sight of some creeper or beast or bird is the cause of his laughter, and by making some such excuse tries to drive the doubt away.

Blessed, O Lord, is your love! Just as you keep the treasure of your heart hidden with your whole being from every eye, and keep it safe, wishing to take the joy of the sight of it yourself alone, so Śrī Rām too, drowned in love, does not wish to make Śaṅkar, the treasure of his own heart, known to any.

When the two of them will not let their mutual love be shown, then who is so fortunate that he could take a share in your hidden bliss and himself get the taste of that joy? For according to the saying *śivasya hṛdayaṁ viṣṇuḥ viṣṇoś cha hṛdayaṁ śivaḥ* — "Viṣṇu is the heart of Śiva, and Śiva the heart of Viṣṇu" — in this bliss born of love you draw a curtain even against your dearest Jānakī and your most beloved Lakhaṇlāl, and taste this supreme bliss and are satisfied by yourself alone.

O Lord, be satisfied and go on being satisfied — some day or other the hearts of your devotees too will surely be flooded with this juice of bliss; for your devotees also sit gazing fixedly, to get the taste of this bliss born of your beholding one another. How long shall the heart's desire go unfulfilled?

*ihī āsa aṭakyo rahata, ali gulāba ke mūla,
hoihaī pheri basanta ṛtu, ina dārana ve phūla.*

On this hope the bee stays lingering at the root of the rose:
the spring will come again, and on these branches those flowers.

|| 27 ||

(28)
*yathā prachchanna veśas tvam ānandāsvāda tatparaḥ,
tathaiva sva hṛdāntastham iṣṭaṁ gopāyati prabhuḥ.*

As you, in your hidden dress, are intent on tasting that bliss,
just so the Lord keeps hidden the beloved who dwells within his own heart.

O you who wear the serpent as your crown! As you, in the hidden dress of an ascetic, are intent on the tasting of bliss, just so the all-capable Śrī Rām keeps the truth of Śiva — the most hidden treasure of his heart — hidden even from Lakṣmaṇa, the stay of his life and his very breath moving outside him, and so takes the joy of the sight of it. || 28 ||

(29) – (30) a pair
*vrajaṭāṁ daṇḍake rāma sītā lakṣmaṇa yātrīṇām,
kaṇṭakākīrṇa mārgasya śodhane nirato mune;
dhanyo 'si muni śārdūla! dhanyāḥ yeṣāṁ hṛdi sthitaḥ,
nijābhīṣṭasya rāmasya chintā 'nyāṁ kaṁ prabādhayet.*

As the travellers Rām, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa went through Daṇḍaka,
you gave yourself, O sage, to the clearing of the thorn-strewn road.
Blessed are you, tiger among sages! and blessed are they in whose heart you dwell.
Whose heart but yours could the care of his own beloved Rām so torment?

O great ocean of the nectar of Rām's name! And why should it not be so? — for you are the very substance of love for Śrī Rām at its furthest reach. As the travellers Śrī Rām and Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa journey through the Daṇḍaka forest, the Supreme Person of Right sees you given to the clearing of their thorn-strewn road — here and there gathering up the thorns of the path, in the guise of one who clears the way — and is made blessed.

That is: the road of love is a strange one. A lover cannot bear the least suffering of the one he loves; this is true. When you consider in your heart that *my Lord Rāghavendra Sarkār is journeying without any covering on his feet, and it must never happen that some thorn should pierce the holy foot of my worshipful deity* — moved by this feeling, you become absorbed in gathering up the thorns of the path. And why should you not? You are for ever ready, in thought and word and deed, to arrange the welfare of your worshipful one; so when your tenderness toward the Lord wells up, how could you sit still? You are absorbed in his service at once.

O best of sages, Śrī Śaṅkar, descent of the perfected — blessed are you! And those people too are worthy of thanks in whose heart your love-filled figure sits enthroned.

Whose heart but yours could the care of your own most worshipful deity torment? The sweet juice of that pain can be known, a little, only by those lovers who have the nectar of love in their hearts, and some smart of it, and some portion of truth. So the clearing of the thorn-strewn road by you is right and fitting; for Mīrā, mad with love, spoke truly too:

*herī maī to darada dīvānī, mero darada na jāṇai koya;
ghāyala kī gati ghāyala jāṇai, jo koi ghāyala hoyā;
jauhari kī gati jauharī jāṇai, kī jina jauhara hoyā;
sūlī ūpara seja hamārī, sovaṇa kisa vidha hoyā.*

Look — I am mad with the pain, and no one knows my pain.
Only the wounded knows the state of the wounded, if he has been wounded himself;
only the jeweller knows the jeweller's state, or one who has the jewel.
Our bed is laid upon the gallows: how then shall we sleep?

|| 29 – 30 ||

(31)

*nīrandhraṁ kadālī vana madhya saṁsthaṁ bhujopadhānaṁ muhur arpayantam,
vaidehī saṁvāhayata pāda padmaṁ rāmaṁ hṛdā dhyāyāmi pañchavaṭī.*

Set in the midst of a close plantain grove, shifting again and again the pillow of his arm,
his lotus feet pressed by Vaidehī — on Rām I meditate with my heart, at Pañchavaṭī.

Thereafter you sometimes come to the forest country of Pañchavaṭī to take the joy of the beauty of the lord of your life, seated there.

O Bholānāth! Lying at his ease upon a slab of rock in the midst of the pavilion of a close plantain grove, and shifting again and again the pillow of his arms, his lotus feet being pressed by Śrī Videha's daughter, the companion of his dwelling at Pañchavaṭī — beholding at Pañchavaṭī, with unblinking eyes, the beauty of your supreme Lord in such a scene, you do not come to your fill at all, but are drowned and lost in the meditation of that very form. || 31 ||

(32)

*punaś cha parñair vihite kuṭīre kūṭastha yogīndra vichāra gamyam,
sītā sakhaṁ kauśala rāja sūnuṁ saumitri guptaṁ suvilokya tṛptaḥ.*

And again, in the hut made of leaves, him whom only the thought of the highest yogis can reach —

the son of Kośala's king, Sītā's companion, guarded by Lakṣmaṇa — beholding him, you were satisfied.

A little while after the sight of the scene described above, you are gladdened by the sight of another scene of the Lord.

O Śiva, bearer of the very form of Śiva! Thereafter, in the fair leaf-hut built of leaves, the young prince of Kośala — who is the one object of meditation reached only by the thought of the lords of yogis absorbed in Brahman — is seated with his beloved, Śrī Videha's daughter; and outside the hut Lakhanlāl, the watchful sentry, armed with weapon and missile, does the work of a doorkeeper and stands girded for the guarding of his most beloved pair. Meditating on the sweetness of this scene and receiving the sight of it, you — though satisfied already by the splendours of yoga — satisfy your inmost being to the full. || 32 ||

(33)

*tṛpto 'pi yogair nirvidhair vilokane punaḥ punaḥ śaṅkita dṛṣṭi pātaiḥ,
nidhiṁ svakiyāṁ para hasta gāminīm yathā kdartho gata dhairya sāhasaḥ.*

Though satisfied by yoga of every kind, you look again and again with a doubting glance — as a miser, robbed of courage and of nerve, looks at his own treasure passed into another's hand.

O Lord of yogis! Though you are wholly satisfied by the splendours of yoga, still your thirst for the sight of the Lord is not stilled. And rightly so: even in the world it is after being filled that thirst begins to torment creatures. So, with doubting glances again and again, with lowered eyes, you look and look at the treasure of your life and are made glad. For *snehaḥ pāpa śaṅkī* — great affection is full of fearful misgivings. The meaning is also this: *may some evil eye not fall upon my most beloved* — and so you look with a doubting gaze. Or else: *may my arriving at an untimely moment never become a hindrance to my worshipful one's freedom* — and with such thoughts you gaze with doubting eyes, as a miser, robbed of courage and nerve, looks again and again with longing at his own capital caught in another man's hands, and looking and looking is never satisfied. || 33 ||

(34)

*muhur vilokyaiva na tṛptim eti tathaiva tvaṁ sve hṛdayāravinde,
virājitaṁ vikṣya na tṛptim eṣi punaḥ punaḥ sātṭvika mūrchchhanāyutaḥ.*

As he, looking again and again, never comes to his fill — just so you, beholding him enthroned in the lotus of your own heart, never come to your fill, but again and again are seized by the swoon of pure feeling.

O you who covet the sight! Just so you too, though you behold again and again that most sweet figure enthroned in the lotus of your heart, do not come to your fill; and through the rush of pure

feeling a swoon born of love and of bliss comes over you again and again, in the form of meditation and samādhi; and you are drowned in bliss in the form of that most beloved one who is *sākṣān manmatha manmathaḥ*, “the very churning of the mind of the god of love.” || 34 ||

(35)

*pramode modase nityaṁ modayan viśvam ātmanaḥ,
pramoda vana kāntāre punar viharase kramaiḥ.*

In the Grove of Delight you rejoice for ever, gladdening the world out of yourself;
and through the forest of the Grove of Delight you wander again, and again in turn.

Thus, gladdening your chosen deity in the Grove of Delight with the sight of your love-drowned raptures, and tasting again and again in Avadh and in the forests belonging to Avadh the sweetness of his play, his abode, his form and his name, you wander there always and without ceasing. || 35 ||

(36)

*kvāpi sītā viyogārti klānta pīḍita mānasam,
mānase sve samārādhya ārtinā klānta mānasaḥ.*

And somewhere, worshipping in your own mind him whose mind was worn and tormented
with the pain
of parting from Sītā,
you too were worn in mind with his affliction.

O Nīlakaṇṭh! Somewhere you worship in your own mind the Supreme Person of Right, whose mind is worn and tormented by the pain of parting from Sītājī; and you yourself seem grieved with his grief. In truth you are beyond all pairs of opposites, and to you sorrow and happiness are all one; and yet, to be grieved with the grief of your master while he is engaged in his play in the world is only fitting, for the keeping of the devotee’s proper bounds. || 36 ||

(37)

*anveṣyato nijaṁ priyaṁ raghunandanasya mūrtiṁ vilokya hṛdayena sahāyakāmaḥ,
pavana nandana rūpa dhārī svayaṁ bhūtvā jayāśiṣā 'laṁkuruṣe mudā śiva!*

Beholding the figure of Raghunandan as he searched for his own beloved, and longing in your heart to help him,
you took the form of the son of the wind, and gladly, O Śiva, adorned him with the blessing of
victory.

O Rudra! In the forest country of the mountain Ṛṣyamūka, beholding the most tender figure of your worshipful one as he is bent on the search for his beloved, and longing in your heart to help him, you take the very form of Hanumān and, being made glad, take away the pain of separation from your most beloved Śrī Rām.

Śrī Añjanī’s son is a descent of Sadāśiva himself. For Rāvaṇa, by offering up his ten heads, had made ten of the Rudras favourable to him; but the eleventh Rudra was not made favourable — and it was he who came down in the form of Śrī Hanumān, the son of the wind, and reduced Rāvaṇa’s city of Laṅkā to ashes in the utterly fierce fire of his wrath. So, O Śaṅkar, appearing in the very form of Hanumān, you long in your heart for his victory over the enemy. || 37 ||

(38)

*mūrtim tvadīyām hṛdaye virājitām loka prathāyai puline niveśya,
pūjāparaṁ vānara saīnya saṁvṛtaṁ jayāśīṣā 'laṁkuruṣe sadā śiva!*

Setting on the shore, for the world's report, that figure of yours enthroned in his heart,
and ringed by his army of monkeys, he is intent on your worship — and you adorn him with
the
blessing of victory, O Sadāśiva.

O Śiva, worker of blessing! The Lord Śrī Rāghavendra Sarkār, the Supreme Person of Right, in order to keep the bounds proper to the world, establishes on the shore that figure of yours which is enthroned in his heart, as Śrī Setubandh Rāmeśvar; and taking with him the army of monkey warriors he becomes intent on your worship. Then you leave off the sage's dress of one rich in austerity, and appearing at once and visibly in the image, you adorn him with the blessing of victory over the enemy.
|| 38 ||

(39)

*punaś cha vīreṇa rasena samplutau utsāha dhairyāv iva deham āsthitau,
chāpeṣu tūṇī vara śobhi kandharau raghu pravīrau suvilokya dṛptaḥ.*

Flooded again with the savour of the heroic, as though Zeal and Steadiness themselves had
taken
bodies,
their shoulders glorious with bow and arrow and quiver — beholding those two heroes of
Raghu's
line, you were fired.

O Mahākāl! After the sight of these plays, you are again wholly flooded with the savour of the heroic. It is as though Zeal and Steadiness had themselves taken bodies and come down visibly upon the earth; they are glorious with arrow and bow and quiver, and fair are their shoulders. Beholding those two lions of Raghu's line, Śrī Rām and Lakṣmaṇa, on the field of battle at Laṅkā, you too become drunk with the heroic and the furious savours, for the destroying of the demon host. || 39 ||

(40)

*dṛptān madāndhān raṇaraṅga dhīrān mahā prahārān madanābhi bhūtān,
rakṣo gaṇān rāma śarāgni tāḍitān didhikṣasi tvaṁ nija bhāla chakṣuṣā.*

The demon hosts — insolent, blind with pride, steady on the stage of battle, mighty in their
blows, overcome by lust,
and already beaten by the fire of Rām's arrows — you longed to burn them with the eye in
your
brow.

O you whose eye is in your brow! There on the field of battle, the host of demons — greatly arrogant, blind with pride, fighting steadfastly on that stage which is war, arrayed with great and powerful weapons and missiles, and overcome by contemptible lust — have been utterly scorched by the fire of Śrī Rāmachandra's arrows. Them you long to burn to ashes with the most fearful flame of your third eye.

The meaning is this: when Śrī Rām, for the keeping of the bounds of right, plays with those unjust night-rangers, drunk with the madness of battle, and kills them at his leisure — then, yours being a devotee's heart, you consider at that moment: *my chosen deity is having to labour very hard at the destroying of these wicked ones; why then should I not destroy them in a single instant with the fiercest flame of my brow-eye, just as at the time of the dissolution I burn the whole universe to ashes in a moment?*

Blessed, O Lord, is your love for your worshipful deity! Blessed is your supreme devotion, and blessed that splendour of yours which is past the reach of mind and speech! || 40 ||

(41) – (42) a pair

*pure suramye sarayū pradeśe prāsāda kakṣe suvibhūṣitāṅgam,
sītā latā līṅgita sarva gātraṁ yogīndra dhyānāmṛta pāna pātram;
sauvarṇa simhāsana bhrājītāṅgaṁ bhrājiṣṇu dīptyā suvibhūṣitāṅgam,
ratna prabhā śobhita divyam aṅgaiś chakṣūṁṣi lokasya chakora yantam.*

In that most lovely city by Sarayū, in the palace chamber, his limbs finely adorned,
his every limb embraced by the creeper that is Sītā, the cup from which the lords of yogis
drink the nectar of meditation;
his body shining on a throne of gold, adorned with a blazing radiance,
divine with limbs bright with the lustre of gems, making the eyes of the world into
chakora-birds.

O Śaṅkar, giver of fearlessness! Thereafter, when you long for the sight of Śrī Rām, lord of Avadh, then in the chamber of the royal palace of fair Ayodhyā, on the bank of the river Sarayū: he whose every limb is finely adorned, whose every part is embraced by that creeper which is Sītā, and whose divine form is the lovely drinking-cup of the meditation of the kings of yogis; whose every limb blazes because he is seated on a throne of the fairest gold; whose divine form is ablaze with the blazing radiance of his body; whose every limb shines with the lustre of the divine gems set in his ornaments; and the sight of whom — that moon which is Rām — is gladdening the eyes of the beholders as the moon gladdens the *chakora*. || 41 – 42 ||

(43)

*śyāmaṁ sunāsaṁ sukapola chakṣuṣaṁ sukeśa sambhūṣita ānanābjam,
saṁsāra ārādhana prāpta dīkṣaṁ dīkṣā pradāṁ dīkṣita darśanīyam.*

Dark of hue, fine of nose, fair of cheek and eye, his lotus face adorned with beautiful hair;
who took the vow of the world's contenting, who gives the vow, and is to be seen by the
initiated.

Whose blazing form is dark; on whose face a nose fair as a parrot's beak is set; whose cheeks and eyes are the treasury of the highest beauty; and who has taken the vow of keeping the world glad. That is: the moment he was seated on the royal throne, this was Śrī Rām's fair vow —

*snehaṁ dayāṁ cha saukhyaṁ cha yadi vā jānakīm api,
ārāadhanāya lokasya muñchato nāsti me vyathā.*

Affection, mercy, happiness — or Jānakī herself:
in giving them up for the contenting of my people, I feel no pain.

That is: “In giving up affection, mercy and happiness, and Jānakī too, who is the root of all these, for the contenting of the world, I feel no pain.”

And so, to satisfy the world with his whole being, he gave up even his wife, swan-like in her pregnancy — who was the full vessel of his affection, who being with child was worthy of mercy, and who was his one means of happiness — and set thereby a matchless example of the vow of the world’s contenting. And only those who have received the initiation of the many great sacrifices, the *aśvamedha* and *vājapeya* and *vājasaneyā* and the rest, can win the good fortune of his sight. || 43 ||

(44)

*dattābhayaṃ go dvija bālakebhyo dīnārta śaraṇāgata pālanāya,
dhṛta vrataṃ daṃśita sarva gātraṃ pītāmbarāchchanna samasta deham.*

Who gives fearlessness to cattle, to brahmins and to children, for the keeping of the poor, the afflicted and those who come for refuge;
who holds to his vow, his every limb mailed, his whole body covered in yellow silk.

Who is for ever ready to give the gift of fearlessness to cattle, to brahmins and to children; who is for ever girded for the protection and keeping of the poor, the afflicted and those who come for refuge; whose every limb is covered with fair armour; and whose whole body is covered with a garment of yellow silk. || 44 ||

(45)

*dehābhimānena nitānta śūnyaṃ maryāda rakṣā vrataṃ ācharantam,
munīndra hṛt padma vikāsayantaṃ śrīyā lasantaṃ taruṇendu vaktram.*

Wholly empty of any pride in the body, keeping the vow of guarding the bounds of right;
making the heart-lotus of the lords of sages open; shining with splendour, his face like the young moon.

Whose divine nature is wholly empty of any pride in the body; who keeps the vow and the observances for the guarding of the bounds of right; whose sight makes the heart-lotus of the lords of sages open into flower; who blazes with a matchless splendour; and who is glorious with a face fair as the young moon. || 45 ||

(46)

*rāmaṃ rameśaṃ dhṛta chāru chāpaṃ pāśāṅkuśaiḥ śobhita pāda pallavam,
saumitriṇā chhatra dhareṇa bhrājitaṃ śatrughna bharata prati vijitaṃ prabhum.*

Rām, the lord of Rāmā, holding his fair bow, the tender soles of his feet marked with noose and
goad;
glorious with Lakṣmaṇa bearing the parasol, and fanned on either side by Śatrughna and Bharat.

Such is the fair Śrī Rām — the very lord of Lakṣmī, in whose hand the fair bow is set for the guarding of the afflicted; whose lotus feet are marked with the noose and the goad. *(It is a fact of the science of bodily marks that the feet of a king of great majesty bear the marks of noose and goad and*

the rest.) Behind whose throne Śrī Lakṣmaṇalāl stands bearing the parasol, while Śrī Bharatlāl and Śatrughnalāl wave the fly-whisks on either side. So does Śrī Rāghavendra Sarkār, possessed of every capability, shine in the palace of Avadh. || 46 ||

(47)

*subhrājatā māruti nandanena śanaiḥ śanair lālita pāda pallavam,
līlā paraṁ loka hite 'nuraktam rāmākhyā brahmāsvadase pramode.*

His tender feet caressed slowly, slowly by the shining son of the wind;
given over to play, devoted to the good of the world — that Brahman named Rām you taste in
the
Grove of Delight.

Whose lotus feet, set upon the footstool, are being served slowly and slowly and with love by the supreme devotee, the son of Māruti; who has come to Avadh for the sake of his play in the world, and is devoted night and day to the good of the world. Beholding face to face in the Grove of Delight that Brahman in the form of Śrī Rām, seated upon his throne, you are filled with delight and made glad. || 47 ||

(48)

*haṁho mānasa rājahaṁsa! svadase nityaṁ pramode sthito
līlā dhāma samanvayena valitaṁ śrī rāma nāmāmṛtam;
rūpaṁ te hṛdayāravinda nihitaṁ dṛṣṭvā pramodānvitaḥ
tulasī mānasa rājahaṁsa vasatām chitte madīye sadā.*

Ho, royal swan of the Mānasa lake! Dwelling for ever in the Grove of Delight, you taste
the nectar of Śrī Rām's name, turned about with the joining of his play and his abode.
And he, seeing his own form set in the lotus of your heart and made glad thereby —
the royal swan of Tulsī's Mānasa: may he dwell always in my mind.

O Śambhu, royal swan on the Mānasa lake of Avadh's lord! Dwelling always in the Grove of Delight, you taste that nectar which is the name of Śrī Rām, joined with the Lord's play and the Lord's abode.

And may the darling of Avadh's lord — the royal swan of the *Mānasa* lake of Śrī Tulsīdās's mind, who is made glad by seeing his own form as Rām enthroned in the lotus of your heart — may he, by your grace, dwell always in the temple of my mind.

Or else: may that royal swan of Tulsī's *Mānasa*, glad at heart to see your divine form enthroned in his own heart as though he beheld it in a mirror, be gracious to dwell in my heart always. || 48 ||

(49)

*haiḍākhānastha siddhasya hṛdayābje nirantaram,
vasantaṁ sānujaṁ rāmaṁ praṇamāmi punaḥ punaḥ.*

To Rām, dwelling without a break with his younger brother
in the heart-lotus of the perfected one who abides at Haiḍākhān —
to him I bow again and again.

To Śrī Rām, together with Śrī Lakhaṇlāl and Śrī Vaidehī, who dwells without ceasing in the heart-lotus of the emperor of the perfected, the Lord of yoga and of yogis, the descent of Śrī Sadāśiva, the crown of saints, who is enthroned at Haiḍākhān — to him I bow again and again.

That is: because the knowledge of the Lord comes down through the succession of gurus and is made good in it, therefore Śrī Rām, who is enthroned in the heart of the most reverend Śrī Sadgurudev, is the one supremely worshipful; for since the knowledge of his nature is received only through the line of the gurus, no relation with him can be formed apart from them. Therefore it is worship offered through the line of the gurus that accomplishes both welfare in this world and happiness in the next. And Śrī Śaṅkar is himself the very first teacher of the branch of devotion to Rām; without his grace it is impossible to obtain true knowledge of the form of Rām, as the Rāmcharitmānas plainly points out:

*aurau eka guputa mata, sabahi kahaū kara jori,
saṅkara bhajana binā nara, bhagati na pāvai mori.*

And one more secret teaching I tell you all, with folded hands:
without the worship of Śaṅkar, no man obtains devotion to me.

That is: without the grace of Śrī Śaṅkar, devotion to Rām is not merely hard to come by — it is altogether impossible. || 49 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Delight.

Om

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Bliss

Sixth stabaka

(1)

*ānanda brahma rūpo 'pi ānande sve pralīyase,
chidānanda rato nityam sachchidānanda samstutaḥ.*

Though you are the very form of Brahman-as-bliss, you dissolve into your own bliss;
for ever given to the bliss of consciousness, praised by Being-Consciousness-Bliss itself.

Here begins the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Bliss. In it is shown how Śrī Sadāśiva, in the dress of a yogi — having been satisfied in Avadh by the gladness of beholding Śrī Rām, the Supreme Person of Right, and longing now to behold the nature of the Self and to play within the Self — comes to Ānandavan, which is Kāśī, and there, drowned in bliss, is absorbed in his wandering.

O Sat-Chit-Ānand Brahman, Sadāśiva! Though you are the visible form of Brahman-as-bliss, you remain dissolved in your own bliss alone. And though your form is eternal consciousness and made of bliss, still you are praised by Sat-Chit-Ānand itself — that is, you are the praiser, and the hymn of praise is also your own form, and the one praised is yourself. Blessed is this most wonderful Māyā of yours! || 1 ||

(2)

*ānanda kānane nityam ānandā moda samstutaḥ,
parānandamayīm mūrtim ātmārāmo nirīkṣasi.*

In the Grove of Bliss, praised for ever with the gladness of bliss,
you who take your delight in the Self behold that figure made of the highest bliss.

O you who take your delight in the Self! Sadāśiva, who plays within the Self alone: you are always in the Grove of Bliss — that is, Kāśī — praised by Śiva who is the very form of bliss; and remembering within the Self your own nature as Śiva, made of the highest bliss, you behold it at Kāśī. || 2 ||

(3)

*kāśī pure śītala vāhinī taṭe śītāmśu śobhita viśāla lalāṭa dīpaḥ,
nivāta dīpa sthiti sama svarūpo svarūpavān bhasma vibhūṣitāṅgaḥ.*

In the city of Kāśī, on the bank of the cool-flowing river, the lamp of your broad brow
glorious with the moon;
your form steady as a lamp standing where no wind comes, beautiful, your limbs adorned
with
ash.

O you who wear the moon at your crest! In the city of Kāśī, on the fair bank of the cool-flowing Śrī Gaṅgājī, blazing with the fair moon set upon your brow, bearing a form as still as a lamp standing in a windless place — most beautiful, and with limbs adorned with ash — you are glorious in that most lovely form. || 3 ||

(4)

*nāgendra saṁyata viśāla jaṭā kalāpa sambhrājitas sarpa kirīṭa kuṇḍalaḥ,
tripuṇḍa saṁśobhita divya mastakaḥ vilochane 'rpita divya chandanaḥ.*

Your great mass of matted hair bound up by the king of serpents, blazing with a crown and earrings of snakes;
your divine brow glorious with the threefold mark, and divine sandal laid upon your eyes.

O Śaṅkar, wishing-tree of your devotees! What manner of form of yours gives joy to the eyes at Kāśī is described in the lines below. You have bound up your fair and mighty matted locks with Vāsuki, king of serpents, and by them your divine form appears most beautiful; and you have put on a crown and fair ear-ornaments of serpents also. Your divine brow is glorious with the threefold *tripuṇḍa* mark, and from both eyes the beauty of the divine sandal-paste is reaching its furthest limit. || 4 ||

(5)

*vyāghrāmbara ajina vibhūṣita sarva gātro gātrair manojña nayanābhirāmaḥ,
nṛmuṇḍa mālāvṛta divya kaṇṭha śrīyā samābhāsi kapāla kharparaḥ.*

Every limb adorned with the tiger's hide and the deerskin, your limbs enchanting and a delight
to the eyes;
your divine throat wound with a garland of men's skulls, and the skull-bowl shining with splendour.

Your whole body is glorious with the tiger's hide and the black antelope's skin; and with limbs possessed of a natural beauty your form appears to the company of beholders a thing of the highest joy. Your divine throat, wreathed with a fair garland of men's skulls, is come to the highest beauty; and the bowl made of a human skull increases the splendour of your lotus hand. || 5 ||

(6)

*pināka sambhūṣita divya kandhara trīśūla sambhrājita hasta saṁvṛtaḥ,
śivā samādhyaṣita vāma bhāga saṁśobhito bhakta manoratha pradaḥ.*

Your divine shoulder adorned with the Pināka, your hand held blazing with the trident;
your left side glorious with Śivā seated there — giver of the heart's desire to your devotees.

O ender of the Ender! Your shoulder blazes with that famous Śaiva bow named Pināka, and your hand, ablaze with the trident, appears most beautiful. On your left side is seated Śivā — Śrī Pārvatījī, the Śakti who works blessing; that is, you are joined in the form of Śiva-and-Śivā, by which your beauty is come to its highest loveliness. Such are you, Maheśvara, the giver of their heart's desire to your devotees. || 6 ||

(7)

*pradāyako bhakti patha sthitebhyo bhuktiś cha mukter yugapat svatantraḥ,
tantra prañālyā dvijarāja pūjito pūjā parair bhakta gaṇaiḥ susevitaḥ.*

Giver to those who stand on the road of devotion, of enjoyment and of liberation at one and the same time, being free; worshipped by the best of brahmins by the way of the Tantra, well served by hosts of devotees intent on your worship.

O giver of what is longed for! To those worldly creatures who stand on your road of devotion you give both those supreme gains, enjoyment and liberation, together; for you are supremely free, and so the surpassing power to grant even two opposite things at once is present in you. O Viśvanāth! In the temple of Kāśī Viśvanāth great and learned brahmins are given to your worship by the observances the Tantra lays down, and you are fully served by thousands of hosts of devotees intent on your worship. || 7 ||

(8)

*manorathānām mano gocharāṇām agocharāṇām api vān manobhiḥ,
jalasya dhārā snapanena kevalam kṣaṇe pradātā śiva śaṅkaras tvam.*

Of desires that lie within the mind's reach, and of those beyond the reach of speech and mind alike, you are the giver in a moment, Śiva Śaṅkar, for the mere bathing of a stream of water.

O wish-granting jewel of your devotees! Those desires which are within the compass of your devotees' minds you grant that very instant, without the least delay; but those desires which are beyond the compass even of their speech and mind — that is, of which the devotee could not dream — even those most hard-won desires you grant in a single moment, being satisfied by the mere bathing of a stream of water, and so content them.

Oṃ. Salutation to Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar, Śrīmad Yogāchārya, adorned with every excellence, the dweller in the caves of Kailāś, the great Munīndra — Śrī Haiḍākhaṇ-vāle Bābā.

*śaśi bhujaṅga bhūṣita nita, he śiva satya-lalāma,
karuṇāmaya samaratha śrī sadguru, bārambāra praṇāma.*

Ever adorned with moon and serpent, O Śiva, ornament of truth — merciful and all-capable Śrī Sadguru, again and again I bow.

You are Śiva Śaṅkar, Bholā Bhaṇḍārī, the simple-hearted treasurer. In what mortal could there be strength enough to recount your virtues? || 8 ||

(9)

*vārāṇasī vāsarato nirantaram pārtha prahāra vraṇa śobhi mastakaḥ,
samasta lokair upagīta kīrtiḥ kāśīśvaro viśva vibhūti nāthaḥ.*

Given without ceasing to dwelling in Vārāṇasī, your head glorious with the wound of Pārtha's blow; your fame sung by all the worlds — lord of Kāśī, master of the world's splendour.

O master of the world's splendour, sole lord of all worldly sovereignty! You are given without ceasing to dwelling at Kāśī, for you are the one ruler of the city of Kāśī. In that battle which you fought in the guise of a Kirāta to test Arjuna, your head is made most glorious by the wound of the *brahmāstra* he loosed at you; and your fame is sung daily by the whole world. Such are you, the one ruler of your most beloved city of Kāśī, and the peerless master of the splendour of the entire universe. || 9 ||

(10)

*nātho 'pi lokasya charācarasya anāthavat tvaṁ maṇikarṇikāyām,
chitā samīpe ramase gata vyathaḥ kāśyām mṛtānām hṛdayāni nāthitum.*

Though lord of the world, of all that moves and does not move, you are as one masterless at Maṇikarṇikā;
beside the pyre you take your pleasure, past all pain, to become lord of the hearts of those who die at Kāśī.

O dweller in the burning-ground, Śaṅkar! Though you are the one ruler of the whole universe, moving and unmoving, still, like one who has no master, you play the whole night through beside the pyres of the dead at the Maṇikarṇikā *ghāṭ* at Kāśī, where the dead are given to the fire — past all pain, and to make yourself the lord of the hearts of the creatures who die in your beloved city; saying: “When you came into my city, having taken refuge with your whole being, then I was your master while you lived; and now, in your state of death, I am seated beside your pyre. While I remain, you have no need of the least anxiety. Be without fear!”

That is, the Śruti saying *kāśyām maraṇān muktiḥ* — “from dying at Kāśī comes liberation” — is made good in just this way: that thousands of creatures dwell at Kāśī in their last days, and are happy there while they live, taking the sight of Śrī Viśvanāth and bathing in the Śrī Gaṅgā. And after death Śrī Śaṅkar sits enthroned beside their pyre, saying: *śmaśānāntāḥ bāndhavāḥ sarve* — that is, “O creatures of the world! Your most beloved kinsmen, your sons and your brothers, were companions only so far as bringing you to the burning-ground; but I am the protector of my devotees always, and so I sit beside your pyre also, guarding you like a sentry.”

Blessed, O Lord, is your tenderness to your devotees! It is for this that your name is famous as the dweller in burning-grounds, because you play there. And it is impossible that this life should find any other lord than you, who stands by the creature in every condition. Blessed is your keeping of those who come for refuge, and your tenderness to your devotees. || 10 ||

(11)

*kadāpi bhaṅgā bhara tāmra lochano vṛṣeṇa bhūtaiḥ saha bhūtanāthaiḥ,
bhraman sukāryām nija vīthikāsu bhūtāni yoktum śiva tārakeṇa.*

Sometimes, your eyes copper-red with the fullness of *bhāṅg*,
you wander your own lanes upon the bull, with the spirits and the lords of spirits,
on your good errand — to join the creatures to the Śiva-tāraka.

O ender of desire! Sometimes, through the intoxication of a great quantity of *bhāṅg*, your eyes appear most beautiful, filled with red. At that time you mount your fair Nandikeśvar, and taking the

spirits and the lords of spirits with you, you wander every lane of the city of Kāśī; and in that passing you bring the creatures who lie at the point of death to their fruit, by speaking the *śiva-tāraka* mantra into their ear. || 11 ||

(12)

*tārādhīpānana! tvadīye pure na ko 'pi mṛto gato yāvadhi mṛtyu dvāram,
dvāraṁ hi mṛtyoḥ pihitaṁ tvayā śiva! ko 'nyo hi loke yam udāśrayema.*

O you whose face is the lord of stars! In your city not one who has died has ever gone to the door of Death;
for you, O Śiva, have shut the door of Death — who else in the world is there for us to take refuge with?

O you whose face is the moon! Sadāśiva, glorious with a face fair as the full moon — in your city of Kāśī not one man has died to this day who went after death to the door of Yamarāj. O Śiva, you have shut Yama's door altogether; that is, since you grant liberation to all creatures, nobody so much as sees the road to Yama's city. Blessed is your greatness! Now who else in this universe is so powerful that we should go to him for refuge? || 12 ||

(13)

*rūpaṁ svakīyaṁ nayanaiḥ prapaśyan maṭheṣu kūṭheṣu cha mandireṣu,
pūjā rasāsvādita sarva gātro gātraiḥ sva pūjāṁ pragṛhṇan prasannaḥ.*

Beholding your own form with your eyes in the monasteries, on the rooftops and in the temples,
your every limb tasting the juice of the worship, and gladly receiving your own worship in your
own body.

O Mahādev! Wandering in the Grove of Bliss, at Kāśī, you behold everywhere the glimpse of your own form — in the monasteries, in the Śiva-shrines built upon the high roofs, and in the temples; and receiving satisfaction in all your limbs from the juice of the joy of the worship offered by devotees, and accepting their worship with your own visible limbs, you are made supremely glad, and going from one place to another you taste the bliss of it. || 13 ||

(14)

*svasyaiva nāmāni svayaṁ grṇānaḥ svarūpa chihṇāni svayaṁ didṛkṣuḥ,
svasyaiva līlāṁ svayaṁ ikṣamāṇo svakīya rūpe ramase svayambho!*

Singing your own names yourself, yourself longing to see the marks of your own form,
yourself watching your own play — in your own form you take your delight, O self-existent one!

O Lord! In that most holy city of Kāśī you become so drowned in bliss on receiving the worship made by devotees that you begin to sing your own most holy names — crying aloud *Bam bam Mahādev! Śiva Śaṅkar! Bholenāth!* and such names; and longing yourself to behold the marks of your own forms, and yourself watching your own plays, you remain absorbed in your wandering, lost in your own form in your own abode, the Grove of Bliss. || 14 ||

(15)

*kaṅkare kaṅkare sāṅṣāt śaṅkaraṁ vīkṣya modase,
yatra gachchhasi tatraiva svām mūrtiṁ vīkṣya vismitaḥ.*

In pebble after pebble you see Śaṅkar himself, and rejoice;
and wherever you go, there you behold your own figure, and are astonished.

O boundless one! That state of bliss of yours — when in every pebble of Kāśī you see everywhere your own very nature, then there is no bound left to your gladness; for your form pervades the whole creation, and so your being is present in every atom. And when you see that everywhere, and wherever in Kāśī you go, behold your own visible figure standing before you, you are drowned in wonder.

O Lord, it is not the case that your Māyā only enchants the minds of the wise; sometimes, according to such words as *māyayā svīyayā 'jo 'pi svayam eva vimohitaḥ*, you are yourself enchanted by the Māyā you made. || 15 ||

(16)

*ko vismayo vā vada loka vismaye suvismayānām prabhava bhava tvayi,
bhasmāṅga rāgaṁ vidadhan dadāsi samasta lokasya parām vibhūtim.*

What wonder, tell me, can there be for you — the world's wonder, the source of all fair wonders, O Bhava?

Wearing the ash-paste upon your body, you give away the highest splendour of every world.

O lord of spirits! You are the cause from which all the fair wonders of the world arise, and you are glorious in a dress and bearing that raise the world's wonder — what wonder, then, can there be for you? Is it a small wonder that, though you wear the ash-paste upon your own limbs, you give away in a single moment, laughing, the highest sovereignty of the three worlds to your devotees as though it were a straw? And is it a small marvel that, though you smear yourself with ash, you are the one master of every sovereignty? || 16 ||

(17)

*śmaśāna deśe nivasan trilochana! trailokya ṛddhiṁ praṇatāya yachchhasi,
kapāla mālām vidadhan bhayāvahaḥ sumāṅgalānām prabhavas tvam uchyase.*

Dwelling in the country of the burning-ground, three-eyed one, you give the wealth of the three worlds to him who bows;
wearing a garland of skulls, terrible to look on, you are called the source of all fair blessings.

O three-eyed one! Though you yourself dwell in the country of the burning-ground, you give the wealth and the attainments of the three worlds to the devotees who bow before you; and though your dress is terrible, since you wear a fearful garland of men's skulls, you are the one and only cause from which all blessings arise.

Whatever blessings and gladness there are in the world, all of them come to creatures only by your supreme grace, as Śrī Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsī set down in describing and praising Lord Śaṅkar:

dānī kahū saṅkara sama nāhī,
dīna dayālu di voī bhāvai, jāchaka sadā sohāhī. || 1 ||
māri ke mārā thapyau jaga meṁ, jākī prathama rakha bhaṭamāhī,
tā ṭhākura kau rīhi nivājibau, kahau bayō parata mo pāhī. || 2 ||
joga koṭi kari jo gati harisō, muni māṅgata sakuchāhī,
veda vidita tehi pada purāri pura, kiṭa pataṅga samāhī. || 3 ||

Nowhere is there a giver like Śaṅkar:
 merciful to the poor, giving is what pleases his mind, and beggars always delight him. || 1 ||
 He burned up Kāma, first among warriors, and then set him in the world again without a
 body —
 how can I tell of such a master's being pleased and showing grace? || 2 ||
 That highest state which sages, after ten million kinds of yoga, are ashamed to ask of Hari —
 in the city of Tripurāri, the Vedas declare, even the worm and the moth attain it. || 3 ||

That is: "Nowhere is there a giver like Śaṅkar. He is merciful to the poor; giving alone pleases his mind, and those who ask always delight him. || 1 || Having burned Kāma, the foremost among warriors, he then let him remain in the world without any body at all — how can I tell of such a Lord's being pleased and granting his grace? || 2 || That highest state which the company of sages, after practising yoga in ten million ways, is abashed to ask of the Lord Hari — that very highest state is won even by worms and moths in Kāśī, the city of Tripurāri Śivajī; and this is plain from the Vedas. || 3 || And those who leave so utterly generous a Lord, the husband of Pārvatī, and go begging elsewhere — the bellies of such foolish beggars are never properly filled." || 17 ||

(18)
nāgendra hāraṁ śirasā vahan punaḥ sukaustubhāny eka janāya yachchasi,
ko vismayas tvaṁ yadi kaṅkare vaseḥ ko 'sāv aṇur yatra na te 'sti niṣṭhā.

Bearing on your head a necklace of the king of serpents, you give away fair *kaustubha* jewels
 to a single man.
 What wonder is it if you dwell in a pebble? What atom is there in which your being is not?

O lord of ashes, ender of Tripura! Though you bear upon your head the necklaces of the kings of serpents, still you give your devotees heaps of fair *kaustubha* gems for their ornaments. The meaning is that you yourself wear the ornaments of snakes, but you have your devotees wear precious *kaustubha* jewels.

Tell me yourself: if you dwell in every pebble, what is there in that to wonder at? Be gracious and show me the atom in which your being is not present! That is: you are enthroned in every atom whatsoever; and a pebble is a very large thing, made of many atoms — what wonder is it, then, that you should be present in it? || 18 ||

(19)

*niṣṭhā tvadīyā sakale charāchare dṛśye 'py adṛśye sad asatsu vastuṣu,
lokāḥ samastās tava bhūti bhāsitā kṛpām vinā tvaṁ nahi dṛṣṭi gocharaḥ.*

Your being is in everything that moves and does not move, in the seen and the unseen, in things that are and are not; all the worlds are lit by your splendour — yet without your grace you do not come within sight.

O God! Your being is present everywhere in all that moves and does not move; you pervade equally all things, seen and unseen, existent and non-existent; the whole world is lit by your sovereignty — and yet, without your grace, you do not come within sight.

You grant your sight only to those most fortunate great ones on whom your full grace rests.

*soī jānai jehi dehu janāi, jānata tumhahi tumhahi hoi jāi;
tumarahi kṛpā tumhahi raghunandana, jānata bhagata bhagata ura chandana.*

He alone knows to whom you give the knowing; and knowing you, he becomes you. By your grace alone, O Raghunandan, the devotee knows you — you, the sandal of the devotee's heart.

According to this *chaupāi* of Śrī Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsji, he alone on whom the Lord's full grace rests can become a vessel of that highest gladness which comes of the knowledge of the Lord's nature. So it is a truth that proves itself: without the Lord's grace, the sight of the Lord is not merely most hard to win — it is altogether impossible. || 19 ||

(20)

*dṛṣṭim dehi kṛpām kṛtvā divyām bhaktāya vāñchhate,
vinā te darśanam loke jīvanam niṣphalam prabho!*

Be gracious and give that divine sight to the devotee who longs for it; without the sight of you, O Lord, life in this world bears no fruit.

O Lord! Therefore this is my wholly humble prayer to you: be gracious and grant that same divine sight to the devotee who follows after you. O God, without winning your divine sight with these eyes of flesh, this life bears no fruit; be gracious, then, and grant this life the sweetness and the fruitfulness of that highest bliss which is born of the sight of you. || 20 ||

(21)

*dṛṣṭyā yathārvaṁ svadase svakīyaṁ rūpaṁ hi kāśyām nayanābhirāmam,
tathaiva bhaktās tava saumya rūpaṁ tvadīya dhāmni prapivantu netraiḥ.*

As you taste with your own eye your own form at Kāśī, that delight of the eyes, so let your devotees drink with their eyes your gentle form, in your own abode.

O you who scatter the pride of the god of love! As at Kāśī you taste with your own gaze your own form, so delightful to the eyes, and come to the highest gladness — even so let your devotees also

drink with their outermost eyes your gentle form, in your own abode of play. Rain down such a rain of the nectar of compassion that our inmost souls may be wholly satisfied with the ambrosia of your sight. || 21 ||

(22)

*netre madiye bhava dāva pīḍite saṁsāra saundarya nirīkṣaṇena,
saundarya sāraṁ śiva! tāvakam vapur vilokya trptim bhajatām na saṁśayaḥ.*

My eyes are scorched by the forest-fire of becoming, from looking at the beauty of the world;
beholding your body, O Śiva, which is the essence of beauty, they will find their fill — of
that there is no doubt.

O three-eyed one! My eyes are being scorched by that forest-fire which is the world, from looking upon worldly beauty. O Śiva, these eyes will beyond doubt come to the highest satisfaction by beholding your holy body, joined with the sweetness of a form that is the very substance of beauty.

A dweller in the desert sees a mirage and moves toward it in the hope of water; but the further he goes, the more his hope is turned to despair. In such a state, if that weary traveller should somewhere catch sight of a most beautiful and broad lake, he satisfies himself in full, and has no need to wander anywhere else.

Just so the eyes of us worldly creatures wander in search of the juice of beauty — now in a woman, now in a son, now in the delusion of nature's loveliness. In such a state, if we should somewhere catch sight of your form, the very substance of the highest beauty, like a matchless lake of nectar, then the thirst of these eyes for beauty would be stilled; for once your most lovely radiance has entered the eyes, all worldly beauties begin to seem pale and without substance.

Be gracious, therefore, and have the compassion to satisfy these thirsting eyes with the nectar of your sight. || 22 ||

(23)

*trptim kuru mahābāho! netrayor mama darśanaiḥ,
paramānanda saṁtrptas tvaṁ loka traya tarpakaḥ.*

Satisfy my two eyes, O mighty-armed one, with the sight of you;
you who are filled full with the highest bliss, the satisfier of the three worlds.

O mighty-armed one! Śaṅkar, glorious with a great boon-giving hand — grant my eyes their fill with the sight of your most beautiful form, for they have been thirsting and aching for that sight through many births. You are filled full with the highest bliss, and you are the satisfier of the three worlds. Therefore, just as you satisfy your devotees by granting them unspendable worldly splendour, so also give the gift of your most beautiful sight and quiet the souls of weary creatures. Otherwise the satisfaction born of the gift of worldly splendours will remain but half complete, and that epithet of yours, "satisfier of the three worlds," will not be wholly made good. || 23 ||

(24)

*maugdhyam prabho te śiva loka viśrutam śrutam na kam vismitam ādadhāti,
bhasmāsuraḥ varam pradāya maugdhyāt svakīyāt svayam eva vihvalaḥ.*

Your simplicity, O Lord Śiva, is famous through the world; who hears of it and is not astonished?

Giving a boon to Bhasmāsura — by your own simplicity you were yourself thrown into a panic.

O Sadāśiva! Your simple-heartedness is renowned in the whole world; who is not filled with wonder on hearing of it? O Bholānāth, you granted a boon to Bhasmāsura, and then, out of your own simplicity, had to run in a panic through world after world for your own safety. Blessed are you, Bholā Bhaṇḍārī! In you the quality is found as the name says; and it is for this that among the three gods your very name is Āśutoṣa, “the swiftly pleased.” || 24 ||

(25)

*hṛdaye me sadā śambho! bhāla chandra jaṭādhara!
umā samśobhi vāmāṅgo vasa nityam maheśvara!*

In my heart always, O Śambhu, moon on your brow, bearer of matted locks, your left side glorious with Umā — dwell for ever, O Maheśvara.

O Śambhu, adorned with the moon, your brow glorious with matted locks! O Maheśvara, whose left side is made lovely by Śrī Pārvatī! Be enthroned in my heart always. For you are yourself the very form of light; and beyond that, by the dwelling in my heart of you who are adorned with the moon upon your brow, the highest coolness will arise, and the darkness of ignorance will be destroyed by those quieting rays. And since your left side is made glorious by Umā, the higher knowledge will come to dwell in this heart. And most of all, by the enthroning in the heart of that wishing-tree which is your blazing form, this temple of the mind will become a thing of greater worth than Kailāś and than Śrī Vaikuṇṭha itself. Be gracious, therefore, and dwell in it without ceasing, and so bring it to its fruit. || 25 ||

(26)

*kāśyām svarūpaṁ tava netra tṛptidaṁ nirīkṣitum bho bhava! bhūmim āgatau,
śrī rām kṛṣṇau nara veśa dhāriṇau netraiḥ svarūpaṁ pibataḥ parasparam.*

To behold at Kāśī that form of yours which satisfies the eyes, O Bhava, the two came down to earth —

Śrī Rām and Kṛṣṇa, wearing the dress of men, and they drink each other’s form with their eyes.

O husband of Girijā! To behold at Kāśī that form of yours which satisfies the eyes, your own chosen deity Śrī Rām, the Supreme Person of Right, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person of Play, take on human shape and come down upon this earth; and drinking in one another the very form of themselves that is for ever enthroned in your heart, they are overwhelmed with bliss. || 26 ||

(27)

*paras parā 'loka sukhena tr̥ptau tvām vīkṣya hr̥ṣṭau namataḥ parasparam,
mūrtim tvadīye hṛdaye vasantīm svām eva dṛṣṭvā chakitau suvismitau.*

Filled with the happiness of beholding one another, and glad at the sight of you, they bow to one another;
and seeing their own figure dwelling in your heart, they are startled and struck with wonder.

O you who fill others with wonder! Those two, Śrī Rām and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, are wholly satisfied in your abode of Kāśī with the happiness born of beholding one another; and gladdened by the sight of you they bow each to the other; and seeing their own figure enthroned in the lotus of your heart, they are filled with utter astonishment. || 27 ||

(28)

*kāśīśvara! tvaṁ hṛdayeṣu kāsase prakāśitum jñāna raviṁ samantataḥ,
saṁsāra māyā muṣitāntarātmanām moham janānām śamayan sva raśmibhiḥ.*

O lord of Kāśī, you shine in the hearts of men to make the sun of knowledge blaze on every side,
quieting with your own rays the delusion of those whose inmost souls the Māyā of the world has
stolen.

O lord of Kāśī! To make the sun of knowledge blaze on every side in the hearts of those men whose truth of Self has been carried off by worldly Māyā, and by its divine light to destroy the darkness of delusion in their hearts, you are glorious in your own capital, the city of Kāśī.

O God, my own inner being also has been carried off by the Māyā of matter. You alone are my refuge; in the world I have no other support anywhere than the fearless shelter of your holy feet. Therefore, O God, have the compassion to drive away the darkness of my heart too with that most blazing divine light of yours. || 28 ||

(29)

*śrī annapūrṇā bhavane suramye samāgataṁ tvām atithim manojñam,
dṛśā pibantī grhiṇī vikampate maugdhyā tvadīyād bhr̥śa śaṅkamānā.*

Come as a lovely guest into Śrī Annapūrṇā's fair house —
the mistress of the house, drinking you in with her eyes, trembles,
greatly afraid because of that simplicity of yours.

O you whose body is adorned with the tiger's hide! When you come as a guest into the fair temple of Śrī Annapūrṇā, Śrī Annapūrṇā is made supremely glad at drinking in the sweetness of the form of you, her beautiful and beloved lord; and yet, misgiving a danger from your simple-heartedness, she trembles within herself.

That is: when, in the course of your wandering through Kāśī, you come to the temple of Śrī Annapūrṇā, she is made supremely glad by the sight of her beloved come to her; but she is also fully acquainted with your simple nature. And so a misgiving comes to her: *may my simple-hearted lord,*

being pleased with some devotee, not one day give even me away — according to the word “there is nothing in all my store that I could not give to my devotee”! And for this, because you are so swiftly pleased, she remains full of misgiving in her heart. It is for this same reason that the whole world praises you with the words *āśutoṣa tuma avaḍhara dānī* — “swiftly pleased are you, and a giver beyond all measure” — and in a single moment is set free from care for the four aims of life. || 29 ||

(30)

*maugdhyam tvadīyam bhava loka viśrutam śrutam na kiṁ vismayam ādadhāti,
sadyaḥ prasanno bhava āśutoṣo sarvasva dānam dadasi kṣaṇena.*

Your simplicity, O Bhava, is famous through the world; who hears of it and is not astonished?

Pleased on the instant, swiftly satisfied, you give away your whole substance in a moment.

O Bhava! Your simple-heartedness is fully famous in the world; who hears of it and does not wonder? You are pleased that very instant by a single pot of water. It is for this that the creatures of the world address you by the name *Āśutoṣa*. Being pleased, you stand always ready to give those creatures even your whole substance — and it is for this that Śrī Annapūrṇā too remains trembling whenever you are looking on. || 30 ||

(31)

*loke 'ti raṅkāḥ bhavatā sanāthitāḥ kṣaṇena dhanadopama bhūti rājitāḥ,
tvatto bhaya grasta matīva vyākulaṁ raṅkatva rūpaṁ śaraṇam na vindati.*

In this world the utterly destitute, taken for your own, are in a moment made to shine with splendour like Kuber's;

and Destitution itself, seized with fear of you and greatly distraught, finds no refuge anywhere.

O Lord! In this world you have been gracious to the utterly poor and made them, in a single moment, as rich in splendour as Kuber. And it is for this that Poverty, distraught with fear on your account, finds no place anywhere at all to stand. That is: whatever man Poverty makes its refuge, on that very man you are gracious and make him possessed of splendour and wealth and grain; and by this you have left Poverty without any shelter. || 31 ||

(32) – (33) a pair

*prayāti yatraiva cha tatra tatra jalasya dhārā snapanena tuṣṭam,
tvām vīkṣya sarvatra bhayād vikampate prāpnoti śāntim śaraṇe tavaiva;
tvam vai śaraṇyo śaraṇāgatānām trāṇāya nityam nirato nirantaram,
dāridrya rūpaṁ śaraṇam samāgataṁ bhaktaṁ nijāṅke vidadhe prasabhaḥ.*

Wherever it goes, there and there it sees you, contented by the bathing of a stream of water, and trembles everywhere for fear — and finds its peace in your refuge alone.

For you are the refuge of those who come for refuge, given without ceasing to their rescue; and Poverty, come in its own shape for shelter, you take upon your lap as a devotee, by force of your own nature.

O crown of givers! Wherever that Poverty goes, there and there it sees you, made glad by the bathing of a single stream of water, and begins to tremble for fear; and seeing nowhere any shelter

in which to rest, it takes refuge in you alone. And you, being the lover of those who come for shelter, and for ever girded for the protection of the creatures who come to your refuge — when Poverty in its own shape, despairing of every other place, comes to the refuge of your holy feet, then you count it your devotee and with the highest gladness take it upon your own limbs.

Blessed, O Lord, is your tenderness to your devotees! You consider in your heart: *wherever in the creation this goes, there it will make the world wretched*; and so, keeping it with yourself, you wander in the guise of one utterly poor, wearing the form described in *mahokṣaḥ khaṭvāṅgaṁ paraśur ajinaṁ bhasma phaṇinaḥ, kapālaṁ chetīyat tava varada! tantropakaraṇabhū* — “the great bull, the club, the axe, the hide, the ash, the serpents and the skull: such, O giver of boons, is the whole furniture of your household.”

Blessed is your devotion to the rescue of your devotees! For the good of your devotees, and to keep it always under your control, you dissolve it into your own being and wander as Daridranārāyaṇa, the Lord who is poverty itself. || 32 – 33 ||

(34)

*prasanna rūpaṁ tava dhyātukāmāḥ kāmān hṛdi sthān sakalān viḥāya,
tavaiva charaṇeṣu matiṁ niveśya tvad rūpa sindhau mano 'rpayanti.*

Longing to meditate on that gladdened form of yours, they leave behind every desire that dwells
in the heart;
and setting their understanding at your feet alone, they offer up the mind into the ocean of your form.

For this reason, out of the longing to meditate on that supremely gladdened form of yours, devotees give up all the appetites that dwell in the heart, and making their understanding still at your holy lotus feet alone, they offer up their mind into that ocean which is your nature. By this their mind becomes a vessel of the highest contentment and peace — that is, once the mind has been offered up into your nature, the highest quieting and satisfying of every desire is obtained of itself. || 34 ||

(35)

*āsādyā tvāṁ śaṅkara pārijāta sama prabhaṁ śaṅkara śānti dāyakam,
tritāpa taptam hṛdayaṁ svakīyam anāyi sarvair api pūrṇa śāntatām.*

Reaching you, O Śaṅkar, whose splendour is that of the *pārijāta*, giver of peace,
all men have brought their own hearts, scorched by the three afflictions, into full peace.

O Śaṅkar, giver of the longed-for fruit like the wishing-tree, granter of the highest peace! By winning your shelter, all the creatures of the world have made their own hearts — scorched with the three kinds of burning, that of the spirit, that of the gods and that of the elements — into a storehouse of complete peace. || 35 ||

(36)

*śāntāḥ munīndrāḥ vigata sprhā janāḥ sprhānvitāḥ karma ratā 'pi mānavāḥ,
tvām eva labdhvā nija lābha tuṣṭāḥ puṣṭāḥ paraṁ tvām manasā smaranti.*

The quieted lords of sages, men freed of longing, and men full of longing and given to works alike —
all, having won you, are content with their own gain, and nourished, remember you with the mind.

O you whose form is the highest peace! The lords of sages, of a quieted nature; the lords of yogis, wholly free of appetite; and men given to works, who long for worldly splendour — all alike, having won you and no other, are contented with the gain of the Self, and coming to the highest nourishment, remember and meditate in their minds on your nature alone. || 36 ||

(37)

*kāśī tvadīyā nagarī suramyā kāśyāḥ patitvaṁ taruṇa trilochana!
trailokya ṛddhiṁ pradadāsi jīvitānām mṛtāṁs tv asāyuiya sukhaṁ dadāsi.*

Kāśī, that lovely city, is yours, and yours the lordship of Kāśī, O ever-young three-eyed one; to the living you give the wealth of the three worlds, and to the dead the happiness of union with you.

O lord of Kāśī! This fair Kāśī is your own enchanting city, and you alone — three-eyed, adorned with the character of youth — are the one master of this fair city of Kāśī. In this city of yours you grant living creatures, while they live, wealth and grain and splendour and all the riches of the three worlds; and when they die you bring them to their fruit by granting them the happiness of *sāyuiya*, the liberation of union with yourself.

That is: in your city your people obtain the highest happiness even while they live, and when in the course of time they die they obtain that state of liberation, made of the highest bliss, which is hard for even the sovereignty of yoga to win. And why should they not obtain it, O God? When you yourself, their lord, are enthroned in the fullness of power above their heads, then what thing could be hard for them to win? || 37 ||

(38)

*dhanyo 'si bhadraṁkara bhūtinātha! dhanyāḥ vadānyaṁ śaraṇaṁ prayātāḥ,
saṁsāra sindhau gahane sudustare eko bhavān eva mamāvalambanam.*

Blessed are you, maker of good, lord of ashes; and blessed are they who go for refuge to so generous a one.

In this deep and hardly crossed ocean of the world, you alone are my one support.

O maker of blessing! O lord of ashes, worker of welfare, sole master of the highest sovereignty! Blessed are you! And blessed too are the men and women who come to the refuge of one so supremely generous and so worthy of thanks, so mighty in power. For me, fallen into this most hard-crossed and utterly deep ocean of the world, you alone are the one support; there is no other protector at all. O Lord, I live by your shelter alone.

*nāhinai nātha! avalamba mohi āna kī,
karama-mana-vachana pana satya karuṇānidhe,
eka gati rāma! bhavadīya pada trāṇa kī.*

I have no other support, O Lord!

In deed, in thought and in word this vow of mine is true, O treasury of compassion:
there is one road only, O Rām — the shelter of your feet.

That is: “O Lord, I have no one else’s support. O treasury of compassion, in thought, word and deed this is my true vow: that my one and only support is your sandals.” || 38 ||

(39)

*tattvaṁ te tattva vidbhiḥ taruṇa taraṇivat tāmra taptam sudīptam,
dīptākṣaṁ dvandva duḥkha praśamana param śāntida kṣemakārī;
śāla prāmśo! śaśidhara! jaṭājūṭa chhatra vraṇāṅkam,
bhaktānām pārijātopama! sakala manovāñchhitānām pradātā.*

Your truth, the knowers of truth declare, is bright as the young sun, glowing as heated copper,
blazing;
its eyes ablaze, bent on quieting the sorrow of the pairs of opposites, giver of peace, worker
of welfare;
tall as the *śāla* tree, moon-bearer, the scar hidden under the canopy of your matted hair —
O *pārijāta* of your devotees, giver of everything the heart desires.

O you who are as the *pārijāta* to your devotees! Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadāśiva, the wishing-tree for the fulfilling of your devotees’ desires! Yogis who know the truth have set out your truth-filled nature as blazing like the young sun and wholly aglow like heated copper. In that most light-filled form of yours the divine eyes are ablaze; and in it is the power to quiet the pairs of opposites — pleasure and pain, liking and loathing, cold and heat, right and wrong; and it is the giver of the highest peace, and joined with the power that works the world’s good.

O tall as the *śāla* tree, bearer of the moon! Even in that divine and light-filled form, the mark of the scar is covered over by the canopy of your matted locks; and that form is the giver of the desires of the heart to the devotees who meditate on it. Blessed in this world are those eyes which are made fruitful by winning the sight of you. || 39 ||

(40)

*ānanda kānane nityaṁ vasan pratyakṣa gocharaḥ,
siddhāśramī siddha siddho śaṅkaraḥ pātu medinīm.*

Dwelling for ever in the Grove of Bliss, visible to sight,
the dweller in Siddhāśram, perfected among the perfected — may Śaṅkar protect the earth.

O you whose nature is bliss! Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Śiva, descent of Śrī Śaṅkar, who dwell for ever and visibly in Ānandavan, in Kāśī, and who wander in Siddhāśram and in the caves of Śrī Kailās — you alone sustain this world and this earth. Blessed are you, and blessed your Māyā! || 40 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in the Grove of Bliss.

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in Vṛndāvan

Seventh stabaka

(1)

*mūrtiṁ manojñāṁ yadunandanasya rādhā milindasya vraje vasantīm,
nīpīya netrair hṛdayaṁ sva tarpitum vṛndāvane tvaṁ punar eṣi suvrata!*

The enchanting figure of Yadu's son, the bee at Rādhā's flower, dwelling in Braj —
drinking it with your eyes to satisfy your own heart, you come again to Vṛndāvan, O keeper of
the fair vow.

This is the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in Śrī Vṛndāvan. In it is shown how Śrī Sadāśiva, satisfied with the bliss of the Self in the Grove of Bliss, comes from his abode at Kāśī to Śrī Vṛndāvan and, in the dress of an ascetic, drinks the nectar of the acts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa — the root of bliss, the Supreme Person of Play, the descent in the fullness of his parts — and is drowned in bliss. For after the wandering in the Grove of Delight and the Grove of Bliss, it is the wandering in Vṛndāvan that by its unearthliness and divinity most gladdens the heart of Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva. And so, obtaining in these three groves the highest bliss of the Lord's play, his abode, his form and his name, he remains drowned in bliss night and day.

O keeper of the fair vow — Sadāśiva, who keeps the fair vow of the juice of devotion to the Lord! Dwelling in Braj, and beholding the enchanting figure of Śrī Śyāmasundar Vṛndāvanachandra, the beloved of Śrī Rādhā, you drink the nectar of his beauty with the cups of your eyes; and to satisfy your heart you come again to the abode of Vṛndāvan. || 1 ||

(2)

*dhāmnī svakīye nija rāsa līlā lālitya sandarśana lālasena,
āmantrito nirjara vṛnda saṁyuto rāsotsavaṁ tasya alamkaroṣi.*

In his own abode, out of longing to behold the loveliness of his own *rāsa*-play,
invited, and joined by the host of the deathless ones, you adorn his festival of the *rāsa*.

O friend of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Out of the longing to taste the unearthly sweetness of the *rāsa* plays carried on without ceasing in his own visible body in his abode of Vṛndāvan, you accept the invitation sent by Śrī Vṛndāvanachandra and come with the host of gods; and with your presence you make glorious the *rāsa*-festival of your most beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. || 2 ||

(3)

*sāmprataṁ sādhu veśaṁ tvāṁ bhaktānāṁ iṣṭa siddhidam,
yateḥ prachchanna veśeṇa charantaṁ vraja dhūliṣu.*

Even now, in the dress of a holy man, giver to your devotees of their heart's attainment,
in the hidden garb of an ascetic you walk in the dust of Braj.

O all-pervading one! At this time, taking on the fair dress of a holy man who grants his devotees their heart's desire, and wandering in the hidden garb of a yogi in the most holy dust of Braj — your devotees behold your form thus with their own eyes and are made glad. || 3 ||

(4)

*nandāṅgaṇe pūrṇa kalāvatīrṇaṁ śiśuṁ manojñaṁ taruṇendu vaktram,
stanandhayaṁ gopa mudāṁ vahantaṁ draṣṭuṁ kapālī nara veśa bhikṣukaḥ.*

To see in Nanda's courtyard him who has come down in the fullness of his parts —
an enchanting infant, his face like the young moon, at the breast, carrying the gladness of the
cowherds —
you, the skull-bearer, became a beggar in the dress of a man.

O most beautiful one! In the courtyard of Śrī Nanda Bābā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has come down with his sixteen parts, in the form of an enchanting infant glorious with a face fair as the young moon, drinking at the breast of mother Śrī Yaśodā and gladdening the cowherds. To behold him, you take on the shape of a human beggar and, on the pretext of asking alms of mother Śrī Yaśodā, behold Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the treasure of her life and the ornament of the three worlds, and are filled with the highest bliss. Blessed, O Lord, is your supreme devotion! || 4 ||

(5) – (6) a pair

*kvachit śrī rādhikā pāda padmāṅkaṁ suvibhūṣitām,
kvachich cha kṛṣṇa pādābja makarandā moda bhāsvarām;
vraja sthaliṁ gāhamānaḥ vicharan vraja vīthiṣu,
vṛndāvana charaṁ guptam api paśyanti tāvakāḥ.*

Here adorned with the marks of Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet,
and there ablaze with the gladness of the honey of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet —
plunging into that ground of Braj, wandering in the lanes of Braj:
though you walk hidden in Vṛndāvan, your own people see you.

O connoisseur of the wandering in Braj! Here that ground of Braj is adorned with the most holy marks of Śrī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet, and close beside it, there, its form is ablaze with the honey of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, the root of bliss. Wandering in it, and moving drowned in bliss through the lanes of Braj — though your form is hidden as you wander absorbed in Śrī Vṛndāvan, the supreme devotees behold even that, and are made glad.

All this is the fruit of your grace alone: that even a form which wanders looking, to worldly eyes, like a dumb and senseless thing, the supreme devotees recognize in every condition and taste the bliss of it, according to the words *tumharihi kṛpā tumhahi raghunandana, jānata bhakta bhakta ura chandana* — “by your grace alone, O Raghunandan, the devotee knows you, the sandal of the devotee's heart.” || 5 – 6 ||

(7)

*līlāvatārasya kathāsu magno rāsotsavam vraja vaneṣu nirīkṣyamāṇaḥ,
yamunā taraṅga jala siñchita sarva gātro ānanda magna iva pūrṇa rato vibhāsi.*

Drowned in the tales of the descent of play, watching the *rāsa*-festival in the groves of Braj,
your every limb wetted by the wave-water of the Yamunā, you shine as one drowned in bliss
and
wholly given to it.

O highest bliss! Bathing daily in the fair, wave-tossed and holy water of Śrī Yamunājī, and drowned
night and day in the most sweet tales of Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, the descent of play, and watching in the
groves of Braj the *rāsa*-festival of Śrī Kṛṣṇa — though you take your delight in the Self alone, you
wander in the form of one drowned in the highest bliss. || 7 ||

(8)

*vibhāsi yatraiva cha tatra tatra rāsotsavāhlādita chitta vṛttiḥ,
ānanda līlāmṛta pāna puṣṭo ānanda romāñchita sarva gātraḥ.*

Wherever you appear, there and there the movements of your mind are gladdened by the
rāsa-festival;
nourished by drinking the nectar of the play of bliss, your every limb thrilling with bliss.

O beholder of the three times! In the lovely lanes of the forest of Vṛndāvan, wherever you appear,
there and there you receive the highest gladness from watching the Lord's eternal, bliss-filled *rāsa*
plays. And bearing a form nourished to the utmost by drinking the most sweet divine nectar of those
bliss-filled *rāsa* plays, your every limb thrills through the overflow of bliss. In such a state, filled with
the helplessness of love, you taste the Lord's plays, which are made of pure consciousness. || 8 ||

(9)

*tāvakāśa tvarṇ vijānanti antaraṅgair na gopyase,
suputraṁ chaiva śiṣyaṁ cha ātma rūpaṁ vidur budhāḥ.*

Your own people know you; from the inward ones you are not hidden;
for the wise know a good son and a disciple to be one's own very self.

O friend of the poor! Your most beloved devotees recognize even that most hidden dress of yours,
by your mercy alone; for being gracious to the inward devotees, you keep no play of yours hidden
from them.

In the world an obedient son and a most beloved disciple are counted as one's own self. The Śrūti
too plainly declare *ātmā vai jāyate putraḥ* — “the son is the very form of the self.” In the same way
the supreme disciple, being one's own self, is entitled to the hidden secret. So too, in setting forth the
scriptures of mantra and tantra, you yourself gave the command *deyaṁ śiṣyāya śāntāya viṣṇu bhakti
ratāya cha* — that is, “even the most secret truth of the mantra should be given to a quieted disciple
who is given to devotion to Viṣṇu.” It is for this reason that you are gracious to grant your devotees
the divine sight also, and so give them the vision of yourself and of your most beloved. || 9 ||

(10)

*kvachit kadambāmra vaneṣu sakto mattair milindair muhur gīta kīrtiḥ,
prachchhāya śītala taleṣu talebhyo līno vaṁśī sudhāpyāyita chitta vṛttiḥ.*

Sometimes lingering in the groves of *kadamba* and mango, your fame sung again and again by bees drunk on the honey;
hidden beneath the cool deep shade, the movements of your mind nourished by the nectar of the
flute.

O sky-clad one! Sometimes in the groves of *kadamba* and of mangoes your virtues are sung by bees drunk with the tasting of honey; and hearing them you too become drunk with bliss, and losing yourself beneath those trees with their dense shade, the movements of your mind come to the highest satisfaction from hearing the most sweet sound of the flute blown by the Lord, the Supreme Person of Play. And by the rising of all the marks of pure feeling, your state becomes one made of consciousness and bliss. || 10 ||

(11)

*kvachich cha vṛndāvana vīthikāsu nānā pramodair vraja gopa saṅghaiḥ,
gopāṅganābhir muhur añjitāṅgaṁ holotsave dattam ati praśasyasi.*

And sometimes in the lanes of Vṛndāvan, amid many delights, with the throngs of Braj's cowherds,
his limbs stained again and again by the cowherd women — at the festival of Holī you praise what is given.

O Maheśvara! Sometimes in the lanes of Vṛndāvan, beholding that dark loveliness — absorbed within himself in the festival of Holī, his limbs stained again and again from playing Holī with the throngs of Braj's most high-spirited cowherds, given to laughter and frolic of every kind, and with the most fortunate cowherd women — you are made glad. That is: gladdened by the beauty of Śrī Nanda's son as he plays Holī in the lanes of Vṛndāvan with the cowherd women and the cowherds and with Śrī Priyājī, you count even the bliss of Brahman a trifling thing beside this bliss. || 11 ||

(12)

*kvachich cha nānā druma jāla maṇḍite latā pratānair vihite sumanḍape,
rāsotsavāpyāyita chitta vṛttiḥ śrī kṛṣṇa chandraṁ suvilokya hr̥ṣṭaḥ.*

And sometimes in a fair pavilion adorned with a net of many trees and made of trailing creepers,
the movements of his mind nourished by the *rāsa*-festival — beholding Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, you rejoice.

O supreme Lord! Sometimes, tasting the beauty of Śrī Vṛndāvanachandra — seated in a pavilion made of many creepers and adorned with a net of many trees, *karīra* and *kadamba* and the rest, his mind satisfied with the divine and bliss-filled sport of the *rāsa* — you come to the highest gladness. || 12 ||

(13)

*anyatra gopān parityajya māyayā ekaṁ charantaṁ saha rādhayā vane,
rādhā 'dharāsvādana chañcharikaṁ chañchad dṛśaṁ vīkṣya muhuḥ prahr̥ṣṭaḥ.*

Elsewhere, having left the cowherds by his Māyā, he walks alone in the wood with Rādhā, a bee at the tasting of Rādhā's lip, his glance quivering — beholding him, again and again you rejoice.

O you who play in the mountain caves of Kailāś! Somewhere you look upon the Lord's mystery-filled divine plays in this way: that by his yoga-Māyā he leaves the company of the cowherd boys and the cowherd women and, taking only Śrī Rādhārānī with him, comes out of longing for a solitary wandering into a fair bower — longing like a bee to drink the nectar of the lip of Śrīmatī Rādhājī, that most fortunate one wholly given to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, his creeper-like arms quivering through the overflow of bliss. Beholding the divine sport of him who is "the very churner of the mind of the god of love," absorbed in that most secret and mysterious play, you yourself are drowned and go bathing in an ocean of the highest bliss. || 13 ||

(14)

*anyatra kuñje cha punaḥ svapantyās tasyāḥ padāmbhoja muni bhṛṅga sevitau,
svayaṁ karābjaiḥ parisevayantaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vilokyaiva muhuḥ prasannaḥ.*

And elsewhere in a bower, as she sleeps, her lotus feet — served by the bee-like sages — Kṛṣṇa himself tends with his own lotus hands; and beholding it, again and again you are made glad.

And in another bower, beholding the beauty of Śrī Yogeśvar as he presses slowly and slowly with his own lotus hands the tender leaf-like feet of his most beautiful beloved — the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhājī, lying asleep, which the sages, like bees, for ever serve with devotion — you are again overwhelmed in the highest delight.

Śrī Bhagavān, taking the support of yoga-Māyā, carries on different plays in different places at one and the same time. And Śrī Yogeśvar Siddha Siddheśvar, being himself the very form of Śaṅkar, is also the master of yoga-Māyā; and so, taking many forms by his own yoga-Māyā, he tastes the juice of the play in different places all at once.

Blessed indeed! And it is for this that, according to the word *nūnaṁ bhagavato māyā jñāninām api mohinī*, your Māyā bewilders even men of knowledge. But in a play where the lord of Māyā is himself the lord of the *rāsa*, and the master of Māyā, Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva, is the watcher — how should worldly creatures be able to taste the sweetness of that divine *rāsa*? These plays are far beyond even their meditation.

Blessed, O Lord, are your divine plays! In them, though he is the lord of the whole universe and of all creation, he is pressing the feet of his beloved, Śrī Rājārājeśvarī. This is love at its furthest reach, of which it has been said, counting it your very own form:

prema harī ko rūpa hai, tyō hari prema svarūpa.

Love is the form of Hari, and Hari likewise is the very form of love.

What end can worldly creatures find to these acts that are beyond the world? Only these words are the support of worldly creatures:

*rāma dekhi suni charita tumhāre,
jaṛa mohahim, budha hohim sukhāre.*

O Rām, seeing and hearing of your deeds,
the dull are bewildered, and the wise are made happy.

And it is for this, O Śiva, that taking on your own attentive form you cast off the hidden dress and, in your real dress, appear at once as a beggar asking only for the sight — as the next verse sets down.

|| 14 ||

(15)

*nijaṁ parityajya virakta rūpaṁ śaśāṅka vyāghrāmbara bhasma maṇḍitaḥ,
nāgendra hārī cha kapāla mālī digambaro darśana mātra bhikṣukaḥ.*

Casting off your own form of one detached, adorned with the moon, the tiger's hide and ash,
wearing the king of serpents for a necklace and a garland of skulls, sky-clad — a beggar asking
only for the sight.

O three-eyed one! Leaving your form of one detached, bearing the moon upon your brow, adorning your body with the tiger's hide and with ash, wearing the necklace of the king of serpents, and sky-clad with the skull-bowl in your hand, you are brought to your fruit by begging for the unceasing sight of that beauty described above — the beloved of your life, the garland of Śrī Rādhā's heart.

O Lord! Let me too behold without ceasing this most sweet beauty of your Divine Pair. This one alms alone, be gracious and grant me. || 15 ||

(16)

*vaṅkima vihāri bhavane bhava netra ramye vaṅkāḥṛtiṁ vaṅka śīrodharādharam,
vaṅkendu vad vaṅka viśāla netraṁ vihāriṇaṁ paśyasi vaṅka netraiḥ.*

In the house of the Crooked Wanderer, lovely to Bhava's eyes —
his shape bent, his neck bent, his lip bent,
his wide eyes bent like the crescent moon —
you behold that Wanderer with your own bent glance.

O Śiva Śaṅkar, adorned with the crescent moon! Sometimes, in the temple of Śrī Bāṅke Bihārījī Mahārāj — *bhava netra ramye*, most beautiful to the eyes of Śrī Sadāśiva — you gaze and gaze with your own sidelong glance at Śrī Bāṅke Bihārījī Mahārāj, who is true to his name in the very sight of him: adorned with a bent figure, with a bent neck, a bent lip, and wide eyes set slantwise like the crescent moon. And so you are made blessed. || 16 ||

(17)

*tvaṁ vāpi tenaiva nirīkṣyamāṇaḥ paras parā lokana jāta kautukaḥ,
smiterupāṅge muhur īkṣyamāṇo paras parā 'lokana jāta sāttvikaḥ.*

And you too are looked upon by him, the wonder rising from your beholding one another;
gazed at again and again from the smiling corners of the eyes, the marks of pure feeling rising
in you both from that mutual beholding.

At that time, when you receive there the gladness of his sight, and his bent glance full of love meets your own glance full of the sweetness of bliss — then, as you are gazed at again and again from the corners of eyes full of a slight smile, in both of you there rises from that mutual beholding the whole overflow of the marks of pure feeling: stillness, sweat, the standing of the hair, trembling and the rest. And by this he is drowned in the highest bliss at the sight of you, and you, receiving the sight of him, are utterly drowned in your own nature and brought to your fruit. || 17 ||

(18)

*sattvodbhavo sattvamatih susattvo sattvāśrito sattva rato 'pi sattvaḥ,
ānanda bhūto 'pi nijānanda sindhau nandātmajānanda sukhe sumagnaḥ.*

Born of purity, your mind pure, of good purity, resting on purity, given to purity, purity itself —
and though you are bliss itself, in your own ocean of bliss you are drowned in the happiness of
the bliss of Nanda's son.

O you whose very figure is purity! Though you are risen out of purity, wholly steadfast in the highest truth, the very form of truth itself, resting on the visible form of purity, given to purity at every instant, and yourself the form of pure being — still you are drowned in the highest bliss of Śrī Nanda's son, who is an ocean of the highest bliss. Victory to you, Sadāśiva, whose holy body is the very form of Sat-Chit-Ānand! || 18 ||

(19)

*kadāpi govardhana dhāmam āgataḥ archāṁ parair bhakta gaṇaiḥ susevitam,
pūjotsavāhlāda yutaṁ girīndraṁ padbhyāṁ parikramya mudāṁ bibharṣi.*

Sometimes, coming to the abode of Govardhan, and finding the image well served by the highest
hosts of devotees,
that king of mountains filled with the gladness of the festival of worship — you circle him on
foot and bear away joy.

O Śarva! Sometimes you come to the abode of Śrī Govardhan, and beholding Śrī Girirāj — the Lord's own embodied form, praised and well served by hosts of devotees given to his worship, and filled with the gladness of the great festival — you make the circuit of him with your own holy feet, and at every step you are filled with the highest bliss and delight. || 19 ||

(20)

*vṛndāvane susaṁtṛptaḥ siddhāśrama niketanaḥ,
siddha siddheśvaraḥ pātu śaṅkaraḥ siddhidaḥ satām.*

Well satisfied in Vṛndāvan, whose dwelling is Siddhāśram —
may Siddha Siddheśvar, Śaṅkar, the giver of attainment to the good, protect us.

May Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar in the form of Śaṅkar — the dweller in Śrī Siddhāśram, who grants all the attainments to good men — being well satisfied in Vṛndāvan with all four of those supreme principles, the Lord's play, his abode, his form and his name, protect us worldly creatures. || 20 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Play in Śrī Vṛndāvan.

The Bouquet of the Examination of the Secret Play in the Grove of Siddhāśram

Eighth stabaka

(1)

*vana trayānanda sukhā 'nubhūtiṁ hṛdā vahan yoga gatāntarātmā,
ātma svarūpaṁ śiva dhyātukāmaḥ siddhāśrame tvam punar eṣi śambho!*

Bearing in your heart the felt happiness of the bliss of the three groves, your inward self gone into yoga,
longing, O Śiva, to meditate on the nature of the Self — you come again to Siddhāśram, O Śambhu.

Here begins the bouquet of blossoms named the Examination of the Secret Play in the Grove of Siddhāśram. In it is described the wandering in the grove of Siddhāśram of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sāmba Sadāśiva, satisfied with the blissful wandering in the three groves; and some portion of his mystery-filled divine plays is set down here for the comforting of the devotee's heart.

O Śambhu! Bearing in your heart the felt happiness of the Self won in the Groves of Delight and of Bliss and in Vṛndāvan, and drowned once more in the samādhi of yoga out of the longing to meditate on the nature of the Self, you come again to Siddhāśram, the seat of the perfected, where your most happy and holy āśram is. || 1 ||

(2)

*siddhāśrame vasan śāntaḥ yoga yukto jitendriyaḥ,
bhaktānām anuraktānām yoga kṣema rataḥ sadā.*

Dwelling at Siddhāśram, quieted, joined in yoga, his senses conquered,
for ever given to the getting and keeping of the devotees who love him.

O lord of sages! Taking on a quieted form and dwelling at Siddhāśram, you win full victory over the senses and are drowned in the samādhi of yoga; and there, out of the longing for the welfare of your loving supreme devotees, you remain given to their getting and their keeping. || 2 ||

(3)

*yoga kṣemau vitanvānaḥ svīyayā yoga māyayā,
siddhāśrama vanoddeśe bhakta vṛndaiḥ susevitaḥ.*

Spreading out their getting and their keeping by your own yoga-Māyā,
in the forest country of Siddhāśram, well served by hosts of devotees.

In the forest country of this most holy Siddhāśram you dwell, arranging by your own yoga-Māyā the getting and keeping of your devotees. The hosts of devotees take Sadāśiva himself for a holy man, and serve him and bow to him. || 3 ||

(4)

*nijāśritānām bharaṇe poṣaṇe cha sadā rataḥ,
hṛdam bhāvaṁ vijānan vai krīḍā saṁsakta mānasaḥ.*

For ever given to the feeding and sustaining of those who take shelter with him,
knowing the feeling of their hearts, his mind bent upon his play.

According to the promise of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, *ye yathā mām prapadyante, tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham* — “in whatever way men come to my refuge, in that same way do I serve them” — Śrī Sadgurudevī Mahārāj, making this feeling good, remains for ever given to the feeding and sustaining of the devotees who have taken shelter at his feet. He knows at once the feelings of his devotees’ hearts; for what delay can there be for one who pervades every vessel, in knowing what is in a devotee’s heart? || 4 ||

(5)

*kailāsasya girer guhāsu viharan rudrākṣa sambhrājito,
bhāryā bhartsita śrī gumāni bharaṇe baddhādaro bhārakam;
chhitvā godhūma kṣetraṁ sva kara kusumair bhakta santarpaṇāya,
dvāviṁśati maṇam akṣayānna nivahaṁ gehe tadīye adhāḥ.*

Wandering in the caves of Mount Kailāś, glorious with the *rudrākṣa*,
you set your care on the feeding of Śrī Gumānī, whom his wife had scolded;
you cut his field of wheat with your own flower-like hands, to satisfy your devotee,
and set in his house an unspendable store of twenty-two *maṇ* of grain.

O ocean of compassion, purifier of the fallen, sustainer of the world! Wandering in the caves of Mount Kailāś, you are glorious with the necklace of *rudrākṣa*. You gave your generous care to the feeding and keeping of the devotee Śrī Gumānī, who had been scolded by his wife; you cut his field of grain, and gathered it with the tender leaves of your own hands; and to satisfy your devotee’s household you filled the storeroom of his house with an unspendable store of twenty-two *maṇ* of grain, carrying the bundles yourself upon your head, load after load!

Blessed, O Lord, is your tenderness to your devotees! It was you who thatched the roof for the devotee Dhannā, and you who set out the meal for Narsī. These habits of yours are very old. How far can the tale of your greatness be told? || 5 ||

(6)

*gumāni bhaktasya prasāda kāmāḥ kāmāṁs tadīyān manasā vichintitān,
sampūrituṁ tvaṁ śaraṇaṁ svakīyaṁ prādāḥ śubhāśvattha tale susaṁsthitaḥ.*

Longing to show grace to the devotee Gumānī, and to fulfil the desires he had framed in his mind,
you gave him your own refuge, seated beneath the auspicious *aśvattha* tree.

O Lord! To rain the nectar of grace upon your desireless devotee Śrī Gumānī Siṃh, and to fulfil the fierce longing for devotion and for refuge in the Lord which he had framed in his mind, one day you seated yourself in the shade of a fair *pīpal* tree and gave him your refuge with your whole being.
|| 6 ||

(7)

*godhūma chūrṇārtham asau mahātmā gataḥ samīpa sthita vāri peṣaṇīm,
mārge bhavantaṁ sadayaṁ vilokya kṣaṇena yātaḥ tava sannidhiṁ prabho!*

That great soul had gone to the nearby water-mill to grind his wheat;
and seeing you on the road, full of mercy, in one moment he came into your presence, O Lord.

O Lord! Śrī Yogirāj, supremely free, able both to punish and to favour! That Ṭhākur named Śrī Gumānī, of a most pure inward being, was going to the water-driven mill set at the edge of the village, to have his wheat ground. On the road itself he received the sight of you, full of mercy and giver of the highest bliss; and in a single moment, through that purity of soul born of the company of the good which he had earned in a former birth, the mirror of his heart became utterly clean. And so in a single moment he was able to receive the clear reflection of Śrī Gurudev, blazing like the sun; and he offered himself up with his whole being at your holy feet. || 7 ||

(8)

*tatraiva te pāda talam prapannaḥ nivṛtta tarṣaḥ kṣata deha bandhanaḥ,
gṛhastha jañjālam apāsya dhīraḥ prachchhāya śītala tale charaṇe nilīnaḥ.*

There at your feet he threw himself down, his thirst quieted, the bonds of the body cut;
casting aside the tangle of the householder, that steadfast man was lost in your feet, in the cool of the deep shade.

Beneath that very *aśvattha* tree, casting off all thirst and the bonds and tangles of household life, that steadfast man began to take his rest in the most happy shade of your holy feet — a shade utterly cool with its fair shadow, and quieting every trouble and every sickness. || 8 ||

(9)

*kṣetre gatvā tvayā nātha! tasya kṣetraṁ vikartitam,
dvāviṁśati maṇonmānam ānītaṁ poṭake grhe.*

Going to the field, O Lord, you cut his field for him,
and brought twenty-two *maṇ*, weighed out, in bundles to his house.

O God! How far shall I recount your virtues? You went to his field and cut all the grain, and tied up twenty-two *maṇ* of grain in bundles and carried it to his house. Blessed is that good name of yours for remembering and protecting your devotees!

For it is your true promise: *teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yoga kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham* — “for those ever-devoted ones who, casting off every appetite, remain always given to my worship alone, I myself carry the getting and the keeping.” || 9 ||

(10)

*dhanyo 'si rakṣā karaṇe samartha! rakṣā karatvaṁ tava loka viśrutam,
godhūma kaṇakān bhavatā surakṣitān nādyāvadhis tasya kuṭumbino 'nvabhavan.*

Blessed are you, able to protect; your protecting is famous through the world.
The grains of wheat you kept safe — his household has not come to the end of them to this day.

O Śaṅkar, maker of blessing! Blessed is your power to protect your devotees. Your habit of protecting is fully famous in the world. That twenty-two *maṇ* of grain, brought to Gumānī's house by your unspendable lotus hands, his household has been eating to this very day.

Thousands of such wonders the dwellers near Śrī Siddhāśram have seen with their own eyes, and they are drowned in bliss when they recount them upon their oath. Blessed, O Bholā Bhaṇḍārī, is your unearthly and divine power of giving refuge to your devotees and of keeping the households of those who come to you! It is for this that Gosvāmī Śrī Tulsīdāsji brought himself to his fruit by writing these words about you:

*āśutoṣa tuma avaḍhara dānī,
mo para kṛpā kariya jana jānī.*

Swiftly pleased are you, and a giver beyond all measure;
be gracious to me, knowing me for your servant.

|| 10 ||

(11)

*gṛhe tadīye tava hasta nirmītā lipis tu adyāvadhi vidyate prabho!
vidher lipīvākṣara bhāk suśobhinī nādyāvadhiḥ paṭhyata eva mānavaiḥ.*

In his house the writing made by your hand is present to this day, O Lord;
fair with letters like the Creator's own script — and to this day men have not read it.

O Lord! In the house of the most fortunate devotee Śrī Gumānī some letters written by your lotus hands are present even now. Those fair letters, though glorious with characters like the script the Creator writes upon the brow, have to this day not been read, for all the efforts men have made.

A picture of the letters written by the lotus hand of Śrī Sadgurudev is given here, for the sight of all.

|| 11 ||

(12)

*tvaḍ daṁśaṁ bhakta gṛhe surakṣitaṁ tāmraṁ manojñaṁ tava hasta bhūṣaṇam,
utthāpitum vā punar eva dhātum sāmārthya hīnāḥ kali grasta sārāḥ.*

Your tongs, kept safe in the devotee's house, of copper, lovely, the ornament of your hand —
men whose strength the Kali age has swallowed have not the power to lift them, still less to hold them.

O treasury of compassion! The fair copper tongs that were the ornament of your hand are present to this day in that fortunate devotee's house, as a sweet remembrance. The men of this age, whose

bodily strength has been destroyed by the Kali age, can neither easily lift them nor hold them; for between the strength of man five thousand years ago and that of this age there is a very great difference.

|| 12 ||

(13)

*tad daṁśakam bhakta gr̥he surakṣitam sva darśanād eva vyathām karoty apā,
tvadiya saṁsarga samanvitam tat tvadiya bhaktasya mano 'valambanam.*

Those tongs, kept safe in the devotee's house, take away pain by the mere sight of them;
filled with the touch of you, they are the one support of your devotee's mind.

Those copper tongs, having received the touch of your boon-giving hands, take away the pain of living creatures by the mere sight of them. Being adorned with the most fortunate touch of you, they are the one support of the mind of your supreme devotee and beloved disciple. || 13 ||

(14)

*dhanyam gumāneḥ parivārakam tat gatvā svayam yatra tvayā kṛtā kṛpā,
kāle tad annam bhavatā subhakṣitam tvadiya bhaktasya sukarmaṇaḥ phalam.*

Blessed is that household of Gumānī, where you went yourself and showed your grace;
and from time to time you ate of his food — the fruit of your devotee's good deeds.

Blessed are the household and the house of that supreme devotee of yours, Gumānī, where you came yourself and were gracious; and from time to time you received his food as your great blessed offering. All this grace is the fruit of the good deeds of that supreme devotee of yours, both in his former birth and in this. || 14 ||

(15)

*phalam sumiṣṭam nahi vidyate 'nyat dattam tvayā yan nija darśanena,
yogātmabhir yoga dṛśā na dṛśyas tvaṁ tasya chakṣvoḥ samagocharo 'bhūḥ.*

No sweeter fruit exists than that which you gave by the sight of yourself;
you who are not seen by yoga-souls with the eye of yoga became visible to his very eyes.

O you who are rich in austerity! Than that fair fruit which you granted to his household by your nectar-filled sight, no sweeter fruit is possible in the world. That form of yours which is unseen by the greatest yogis even through the eye of yoga became the object of his own bodily eyes — and that is no small piece of good fortune. || 15 ||

(16) – (17) a pair

*mahānase pāka kṛte subholā datte 'hni chārke taruṇatva yāte,
gantum pravṛtte tvayi śāradā taṭam gumāni bhakto 'pi sahaiva gantum;
mano dadhe deva! tvayā 'nukampitaḥ padbhyām kiyad dūram anuvratas tvām,
tvam utthitaḥ khe nija yoga māyayā gumāni bhaktena sahaiva bhūtalāt.*

When the cooking was done in the kitchen by good Bholā, and the day's sun had come to its strength,
and you set out for the bank of the Śāradā, the devotee Gumānī too set his mind on going with you;
and being shown your compassion, O God, he followed you some distance on foot —
and then you rose into the sky by your own yoga-Māyā, and with you, from the ground, the devotee Gumānī.

O most merciful one! To bring this king among devotees, Gumānī, to his fruit, you performed many plays filled with a splendour beyond the world. Of those divine plays, one is described here, to send courage and steadiness flowing through the hearts of devotees.

One day a brahmin named Śrī Bholādatt was busy cooking Śrī Mahārājī's food. Because there was some delay in the cooking, the sun had come to its strength; it had become about eleven o'clock. At that time, when the cooking was finished, you gave the command from your own lips: "I shall bathe in the Śāradā Gaṅgā and come at once."

At that Śrī Gumānī too prayed with folded hands: "Mahārāj! You are possessed of every capability and will come back after bathing in the Gaṅgā; but I am utterly poor. When the grace of Śrī Gaṅgā Māi falls on me too, then I shall bathe."

What delay could there be for the emperor of the world's heart in understanding what was in his lover's heart? You gave the command at once: "Gumānī? Come, let me have you bathe in the Śrī Gaṅgā too."

Setting the revered command upon his head, and counting it the supreme grace of his Lord, Gumānī also followed behind Śrī Mahārāj. When the two of them had come outside the āśram, at a distance of some thirty or forty paces, then Śrī Gurudev, of supreme capability, began to rise up unsupported into the path of the sky by the highest sovereignty of his yoga; and Gumānī too, receiving the command, took the support of his holy feet and began to move along the path of the sky. || 16 – 17 ||

(18)

*tūrṇaṁ kṣaṇārdhena tvayaiva sākaṁ prāptaḥ sa bhakto 'pi hi śāradā taṭam,
bhakta pratoṣāya tvayā mahāvratā! sva yoga sampat kaṇikā pradarśitā.*

Swiftly, in half a moment, that devotee too reached the bank of the Śāradā along with you;
to content your devotee, O keeper of the great vow, you showed him one grain of the wealth
of
your yoga.

And very swiftly, in half a moment, he reached the bank of the Śāradā, forty miles away, together with Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Gurudev. O keeper of the great vow! To raise contentment in the hearts of your devotees, you showed him a single grain of that mighty wealth of yoga which is yours. Blessed is your greatness, and your tenderness to your devotees! || 18 ||

(19)

*snātvā śāradvatī tīre tvayā sārddham masāv api,
samprāptaḥ kṣaṇa mātrena haladvānī tapovanam.*

Having bathed on the bank of the Śāradā, he too, along with you,
reached in a single moment the grove of austerity at Haldvānī.

Having bathed his fill in the heavenly river Gaṅgā, that supreme devotee also came back with you, in a single moment, to the grove of austerity at Haldvānī. || 19 ||

(20)

*śrutvā gumāni vadanāt vṛttāntaṁ vismaya pradam,
bholādattādayo bhaktāḥ sambhrāntās chakitā 'bhavan.*

Hearing from Gumānī's mouth that wonder-giving account,
Bholādatt and the other devotees were confounded and amazed.

Hearing that astonishing account from the mouth of Śrī Gumānī, that vessel of supreme grace, the other devotees — Bholādatt and the rest, who were present at the āśram at that time — became greatly distraught and struck with wonder.

Thousands of people are fully acquainted even now with the unearthliness of this wonder of Śrī Mahārāj's yoga. This is only a very ordinary glimpse that has been given. Your splendour is joined with the sovereignty of Sadāśiva himself, and so you are able *kartum akartum anyathā kartum* — to do, to leave undone, and to do otherwise. || 20 ||

(21)

*so 'yaṁ bhāgyavatāṁ śreṣṭho gumānī nāma ṭhākuraḥ,
tava saṁsarga sāmīpyāt kṛta kṛtyo gata vyathaḥ.*

That same Ṭhākur named Gumānī, best of the fortunate,
by the nearness of your company was brought to his fruit, and his pain was gone.

That same Ṭhākur named Śrī Gumānī is the highest and best among the fortunate — who, by serving you night and day, by your company and by taking refuge with you, destroyed the whole net of his pain, and by your grace obtained in this life the state of one who has done what was to be done. || 21 ||

(22)

*haladvānī vanoddeśe siddha pīṭhe nijāśrame,
līlā kṛtā tvayā nātha! dhāmnī sve loka pāvanīḥ.*

In the forest country of Haldvānī, at the seat of the perfected, in your own āśram,
you performed, O Lord, in your own abode, those plays that purify the world.

O Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! In the forest country of austerity at Haldvānī, in your own abode of Siddhāśram, the seat of the perfected, which lies in the foothills of Mount Kailāś, you have performed many plays that purify the world; and all of them are wholly beyond the reach of speech and mind. || 22 ||

(23)

*vaṅgottha vipra mukṛtārthaṁ nijātma tuṣṭyartham uhuṁ paryaṭantam,
kṣaṇena sandarśana mātrato 'khilāṁ prākāśayad yoga vibhūti siddhim.*

To bring to his fruit a brahmin risen from Baṅga, who wandered far for the contenting of his own soul,
in a moment, by the mere sight of you, you revealed the whole attainment of the splendour of yoga.

O friend of the afflicted! A learned man of the country of Baṅga — Bengal — was labouring by the practices of yoga for the direct seeing of the Self, but had not been able to see success; and for the contenting of his soul he went from one place to another, presenting himself in the service of great men and praying in the spirit of a seeker. To him, in a single moment, by the sight of you, that attainment which is born of the splendour of yoga came by your mere glance.

The full account of this happening is as follows. A Bengali scholar came into this country in the rainy season. This gentleman had practised the exercises of yoga for many years; in the labour of these practices his age had grown great, though his body was very robust and he did not appear old. All the yoga practices his guru had taught him he had completed. After his guru had left the body, he found no perfected great one to carry those practices further; and so, searching, he came into this province. Coming here and asking, he learned that the Mahārāj of Padampurī, the reverend Śrī Somvārī Bābā, had left the body, and that the Mahārāj of Śrī Haiḍākhān — the reverend Śrī Gurudev — was at his āśram of Chheḍū, near the Bhaṭkoṭ valley.

Because the road was very distant and hard, he took a man who knew the way and set out on foot for Chheḍū to have Śrī Mahārājī's sight. On the road he had to face grievous hardship because of the rain; and after four days of painful and difficult travelling he reached the āśram. At that time Śrī Mahārājī was seated with the visitors inside the thatched shelter. The moment this seeker took his sight from ten paces away, his condition became wonderful. He stood still, struck motionless. From his eyes an unceasing stream of tears flowed on; his throat was choked; he was overwhelmed with feeling.

This state lasted about two hours; and in the meantime Śrī Mahārājī went off toward the forest. When the scholar came back to himself, he told them that in search of yogis and great souls he had travelled the whole of India, and had taken counsel about his own condition with countless yogis; but nobody had been able to move him forward from the place where his cart had stuck. "Yet by the mere sight of Śrī Mahārājī everything was made easy for me. Without my asking, he entered within me and gave me the glimpse and the experience of all the further practices of yoga."

Remembering thus the grace of that boundless Siddha Siddheśvar, he was overwhelmed with feeling and went on making full prostrations in the dust of his holy feet. || 23 ||

(24)

*badarikāśrama kāntāre satkṛto viṣṇunā svayam,
ramā karābja samprāptaṁ bhuktavān pakva modanam.*

In the forest of Badarikāśram you were honoured by Viṣṇu himself,
and ate the well-cooked rice that came from Ramā's lotus hands.

O Lord Śiva, Mandara of the jewels of yoga! In the forest of Badarikāśram you were honoured by Lord Viṣṇu himself; you alone have become entitled to receive the great blessed offering of well-cooked rice from the lotus hands of Śrī Lakṣmījī.

The secret of this passage is as follows. Once Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadgurudev came to the forest of Badarikāśram for the sight of the Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa. He was wholly drowned in that sight. When the blessed food of Śrījī was distributed there, he did not take the great offering from the hands of the

temple priests. Then the Rāwal, the authority of that place, came himself bearing the great offering; but the Mahārāj did not accept it. And having received the gladness of the sight, Śrīmad Mahārāj went on into the forest — and then Śrī Badarīvan-vihārī himself came, with Śrī Padmālayā Padmā, adorned with the *chhamchham* ringing of anklets.

Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar was seated drowned in meditation in that holy wood; and when, drawn by the *chham, chham* of the sounding anklets, he looked before him, he was made glad by receiving the nectar-filled sight of the lord of Vaikuṇṭha, the connoisseur of wandering in the Badarī wood. The Divine Pair gave the blessed offering with their own lotus hands to their most beloved Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar. Śrī Mahārāj received that nectar-filled great offering, endowed with the Lord's own splendour, and brought his own being to its fruit. || 24 ||

(25)

*ko 'nyo vaibhava śīlo 'sti sarīsāre 'smin mahāmate!
paripakva kaṣāyatvāt sarva sampat samanvitaḥ.*

What other man of such splendour is there in this world, O great of mind?
Because your passions are wholly ripened away, you are joined with every wealth.

O great of mind! To what other great one in this world has such splendour come? By the churning of the science of yoga and the practices of yoga, and because all the appetites of the heart have been fulfilled, all the attainments stand before you at every instant. || 25 ||

(26)

*ramā karābja samparka odanopabhoga bhāgyabhāk,
dhanyo 'smi muni śārdūla dhanyaṁ tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ vraje.*

You who have the good fortune of eating rice touched by Ramā's lotus hands —
blessed am I, tiger among sages; to you, the blessed, I come for refuge.

O tiger among sages! O lord of sages, most fortunate in the eating of the rice received from the lotus hands of Śrī Lakṣmīdevī, sovereign of the three gods! Today I am blessed. Thus have we come to the refuge of you, the vessel of the Lord's grace and worthy of the highest thanks. Be gracious to us too, and bring us to our fruit. || 26 ||

(27)

*dhanyo 'smi tapasām śreṣṭha! kṣamāyām viṣṇunā samaḥ,
dayā sarveṣu bhūteṣu tāvakī niṣprayanā.*

Blessed am I, O best of the austere! In forbearance you are the equal of Viṣṇu;
and your mercy toward all beings asks no reason at all.

O best among the austere, Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar! Blessed are you. In forbearance you are the equal of Lord Viṣṇu — (*when the great sage Bhṛgu struck him with his foot for no cause at all, not the least anger came to Lord Viṣṇu*). Your causeless mercy toward all living beings astonishes the world. || 27 ||

(28)

*satyasya te satya ratasya śambho! trikāla satyā vihitā sulilā,
līlā vinodārtha kṛtārtha kāmāḥ kāma prahartā bhuvi tvam prayātaḥ.*

You are truth, O Śambhu, and given to truth; the fair plays you have made are true in all three times.

Longing to bring the sport of your play to its fruit, O slayer of Kāma, you came upon the earth.

O Śambhu! You are true in all three times, and you are unceasingly given to the form of Being itself; and all the plays performed by you are true in all three times. O you who burned up the god of love, scatterer of Kāma's pride! Out of the longing to bring the sport of your play to its fruit, you came down upon the earth in the form of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar. || 28 ||

(29)

*śraddhām janānām hṛdayād vinaṣṭām punaś charitrais tava loka ramyaiḥ,
sandhātu kāmāḥ kuruṣe mahātman vīta sprho loka hite 'nuraktaḥ.*

Longing to knit up again, with your world-delighting deeds, that faith which had perished from

men's hearts,

you act, O great soul, free of all longing, devoted to the good of the world.

O great soul! Out of the longing to wake once more, by your most lovely deeds, that faith which had perished from the hearts of worldly creatures — though you are detached from every appetite, you give yourself to the longing for the world's good and perform your most enchanting plays. || 29 ||

(30)

*ṛuṇī pradeśe tava sannidhāne grīṣme sthitānām bahu darśakānām,
viśvāsa kāmēna guhāntarālāt pānīya pātraṁ svayam āhṛtaṁ karaiḥ.*

In the country of Ṛuṇī, in your presence, in the heat, many onlookers were sitting;
and to give them faith, you brought out from within the cave, with your own hands, a vessel of water.

Once at Ṛuṇī-Dvārson many visitors were sitting with Śrī Mahārājī. They were the days of summer, and the water was some distance away. Then Śrī Mahārājī pointed out a hidden cave near that place and said, "Inside this there is very cold and sweet water." This was not known even to the oldest and most aged dwellers of that place; because the mouth of the cave was exceedingly narrow, nobody knew that there was water within. Though they tried, no man was able to enter it. Then, before the eyes of them all, Śrī Mahārājī took a water-pot in his hand, entered that cave, and brought cold water from within. || 30 ||

(31)

*saṁsāriṇām tvam bhava! viśmayaiḥ svaiḥ viśmāpano viśmaya viśmayo 'si,
surasā śarīrād api kiṁ susūkṣmaṁ guhāmukhaṁ yat tava duṣpraveśam.*

O Bhava, with your own wonders you astonish worldly men — you are the wonder of Wonder itself.

Was the cave's mouth finer even than Surasā's body, that entering it should be hard for you?

O Bhava! With your utterly astonishing plays you fill the world with wonder. And what great matter is it to astonish the world? — rather you astonish the very god who presides over Wonder itself. O God, was that cave's mouth finer even than the body of Surasā, mother of serpents, that entering it should have been hard for you? || 31 ||

(32)

*tvaṁ māruteḥ rūpa samāśritaḥ kṛte antaḥ praviṣṭaḥ surasā mukhe śiva!
guhā praveśaṁ tava kiṁ sudurlabhaṁ kṛtaṁ tvayā yaṁ manuḥjāṁ samīpe.*

You who took the form of the wind's son, O Śiva, and entered within Surasā's mouth —
was entering a cave hard for you, that you did it before the eyes of men?

O Śiva! It was you who, in the Tretā age, took the form of Śrī Hanumān and entered the mouth of Surasā. What hard matter was it for you to enter this cave, that you did it before the eyes of men? Your power is above all the truths of yoga, and beyond the reach of speech and mind. || 32 ||

(33)

*āśid apūrvam tava siddha pīṭhaṁ tatraiva taptam tapasā kalevaram,
śatābdikānām tritayam bhava tvayā ekāsane naiva kṣaṇārdha tulyam.*

That was your seat of perfection in a former time, and there your body was heated with austerity;
three hundred years, O Bhava, you passed on a single seat, and they were as half a moment.

On being asked about this cave, you told them that it had formerly been your seat of perfection; that in this cave you had sat in samādhi on a single seat for three hundred years, and had passed them as though they were half a moment. || 33 ||

(34)

*kām kām avasthām tava varṇayāmi narākṛte śaṅkara! yā kṛtā tvayā,
narāḥ sva chittaṁ paritarpayanti tvadīya līlā rasa varṇanena.*

Which of your states shall I describe, O Śaṅkar in human shape, of all that you have done?
Men content their own minds by telling over the juice of your play.

O Sadāśiva, wearing the dress of a man! How far shall I describe the matchless plays you have performed? Even now worldly men gladden their own minds by telling of the highest sweetness of your plays. || 34 ||

(35)

*asi tvaṁ śaṅkaraḥ sāksāt śiva rūpī sanātanaḥ,
bharaṇe poṣaṇe chaiva saṁhāre cha sadā rataḥ.*

You are Śaṅkar himself, eternal, wearing the form of Śiva,
ever given to sustaining and nourishing, and to the drawing back of all.

O Mṛtyuñjaya! You are Śaṅkar himself, the eternal storehouse of the highest blessing, who by your supremely divine power are given to the sustaining and nourishing of this world, and to its withdrawal. || 35 ||

(36)

*udīchī dik kântāre yajñāḥ sviṣṭā kṛtās tvayā,
svayaṁ hotā cha havyaṁ cha svayaṁ cha havya vāhanaḥ.*

In the forests of the northern quarter you made sacrifices, well offered:
yourself the priest, yourself the oblation, and yourself the bearer of the oblation.

O you who wear the moon at your crest! In the most holy forests of Uttarākhaṇḍ you accomplished great sacrifices, in which you yourself took the form of the priest who offers, and yourself the material to be offered, and yourself the very fire of the sacrifice. || 36 ||

(37)

*yajñeṣu te deva samāgatāḥ surāḥ svarūpavantas tava rūpam īkṣitum,
hutāśīnaṁ te kara saṁchryutaṁ jalaṁ nipīya tṛptāḥ gata sādhasā 'bhavan.*

To your sacrifices, O God, the gods came in their own forms to behold your form;
and drinking the water that fell from your hand into the fire, they were satisfied and their fear was gone.

O God! Whenever you performed a sacrifice according to the rite in the forest country of Uttarākhaṇḍ, then, at the chanting of the mantras, the gods who preside over those mantras came and were made glad by beholding your form, so full of blessing and of the highest good.

O most glorious one! Many a time the oblation of water given from your lotus hand took the form of ghee, and from it the flames of the fire rose several cubits high; and drinking that water-turned-ghee, charged with mantra, the gods came to the highest satisfaction and were made free of fear. || 37 ||

(38)

*bahūnām makha kāryāṇām āhartā vidhi pūrvakam,
śivaḥ śaṅkarakāḥ śrīmān tvam āsīr bho trilochana!*

The performer of many works of sacrifice, according to the rite —
Śiva, Śaṅkar, the glorious: that were you, O three-eyed one.

O three-eyed one! You are Śiva himself — the accomplisher of many great sacrifices according to the rite, the worker of the highest blessing, adorned with beauty and with sovereignty. || 38 ||

(39)

*tvam eva śakto nanu deva! loke pañchāgni tapasaḥ suyathārtha rūpam,
prakāśitum naiva tvad anya ko 'pi śakto yathārthaṁ tapasaḥ svarūpam.*

You alone, O God, were able in this world to show forth the true form of the austerity of the five fires;
no other than you was able to show its true form.

O God! In this world yours alone was the power to show forth the true form of the austerity of the five fires. No other than you has been able to show forth the true form of this austerity. || 39 ||

(40)

*anye chaturṇām jvalatām havirbhujām madhye sthitāḥ pañchama sūrya māninaḥ,
tvadīya rūpaṁ nayanaiḥ sumaṅgalaṁ sāksāj janair netra chaṣair nipītam.*

Others stand in the midst of four blazing fires, counting the sun for the fifth;
but that most blessed form of yours men drank with the very cups of their eyes.

Other ascetics who have practised the austerity of the five fires until now have kept only this method: they heated four fires of *dhūnī* on the four sides of their body, and counting the sun for the fifth fire, they performed the austerity keeping their eyes fixed unblinking upon the sun. That was the form of the austerity of the five fires.

But O Sadāśiva, your form as you gave yourself to the austerity of the five fires was utterly wonderful; thousands of men and women drank it with their own eyes and received bliss. The description of that blessed form is this — || 40 ||

(41)

*hiraṇya keśaṁ jvalanopamaṁ prabho! saptaiḥ sva jihvair jvalanena liḍham,
subhāsvaram jyotimayaṁ manojñaṁ chitā sthitaṁ vismayam ādadhānam.*

Gold-haired, like the fire itself, O Lord, licked by the fire with its seven tongues;
blazing, made of light, enchanting, seated upon the pyre, filling all with wonder.

Glorious with hair ablaze with a beauty like gold; brilliant as the fire-god himself; wrapped on every side by the fierce flames of the fire with its seven tongues; utterly blazing, the very form of light, most beautiful, seated upon the pyre of fire, and filling the eyes of the onlookers with complete wonder — that most divine form of yours was bowed to by thousands of beholders in the country of the northern road. || 41 ||

(42)

*yais tvayi pītaṁ nayanābhirāmaṁ vismāpanaṁ jyotirmayaṁ sudivyaṁ,
rūpaṁ trilokasya susṛṣṭita kāraṇaṁ śaṁ kārakaṁ śaṅkara rūpa dhāraṇam.*

Blessed are they who drank in you that delight of the eyes, that wonder-working, light-filled,
most divine
form — the cause of the fair creating of the three worlds, the maker of blessing, bearing the
form of Śaṅkar.

O figure of the highest blessing! Blessed are those men who beheld that fairest form of yours, light-filled, most divine and a delight to the eyes, which astonishes the eyes of the world. That divine form of yours was the one cause of the creating of the three worlds. For the world it is the maker of blessing — that is, the worker of good — and the very form of Śaṅkar. || 42 ||

(43)

*kathaṁ vayaṁ tvāṁ manujaṁ vidāmaḥ indrānujaṁ vā vidhi rūpa dhāriṇam,
yogeśvaras tvaṁ nija yoga māyā prabhāva vyaktau bhuvalokam āgataḥ.*

How shall we know you — as a man, or as Indra's younger brother, or as one wearing
Brahmā's
form?

You are the lord of yoga, come to this world of earth to make plain the power of your own
yoga-Māyā.

O God of gods! In what way are we to take you — for a human king of yogis, for Viṣṇu himself, or for Brahmā? You are Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva himself, the Lord of yoga and of yogis, who out of mercy toward creatures caught in the terrible Kali age comes to adorn and bring to its fruit this world of earth, in order to show forth the power of his yoga-Māyā. || 43 ||

(44)

*śaṅkā na samprati manāg api bādhate bhoḥ! śaṅkā śaśāṅkita madīya hṛdantarāle,
kailāsa kandara vihāra rasārdra chittaḥ sākṣāt śivaḥ śiva rataḥ śiva śaṅkaras tvam.*

No doubt now troubles me in the least, nor the doubt that had shadowed the inward of my heart:

your mind moist with the juice of wandering in Kailāś's caves, you are Śiva himself, given to Śiva — Śiva Śaṅkar.

O Maheśvara! Many a time even Śrī Brahmājī falls into doubt about recognizing that most blessed divine form of yours. It is therefore only natural that doubt should sometimes arise in the human mind, which he fashioned. But O Lord, now that the knowledge of your real and unearthly nature has come, there is not the least doubt at this time about your being Śaṅkar in visible shape. It is a firm certainty: you, whose heart is made moist by wandering daily in the caves of Kailāś, are beyond doubt Śaṅkar himself, Sadāśiva, given to his own form as Śiva. || 44 ||

(45)

*“manasā phalegī” ti vadan maheśa!
tvaṁ mānase me sutarām ramasva;
umā sameto hṛdaye vasan prabho!
kṣamasva śambho! mama vākya śāṭhyam.*

Saying “manasā phalegī,” O Maheśa —
take your delight fully in my mind;
dwelling in my heart together with Umā, O Lord,
forgive, O Śambhu, the impudence of my speech.

The nectar-flowing divine word of Śrī Sadgurudevjī Mahārāj is this: “Bābā, manasā phalegī” — “Bābā, it will bear fruit according to the mind.” Speaking that divine sentence, O Maheśvara, be enthroned and take your delight gladly in the temple of my mind, together with Umā, your most fortunate consort. And if in a dull-witted man like me there has been some impudence in describing your most secret acts — you are an ocean of mercy and forgiveness; be gracious and forgive them. || 45 ||

(46)

*śivo ‘si śiva gata prāṇaḥ śivātmā śiva rūpa dhṛk,
rāma kṛṣṇau nara tanuṁ draṣṭuṁ mānava rūpa dhṛk.*

You are Śiva, your life gone into Śiva, your soul Śiva's, wearing Śiva's form;
and to behold Rām and Kṛṣṇa in their human bodies you wore a human form.

O God! You are Śiva himself, and your life has gone into Śiva. You are the very soul-essence of Śrī Sadāśiva, and you are enthroned in the most beautiful form of Śrī Śiva himself. || 46 ||

(47)

avatāra vidhānam cha yuktaṁ tava sadāśiva!
avatīrṇe bhuvam viṣṇau sveṣṭe priyatame vibhau.

Your taking of a descent is fitting too, O Sadāśiva,
when Viṣṇu, your own beloved and all-pervading, came down upon the earth.

O Sadāśiva! Your taking a descent is only fitting; for when your most beloved, the all-pervading Lord Viṣṇu himself, took a descent and came to bring the earth to its fruit, then your coming too was only fitting. || 47 ||

(48)

nara rūpeṇa avatīrṇau rāma kṛṣṇau punaḥ punaḥ,
draṣṭum narākṛtiḥ sākṣāt siddheśa! śaṅkara! kṛteḥ.

Rām and Kṛṣṇa came down again and again in human form;
and to behold them you took human shape, O Siddheśa, O Śaṅkar.

O ender of desire! When Śrī Rām and Śrī Kṛṣṇa came down in the fair form of men, then, to obtain the bliss born of beholding the sweetness of their most divine forms, O Śaṅkar, you too came in the form of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar. || 48 ||

(49)

tvaṁ sākṣāch cha veṣeṇa yogīśvara svarūpa dhṛk,
pūrṇam raṁśair mukhaṁ pūrṇāṁ kṛtārthaṁ yasi śaṅkara!

In your very dress you bear the form of the lord of yogis,
and with your full parts you bring the full earth to its fruit, O Śaṅkar.

O Śaṅkar! In the dress of a man you take on the form of the very lord of yogis, and with your full parts you bring to its fruit, by the touch of your holy feet, this earth rich in wealth and grain. || 49 ||

(50)

namaḥ śivāya śāntāya śiva tattvāya te namaḥ,
śiva saṅkalpa yuktāya siddhāśrama nivāsine.

Salutation to Śiva, to the quieted one; salutation to you, the truth of Śiva;
to him who is joined with the auspicious resolve, the dweller in Siddhāśram.

O quieted Sadāśiva, dweller in Siddhāśram! You alone are the truth of Śiva in this world; and to you, Sadāśiva, ever joined with the good resolve for the welfare and blessing of the world, salutation again and again. || 50 ||

(51)

dayāṁ kuru dayālutvāt dayā dāna paro bhava,
kṛpālos te kṛpāṁ prāpya tareyus tāvakāḥ janāḥ.

Show mercy, out of your mercifulness; be given to the gift of mercy;
that your own people, winning the grace of you the gracious, may cross over.

O ocean of mercy! Because you are the foremost among the merciful, grant to me also the alms of mercy; so that your devotees, the supreme vessels of your grace, having won the grace of one so supremely gracious as you, may cross the ocean of the world with ease. || 51 ||

(52)

*bhasmendu kharpara phaṇīśa phaṇā kirīṭi vyāghrāmbārā jina vibhūṣita sarva gātrah,
pāśa trīśūla asi charma pināka pāṇiḥ prāṇeśvaro 'vatu sadā bhava bhīma kāyaḥ.*

Ash and moon and skull-bowl, crowned with the hood of the lord of serpents,
his every limb adorned with the tiger's hide and the deerskin;
in his hands noose and trident, sword and shield and Pināka —
may the lord of life, Bhava of the fearful body, protect us always.

May that lord of life, Śiva Śaṅkar, the helmsman of the whole universe — who has kept the anointing of the ash of the pyre upon his fair body; upon whose brow the digit of the moon sits in the highest loveliness; upon whose head is set the crown of the most lovely serpent's hood; in whose hand the skull-bowl is glorious; whose every limb is adorned with the tiger's hide and the black antelope's skin; whose enchanting hands are arrayed with the most divine weapons, noose and trident and sword and shield and Pināka — may that Śrī Śaṅkar of the fearful body, ever given to the rescue of the afflicted, protect the world always by his grace. || 52 ||

(53)

*śiva rūpa guro nityaṁ vasa hṛdaye nirantaram,
tvayā vinā 'smin hṛdaye naiva śāntiḥ kathañchana.*

O guru in the form of Śiva, dwell for ever in my heart without a break;
for without you there is no peace in this heart by any means.

O Śrī Gurudev in the form of Śrī Sadāśiva! Be enthroned daily in my heart and adorn it. Without your sight and your dwelling, the highest peace can never dwell in this heart. Therefore set your form enthroned in it and make it a storehouse of the highest peace and bliss. || 53 ||

(54)

*namo namas te 'stu mahānubhāva! namo namaḥ śaṅkara mūrti dhāriṇe,
namo namaḥ tvāṁ hṛdayāravinde kṛtādhivāsāya mahendra mūrte.*

Salutation, salutation to you, O greatly glorious one; salutation to him who bears the figure of Śaṅkar;
salutation, salutation to you who have made your dwelling in the lotus of the heart, O figure of Mahendra.

O greatly glorious Śrī Siddhādhīśa Sadgurudev! I bow to you again and again. To you, wearing the form of Śaṅkar, whose nature is Śiva, my salutation again and again. To you, Śrī Sadgurudev, enthroned in the lotus of my heart in the form of Śrī Mahendra, salutation again and again. || 54 ||

(55)

*śrī viṣṇo hṛdayāravinda nihitaṁ guptaṁ manojñaṁ dhanam
tasyaivāśu kṛpā kaṭākṣa sulabhaṁ prāptaṁ janair bhūtale;
labdhvā bhūtala vāsino nija hṛdas toṣāvadhi grhyatām
dāridryaṁ duḥkha saṅkaṭaṁ yama bhayaṁ adyāpi kiṁ sthāsyati.*

That hidden and enchanting treasure laid up in the lotus of Śrī Viṣṇu's heart
has been made easy of winning by that same one's swift glance of grace, and men on earth
have
got it.

Having got it, O dwellers upon the earth, take of it to your heart's full content:
will poverty, or the strait of sorrow, or the fear of Death stand any longer now?

That most secret and most enchanting heap of jewels — the mystery-filled acts of Śrī Śaṅkar, kept
safe in the lotus of Śrī Viṣṇu's heart — has by the gracious glance of that same divine power been
made most easy of winning for the dwellers of this earth, in the form of this hymn.

That is: by the using of this unspendable treasure, poverty will be destroyed root and branch, and
the very name of sorrow cannot remain; and since my worshipful Lord is called Mṛtyuñjaya, the fear
of untimely death will also depart. **Plunder this store! Plunder it!! Plunder it!!!** — or else you
will have to go on wandering here and there through birth after birth. || 55 ||

(56)

*siddha siddheśvarādhīśa charitraṁ paramādbhutam,
saṁsāra sāgare magna duḥkhitānām plavaṁ mahat.*

The acts of the sovereign of the perfected and their lords are wholly wonderful:
a great raft for the sorrowful, sunk in the ocean of the world.

These acts of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar, Śrī Sadgurudev, are utterly wonderful. For creatures sunk
and sorrowing in the ocean of the world, this is a most beautiful boat, kept safe and hidden, that
cleaves the sea of becoming. Seat yourselves in it and range the ocean of the world without fear, and
be overwhelmed with bliss in this life. || 56 ||

(57)

*śrī śambhoś charaṇāravinda chalitā sandeha grāhānvitā
śraddhā bhakti sukūla maṇḍita jalair bhāvāmṛtair vāhinī;
mūrdhni sve vidhṛtā mahendra giriṇā siddheśa pādāṅkīte
śrī śambhoś charitāmṛtaiḥ suvimalā gaṅgā jagat pāvanī.*

Flowing from the lotus feet of Śrī Śambhu, with doubts for its crocodiles,
its banks adorned with faith and devotion, its waters the nectar of feeling;
borne upon his own head by the mountain Mahendra, marked with the feet of the lord of the
perfected —
a Gaṅgā made wholly clear by the nectar of Śrī Śambhu's deeds, and purifying the world.

This heavenly Gaṅgā, which is the form of Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar, has come forth from the lotus
feet of Śrī Sadāśiva. The doubts natural to human nature are the crocodiles in it, and men of doubting

minds and no faith become their prey. Faith and devotion are the fair banks of this Gaṅgā, and the flow of its most beautiful water, which is feeling, runs on without ceasing like nectar.

As Śrī Bhāgīrathī is first borne by Lord Śrī Śaṅkar and thereafter borne by the Himālaya, so this most holy Jāhnavī has been borne upon his own head by Śrī Mahendradev, the unmoving mountain marked with the holy feet. || 57 ||

(58)

*yasyāḥ darśana mātrena pumān pāvanatām vrajet,
paṭhana śravaṇābhyām tu bhukti mukti pradāyinī.*

By the mere sight of her a man goes to purity;
and by reading and hearing she gives both enjoyment and release.

There is one further distinction in this most holy Gaṅgā: that by the mere sight of her a man becomes utterly pure; and by reading and hearing her according to the rite, both things — enjoyment and liberation — come at once into the hand. || 58 ||

(59)

*śivasya nāma mātrena pāpa puñjaṁ praṇaśyati,
kiṁ punar darśanaṁ sparśaṁ pāda vandana sevaniḥ.*

By the mere name of Śiva the heap of sins is destroyed —
how much more by his sight, his touch, and the worship and service of his feet.

By the mere uttering of the name of Śrī Sadāśiva, joined with every splendour, the whole heap of sins is destroyed. What then can be said of his sight, his touch, of bowing at his feet and of serving him! || 59 ||

(60)

*haṁho trīnetra! madanāntaka! mūrtinātha! nātho 'si śaṅkara charāchara viśva goptā,
gaṅgā taraṅga bhara śobhita bhāla mālīn! bhaṅgo taraṅga mudito vasa mānase 'smin.*

Ho, three-eyed one! Ender of desire! Lord of forms! You are the lord, O Śaṅkar, the guardian
of
all that moves and does not move.

O you whose brow is glorious with the flood of Gaṅgā's waves — glad with the wave of *bhāṅg*,
dwell in this mind of mine.

O three-eyed one! O ender of desire! O sole master of all sovereignty — you are the one protector of the whole creation. O God, god of gods, whose brow is glorious with the auspicious wave-water of Śrī Gaṅgājī! Be gracious, and made fully glad by the wave of *bhāṅg*, be enthroned in this temple of the mind and set it ablaze. || 60 ||

(61)

*dhyānaṁ chitra paṭe kṛtvā dhyeya mūrteḥ guroḥ sadā,
susnātaḥ sukrto gāyan labhate sarva maṅgalān.*

Meditating always upon the picture of the guru's figure, the object of meditation,
he who has bathed well and does good, and sings, obtains every blessing.

The man who, having bathed daily at dawn, meditates upon the picture of the enchanting figure of Śrī Sadgurudev — whose holy body is most beautiful and fit for meditation — and sings this hymn, obtains in a single moment all the desires of his heart. || 61 ||

(62)

*paṭhanāt pāṭhanād vāpi śravaṇāt śrāvaṇāt tathā,
dinaiḥ katipayair eva karasthāḥ sarva siddhayaḥ.*

By reading, or by having it read; by hearing, or by having it heard —
in a few days all the attainments are in his hand.

By the daily reading of this divine hymn according to the rite, and by having it read; by hearing it, or by having it heard — in a few days only, all the attainments come of themselves. || 62 ||

(63)

*gajāśva pattī dhana dhānya sampadaḥ, putra prapaurā bharaṇādi sampadaḥ,
yaśaḥ kalatram vijayaḥ pade pade stavasya pāṭhāt kṣaṇa mātrato bhavet.*

Elephants, horses, servants, wealth and grain and every substance;
sons and grandsons and great-grandsons, ornaments and splendours;
fame, a faithful wife, victory at every step —
from the reading of this hymn, all these come in a single moment.

Elephants, horses, servants, wealth, grain and all substance; sons, grandsons and great-grandsons; ornaments and splendours; fame, a wife faithful to her husband, victory at every step — all this sovereignty is obtained in a single moment by the reading and the pondering of this hymn. || 63 ||

(64)

*manorathāḥ ye suvichāritāḥ janaiḥ achintitāś chāpi phalanti sampadaḥ,
sadāśivasyāpi parā dayā sphureṭ yathā nara vāñchita siddha bhāg bhavet.*

The desires men have well considered, and the riches they never thought of, alike bear fruit;
so may the highest mercy of Sadāśiva shine out, that a man become a sharer in the attainment
he
longed for.

The desires well considered by men are indeed fulfilled; but the wonder is that even those desires and splendours which a man cannot so much as think of in his heart come to him at once. In a short time a man becomes a vessel of the supreme grace of Śrī Sāmba Sadāśiva, by which he becomes wholly able to obtain everything he longs for, and attainments beyond the reach even of his understanding and mind. || 64 ||

(65)

*yasya kṛpā kaṭākṣeṇa bhāsate bhāratī mukhe,
tasyaiva nāma mudrāyāḥ ankaṁ padyeṣu vidyate.*

By whose glance of grace the goddess of speech shines upon the mouth —
the seal of that same one's name is set in these verses.

By the supreme grace of Śrī Gurudev — blessed in his very name, greatly glorious, joined with all wealth and attainment, Sadāśiva in visible form — the goddess Śrī Sarasvatī dwells upon the tongue of a worldly creature such as I. And the seal of the letters of that same greatly powerful and splendid one's name is enthroned in every verse. Therefore these verses, being stamped with his seal, are possessed of every power, like a royal command. || 65 ||

(66) – (67)

*haiḍākhānastha samrājo śivasya susabhājuṣā,
vipreṇa viṣṇudattena alavara nagara vāsinā;
tathaiva toṣa kāmēna likhitā tava śāsanāt,
kaṭukā madhurā vāpi stutis tvām suprasādayet.*

By the brahmin Viṣṇudatt, who attends the court of Śiva, the emperor abiding at Haiḍākhān,
and who dwells in the city of Alwar,
and out of the longing to please you, this praise was written at your own command:
whether it be bitter or sweet, may it make you gracious.

O Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadāśiva, emperor abiding at Haiḍākhān! The brahmin poet of your court, Viṣṇudatt Miśra — who in this birth am a dweller of the city of Alwar in Rājasthān — O God, out of the longing to please you, and by your own revered command, has made this hymn of praise.

O lord of the whole creation! Whether this praise be sour or sweet, my God, hear it and be pleased; for this servant too is yours, and this praise is yours, and you yourself are the hearer. A thing in which one's own belonging enters appears most beautiful even if it be bad. Be wholly pleased, then, by the hearing of this hymn: this is my one prayer. || 66 – 67 ||

(68)

*tavaiva gītasya prabho tvam eva jñāsi tattvaṁ surasaṁ mahatvam,
ahaṁ tu te lekhaṇa yantravad vibho! kathaṁ vijāne tava rūpam adbhutam.*

Of your own song, O Lord, you alone know the truth, the sweetness and the greatness;
and I am but your writing-machine, O all-pervading one — how should I know that wonder-
ful form
of yours?

O Lord! The greatness, the distinction and the fair juice of your song of praise, you alone know fully.

O boundless one! I am only like your writing-machine. As a man who types can write with his typewriter whatever he pleases, just so whatever was your own wish, that alone you had written through this human instrument.

Where in me is there strength enough to recognize your utterly wonderful and matchless form? Whatever little I have been able to know is all your grace alone; on that alone is my trust and my refuge. Otherwise I am wholly helpless, weak and without understanding. || 68 ||

(69)

*kvāhaṁ manda matiḥ kṣudraḥ kva lokottarāḥ guṇāḥ,
kenādyāvadhi gaṇitāḥ kiṁ pārthivāḥ paramāṇavaḥ.*

Where am I, dull of wit and trifling, and where are virtues beyond the world?
Who to this day has counted the atoms of the earth?

O ocean of compassion! Where am I — dull of understanding, utterly trifling, a heap of sins — and where the singing of your unearthly, matchless and undying virtues? What strength have I to describe your virtues and your acts in full? Has any mathematician to this day been able to make a true count of the atoms of the earth? When the counting of the atoms of the material earth is altogether impossible, then the counting of your unearthly and measureless divine virtues by a creature subject to death is utterly impossible. || 69 ||

(70)

*aho bhāgyaṁ maho bhāgyaṁ kūrmaṁchala vanaukasām,
yair nipīto netra chaṣaiḥ śaṅkaraḥ siddha rūpavān.*

O the fortune, the great fortune of the forest-dwellers of Kūrmāñchal,
who drank with the cups of their eyes Śaṅkar in the form of the perfected one!

How far shall we tell the good fortune of the men and women dwelling in the country of Kumāñ, who tasted in full with the cups of their eyes the sweetness of the form of Śrī Ṭhākura, Siddha Siddheśvar himself, and so made their birth fruitful! || 70 ||

(71)

*charaṇārpita sarvasvo viṣṇo charaṇa sevakaḥ,
chañcharikāyatām viṣṇuḥ śrīmatām pāda padmayoḥ.*

He who has offered his whole substance at your feet, Viṣṇu, the servant of your feet —
let this Viṣṇu become a bee at the lotus feet of the glorious one.

This Viṣṇudatt, servant at the feet of Śrī Lakṣmaṇjī Mahārāj, has offered up at your holy feet his body, his mind, his wealth, his whole substance. Now be gracious and make him a bee that tastes the juice of your holy lotus feet, so that love for your lotus feet may go on taking a daily newness and increasing. || 71 ||

(72)

*śaṅkāri śaṅkara mano 'haṅkāri me ḍamarū ṭaṅkārato vaśanaya,
jhaṅkāri me 'bhayaṅkāri rave bharatu bhaṇḍārakaṁ mama grhe;
bhaṅgā taraṅga bhara bhāraṁ gato harasi duḥkha bhāraṁ mad deśām,
gaṅgā taraṅga rati saṅgāt tato utkaṭa saṅgād bibhṛtu mām.*

O Śaṅkar, destroyer of doubt — bring this arrogant mind of mine under your sway with the beat
of your ḍamarū;
let your ringing, fear-dispelling sound fill the storeroom in my house;
gone into the fullness of the wave of bhāṅg, you take away the load of sorrow from my country;
and by your glad union with the waves of Gaṅgā, sustain me.

O Śaṅkar, wishing-tree of blessing! This mind of mine is exceedingly arrogant; bring it under your sway with the consciousness-giving beat of your *ḍamarū*, which carries a man across the ocean of sound-Brahman. O giver of fearlessness! Let your sweet-sounding, ringing note fill the storeroom in the houses of us worldly creatures with wealth and grain.

O God! Full of the intoxication of the wave of *bhāṅg*, you are pleased in a single moment and take away the load of sorrow from pitiable and afflicted creatures like me. O Nīlakaṇṭh! Made glad by the unceasing embrace of the most holy and cool waves of Śrī Gaṅgājī, be gracious to feed and sustain me. || 72 ||

(73)

haṁho yogīndra rāja chatura ula guṇanidhe jñāna vāpī suhaṁsa!
vipro 'haṁ hīna dīno bahu maṇi nikaraiḥ ratna sandheya hīnaḥ;
śabdārthyaṁ tvat pradattaṁ maṇi gaṇa nichayaṁ yad bhūtaṁ māmakīnam,
no tvām hāra mālām sva ruchi vilāsitām arpaye tāvakīnām.

Ho, king of the lords of yogis, treasury of virtues, fair swan on the pool of knowledge!
 I am a brahmin, poor and abject, without heaps of gems or store of jewels to string;
 but the mass of jewels that is word and meaning, which you yourself gave me and which be-
 came
 mine —
 from these I offer you this garland, strung after my own liking, and it is yours.

O matchless treasury of virtues, Śrī Yogeśvar! You are the most beautiful swan, made glad by wandering night and day in that lake which is knowledge. To describe your unearthly, divine and matchless songs of virtue is most hard for a man.

I am a poor and abject brahmin. Whence should heaps of jewels and stores of precious gems come to me? I am busy night and day only in the keeping of my household; costly gems and the rest are wholly beyond my reach.

Yes — that unspendable store of gems and jewels which is the word, which you gave me by raining down your matchless grace, is my highest and most unearthly and divine wealth. And this fair garland-creeper, lovingly strung from the mass of gems and jewels that is the word, sprung from that store, and which I have made and woven according to my own liking — because it was accomplished by the power you gave, it is yours alone. This garland of yours I offer for the adorning of your own heart: *tvadīyaṁ vastu govinda! tubhyam eva samarpaye* — “your own thing, O Govinda, I offer to you alone.” O God of gods, this thing of yours is offered with reverence into your own most holy service. Wear it, and be gracious to make me glad. || 73 ||

(74)

śrī mahendrasya pādābja sevanāl labdha chakṣuṣā,
sadguros toṣa kāmēna svāntaḥ sukhābhilāṣayā;
stava rājasya sampūrṭiḥ śivarātrau kṛtā mayā.

With eyes won by the service of Śrī Mahendra's lotus feet,
 out of the longing to please the Sadguru and out of the desire for happiness within,
 the completing of this king of hymns was made by me on Śivarātri.

Having won a clear sight from serving the holy lotus feet of Śrī Mahendra Svāmī Mahārāj, and to please Śrī Siddha Siddheśvar Sadgurudev and so content and bless my own soul, the completion of this most beautiful hymn was made on the Śivarātri of Vikram Samvat 2013 [February 1957]. The grace of Śrī Sadgurudev was received on Māgh Śukla Aṣṭamī; and beginning from that blessed day, the root hymn was fully composed by Phālgun Kṛṣṇa Trayodaśī. || 74 ||

(75) – (76)

*chatura brahma ravaṁ netrair mite vaikrama vatsare,
chaitre māsi site pakṣe navamyāṁ bhauma vāsare;
sampūrṇā ūrmilā ṭikā lakṣmaṇasya prasādataḥ,
śrī śaṅkara mude bhūyāt yāvach chandrārka medinī.*

In the Vikram year measured by “four, Brahmā, sound, eyes,”
in the month of Chaitra, in the bright fortnight, on the ninth day, on a Tuesday,
the Ūrmilā commentary was completed by the grace of Lakṣmaṇa:
may it be for the gladness of Śrī Śaṅkar as long as moon and sun and earth endure.

By the rule *aṅkānām vāmato gatiḥ* — “the figures run from the right” — this gives Samvat 2014. On Chaitra Śukla Navamī, a Tuesday — that is, on the most holy festival of Śrī Rām Navamī — this commentary named Śrī Ūrmilā was completed by the grace of Śrī Lakṣaṇlāl. May it go on gladdening the Lord Chandraśekhara, god of gods, Mahādev, Śrī Sadāśiva Bholā Bhaṇḍārī, as long as moon and sun and earth remain in the world. || 75 – 76 ||

Here ends the Bouquet of the Examination of the Secret Play in the Grove of Siddhāśram.

May it be an offering to Śrī Sadāśiva.

May it be auspicious.

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