

STOTRA ONE

The Pleasure of Devotion

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We praise the one who is filled with devotion,
Who meditates not nor recites by the rule,
And yet without any effort at all
Attains the splendor of Śiva.

Though my soul is young
Drinking the nectar of your devotion,
It is yet as one gone grey,
With hair whitened by the dust
Along this journey through the world.

Even the path of worldly living
Becomes blissful for the devotees
Who have obtained your blessing, O Lord,
And who live inside your realm.

When everything in the world is in your form,
How could there be a place
Not suitable for devotees?
Where in the world does their *mantra*
Fail to bear fruit?

Triumphant are they, intoxicated
With the celestial drink of devotion.
They are beyond duality
Yet retain you as “the other.”

Only those who are immersed
In the joy of fervent devotion
Know the essence, O Lord,
Of your boundless ocean of bliss.

You alone, O Lord, are the self of all.
And everyone naturally loves his own self.
Thus victorious becomes the one who knows
That devotion is inherent in all.

Lord! When the objective world has dissolved
Through a state of deep meditation,
You stand alone—
And who does not see you then?

But even in the state of differentiation
Between the knower and the known,
You are easily seen by the devotees.

Just as Devī,
Your most beloved, endless pool of bliss,
Is inseparable from you,
So may your devotion alone
Be inseparable from me.

The path of the senses is threefold,
Marked by pleasure, pain, and delusion.
For the devotee this is the path
That leads to your attainment.

The highest state of intellectual knowledge
Has none of the taste of the nectar
Of your devotion.
To me, O Lord, it is like sour wine.

Those who practice the exalted science
Of your devotion
Are the only ones who truly know
The essence of knowledge and ignorance alike.

May this vine of speech,
Rising steadily from the root,
Everywhere adorned with blossoms
And sprinkled with the nectar of devotion,
Yield for me fruit abundant with that sentiment.

“One should worship Śiva by becoming Śiva”
Is the old saying. But the devotees say,
“One should worship Śiva by becoming a devotee.”
For they can recognize your essence as nondual,
Even when it is in bodily form.

What for the devoted
Does not serve as an instrument
To attain identification with you?
And what, then, for the spiritually inferior,
Does not serve as an obstacle,
Leading to failure in spiritual attainment?

According to *yoga*, you are obtained
At particular times and in particular places.
This is deception!
Otherwise, how is it that you appear to devotees,
O Lord, under all conditions?

Pratyāhāra and similar practices
Have nothing to do with this unique attainment.
Even in what is merely the yogin's nonmeditative
state,
The devotees acquire complete union.

Neither *yoga* nor austerities
Nor ceremonial worship
Is recommended on this path to Śiva.
Here, only devotion is extolled.

Within and without, let determinate cognition cease,
Dispelled by the brilliant,
Glowing light of devotion.
Let even the name of anxiety be destroyed
So that I may have direct realization
Of the true nature of all things.

With the single word *Śiva*
Ever resting on the tip of the tongue,
The devotees can enjoy
Even the most complete array of savory delights.

Who else is to be counted
By those resting comfortably in the celestial bliss
Of the cool, pure, tranquil, sweet
Sea of the nectar of devotion?

Lord! Why should someone like me
 Not taste of the *mahaṣadhi* herb of devotion,
 Whose natural extract
 Is called liberation?

O Lord, the wise pray for those fortunes alone
 That nourish the capacity to delight
 In the bliss of your devotion.

They have experienced inexplicable bliss
 In a downpour of devotional nectar.
 Even should they fall,
 They will not become soiled
 With the mire of false attachments
 And other such things.

When it ripens, the vine of devotion
 Inherently bears fruits, called *siddhis*;
 These begin with *aṅimā* and other powers
 And culminate in liberation.

How wonderful it is that the mind, O Lord,
 In essence the seed of all suffering,
 When doused with the nectar of devotion
 Bears the magnificent fruit of beatitude.

STOTRA TWO

Contemplation of the All-Soul

May you be glorified, O Essence of Consciousness,
Appearing in many forms as Agni,
The moon, the sun, Brahmā, Viṣṇu,
The mobile and the immobile.

May you be glorified, O Mighty Fire,
Brilliantly lustrous from smearing the ashes
That remain of the universe,
Your sole oblation.

May you be glorified, O Mild One,
Smooth and brimming with the finest nectar,
O Terrible One who burns away
The entire universe.

May you be glorified, O Mahādeva,
O Rudra, Śaṅkara, Maheśvara,
O Śiva, Embodiment of the Mantra.

May you be glorified, O Fire of Śiva,
 O Dreadful One, who,
 Having absorbed the melting fat
 Of the pieces of the three worlds,
 Remain yet auspicious.

May the Lord be glorified,
 The mysterious Śambhu
 Whose only definition is that he is
 Devoid of all definitions.

Glory to the imperceptible Lord,
 The antithesis of the Vedas and the Āgamas
 And yet the true essence
 of the Vedas and the Āgamas.

Glory be to Śambhu,
 The sole cause of the universe
 And its only destroyer,
 Who takes worldly form
 And who transcends the world.

Glory be to Śambhu,
 Who is the consummate beginning, middle, and end,
 Who takes the form of beginning, middle, and end,
 Who is without beginning, middle, or end.

The utterance of your name even once
Produces the same effect
As several virtuous deeds.
May you be glorified, O Difficult of Attainment.

Homage to the One who revels always
With a band of ghosts
In moving and in nonmoving forms.
May you be glorified, O Skullbearer,
O Essence of Consciousness.

Homage to that wondrous Śambhu,
The Deluding One
Who is yet pure and clear;
The Hidden One
Who has yet revealed himself;
The Subtle One
Whose form yet takes the form of the whole universe.

May you be glorified, O Omnipotent One,
Whose many acts bewilder,
Whose play is to destroy the world
Maintained by Brahmā, Indra, and Visnu.

May you be glorified, O Hara,
Fathomless ocean

On whose shores the mere wanderer
Acquires your special powers.

Homage to Śambhu, resplendent lotus
Dwelling unsullied
In the midst of the world's thick mire
Of illusion.

Homage to the Auspicious One,
The Pure, the Protector, the Adorned Soul,
The Beloved, the Highest Truth,
The Best of all things.

Homage to Śambhu,
The One who is ever bound
Yet enjoys eternal liberation:
Who is beyond bondage and liberation.

In this vast expanse of the three worlds,
Whose whole essence is ludicrous,
You are the sole enjoyer of perpetual delight.
May you be glorified, O One without a Second.

May you be glorified, O Śarva,
Who are the essence of the "righthanded" path,
Who are the essence of the "lefthanded" path,
Who claim every sect
And no sect at all.

May you be glorified, O Deva,
Who can be worshiped in any manner
In any place
In whatever form at all.

May you be glorified, O Granter of Boons,
Who are served by those aspiring for liberation,
And whose boundless depths of beauty
Dispel all afflictions.

May you be glorified, O Lord,
Who forever fill the three worlds
With infinite beatitude,
Rejoicing in eternal celebration.

Homage to your terrifying sense-goddesses!
Whatever they enjoy
Is all in offering to you.

May you be glorified, inaccessible
Even to the long-haired sages.
But those endowed with the spirit of devotion
Embrace you without difficulty.

May you be glorified,
Vessel of the sweetest nectar,
Treasury of supreme liberation,
Attainable far beyond the farthest limits.

May you be glorified, O Form of the Great *Mantra*,
Cool and lucid,
Blessed with exquisite fragrance,
Brimming with the great nectar of immortality.

The great cloth
Representing your absolute oneness
Is full of the nectar of freedom
And has not a single spot of color.
Homage to your teachings, O Lord.

We praise the path of Maheśvara,
The thunderbolt against all doubts,
The fire of destruction
That destroys all misfortune,
The final dissolution
Of all things inauspicious.

May you be glorified, O Deva!
Homage! Adoration!
O Protector of the Whole Universe,
O Supreme Lord of the Three Worlds,
For refuge I come to you alone.

STOTRA THREE

The Gift of Affection

Homage to the miraculous Sambhu, who,
Transcending the two forms—the real and the
 unreal—
Of all that exists,
Constitutes the Third Form.

In this threefold universe of bondage
The only ones who are free,
Including the gods and the sages,
Are those who arise from your freedom.

They enjoy perfect happiness
Who have the unique elixir
Against the ills of the world:
The remembrance that the entire universe
Is inlaid with your form.

Whose white canopy is the self-illuminated moon,
 Whose fly-whisk is the stream
 Of the heavenly Gaṅgā—
 He alone is the Supreme Lord.

Bestow on me your glance
 Which radiates immortal nectar,
 Cool and pure
 Like a crescent of the moon.

Why, O Lord, do the drops of supreme knowledge
 That flow from the ocean of your consciousness-bliss
 Not have the delicious flavor
 Of immortal sweetness?

Whose heart
 Is not immersed in the delight of your nectar,
 O Lord,
 Has no heart at all.
 O Mighty One! He should be despised!

Whose heart
 Is united with you, O Lord,
 Alone is worthy of Śambhu's powers.

Meditation on you
 Washes away both delights and sorrows

As a river stream
Washes away high lands and low lands alike.

For those who feel no separation from you
And for whom you are dearer than their own souls—
What cannot be said
Of the abundance of their happiness!

I roar! Oh, and I dance!
My heart's desires are fulfilled
Now that you, Lord,
Infinitely splendid,
Have come to me.

In that state, O Lord,
Where nothing else is to be known or done,
Neither *yoga*
Nor intellectual understanding
Is to be sought after,
For the only thing that remains and flourishes
Is absolute consciousness.

Whose voice ever rings
With the eternal sound *Śiva*
Escapes spontaneously
The cruel grip of undefeatable, endless sorrows.

The “first person”
Is distinguished from the “second person”
And from the “third person” as well.
You alone are the Great Person,
The refuge of all persons.

O Lord of the Universe!
How lucky are your devotees,
Worthy of being adored by you.
For them, this turbulent ocean of the world
Is like a great pleasure-lake
For their amusement.

Those who delight in you
Long for nothing but to identify
With you completely.
How could worldly desires ever be requested!
For the devotees feel ashamed
Even in expressing the prayer:
“May you be revealed to me.”

“Higher than Me there is nothing,
Yet even then I practice *japa*.
This shows that *japa* is but
Concentration on absolute oneness.”

Thus you instruct your devotees
As well as the whole world
Through your *akṣamālā*.
In essence this is what constitutes *japa*.

The unreal is indeed different from the real,
And the real is indeed different from that, O Lord!
You are neither real nor unreal,
But the nature of real and unreal both.

Though you shine even more brilliantly
Than the rays of a thousand suns
And though you pervade all the worlds,
Still you are not visible.

In this unconscious world
You are the form of consciousness.
Among the knowable, you are the knower;
Among the finite, you are the infinite:
You are the highest of all.

“No more of these lamentations!”
I cry out loudly before the Lord,
For in spite of knowing all this
I am confused
And I stray from the right path.