

THE SHATARUDRIYAM - INTRODUCTION

The shatarudrIyam is called "yajushAm sArAm". As everyone knows, it consists of eleven anuvAkAs. Sayana, Bhatta BhAskara and Abhinava Shankara have commented on it, as everyone again knows. But what is not known as well is that Sri Vaishnava Acharyas have explained certain mantra-s of this section here and there.

How and why do certain mantra-s of the Rudram occur in other sections of the Veda? Let us first understand the origin of this section. Each part of the Veda has a particular reason for manifesting. The origin of the Rudram is explained in the Shatapatha brAhmaNa and MahAbhArata.

I had explained the origin story of Rudram from Shatapatha brAhmaNa here on twitter - <https://twitter.com/DefiledGod/status/1296885759471783936?s=19>

Those interested can read the full story in that link, but I will give a brief summary below (or, as brief as I can be; apologies for the length!).

Origin of the ShatarudrIyam

The shAnti parva of mahAbhArata contains the reason behind the manifestation of the Rudram mantrAs. After creating all beings, brahmA could not find a way to destroy them even after prolonged meditation. The beings of the world continued to multiply and increase. This frustration of brahmA led to anger and a loss of his composure from Yoga:

**yadAhamnAdhigachChAmi buddhya bahu vichArayan samhAram AsAmvrd
dhAnAmtato mAmkrodha Avisha**

[BrahmA: When I could not attain (that knowledge) of destroying all beings by my intellect (Yoga), even after long deliberation, then anger entered my mind]

That anger of brahmA, which is a manifestation of his rajo guNa, took on the appearance of a devastating fire which began to afflict all beings. Then, Rudra, the ruler of the embodied beings, who is sthAnu as he is firmly fixed in yoga and dharma, went to brahmA and appealed to him to control his anger as these beings did not deserve to be wiped out in this manner.

The MB goes on to say brahmA heeded Rudra's plea as follows:

**srutvA tu vachanaṃdevah. sthAnor niyatavAchmana. tejas tat svamñijagrAha
punar evAntar AtmanA**

**[Hearing SthAnu, BrahmA, of restrained speech (senses) and mind, himself
restrained the fire (of passion) in his mind.]**

Now look at the peculiar nature of this shloka. It says brahmA is already "niyatavAcmanaH" but restrained the fire of passion in his mind. How can one say he is already of controlled mind, when he was in the process of restraining his rajo guNa?

The Shatapatha BrAhmaNa takes over the narrative and fills in the gap. When the gods made this plea to brahmA (or, sthAnu on behalf of the gods), brahmA asked them to collect food for his mind. "Food" refers to knowledge of the form of veda mantra-s that brahmA can recite and contemplate on, to quell his rajo guNa or anger.

The devAs took mantra-s from different portions of the Veda scattered everywhere and arranged them into eleven anuvAkAs which ensured they formed a story or narrative when taken together. These were offered to brahmA. As he was reciting them and dwelling on their meanings while trying to control his anger, he is referred to in the MB shloka as having restrained speech and mind. "vAc" refers to all senses.

Thus, the ShatarudrIyaM of eleven anuvAkAs was originally a number of separate veda mantra-s scattered all over. Like bees collecting honey from different flowers, the gods collated them together to form a story.

This conjures a lovely picture - Imagine the resplendent brahmA sitting in Yoga, meditating and reciting Rudram from all 4 faces in a majestic voice(s), surrounded by all the devAs and riShIs with folded hands listening to him, while the entire Universe is burning from the fire of his anger!

The name "shatarudrIyaM" is also defined in the Shatapatha brAhmaNa 9.1.1.2 thus:

[They spoke, "Let us collect food (mantra-s) for that mind of brahmA, so we will appease it (render it sattva). They gathered food, by which the mind is appeased (Śantadevatya), and in so much as the mind is appeased by them,

it (those mantras) are called Śāntadevatya. Śāntadevatya is called indirectly the Śātarudrīya, for the gods like the indirect (expressions)]

The "ShatarudrIya" thus means "Related to the numerous (Shata) hankerings (rudrAs). The constant contemplations on unattainable sense objects in the mind are called the "rudrAs" as they make one weep - cause pain and anger. Thus the true name of this section is "Shantadevatya" as the mind is appeased by it.

For a detailed version of the story, refer the twitter posts in the link.

Intent of the ShatarudrIyaM

So, from this, we get the goal of the ShatarudrIyaM - its' aim is to quell the wayward senses and mind. Thus, rudrajapaM serves as an accessory to karma yoga (desireless action) and jnAna yoga (meditation on the self). It is thus recommended for all karma and jnAna yogIs aspiring for experience of the individual self, but is not a direct vidhi for mokSha. Vide the following pramANAs, KaivalyOpaniShad, which is entirely dedicated to the meditation on the self (jnAna yoga), recommends Rudram as an accessory:

yaH shatarudrIyamadhIte so.agnipUto bhavati surApAnAtpUto bhavati sa brahmahatyAyAH pUto bhavati sa suvarNasteyAtpUto bhavati sa kRRRityAkRRRityAtpUto bhavati tasmAdavimuktamAshrito bhavatyatyAshramI sarvada sakRRRidvA japet anena j~nAnamAtpnoti saMsArArNavanAshanam | tasmAdevaM viditvainaM kaivalyaM padamashnute kaivalyaM padamashnuta iti

[He who reflects on (the meaning of) the ShatarudrIya, he becomes purified from the fire of passion or rajo-guNa (so'gnipūto bhavati). He has become purified from the sin of drinking liquor, he has become purified from the sin of brahmahatya, he has become purified from the sin of stealing gold, he has become purified from the sin caused by performance of all activities prohibited by the Veda and the non-performance of activities prescribed by the Veda. He finds refuge in the individual self that is undiminishing in its' pure state (avimukta). He who is a Paramahansa Sannyasin (atyāśramī), should always recite it, or atleast once. By this he obtains knowledge of the individual self which destroys the ocean of samsara. Therefore, knowing the self in this manner, he attains the state of experiencing the self divested of

prakṛti (kaivalyaṃ padam). He attains the state of experiencing the self divested of prakṛti (kaivalyaṃ padam).]

jAbala upanishad, another one which focuses entirely on meditation on the individual self, again recommends the Rudram:

atha hainaM brahmachAriNa UchuH kiM japyenAmRRitatvaM brUhIti || sa hovAcha yAj~navalkyaH | shatarudriyeNetyetAnyeva ha vA amRRitasya nAmAni || etairha vA amRRito bhavatIti evamevaitadyAj~navalkyaH || 3||

[Then the brahmacharins asked Yājñavalkya, "Tell us, by recitation of which, does one obtain the state of the individual self (amṛtatvaṃ)? yAjnavalkya said, "By the ShatarudrIya, which comprises the names indicating the auspicious attributes of Brahman who is nectar (amṛta). By (reciting this), one attains the individual self that is immortal, or nectar as it is blissful (amṛta).]

In the sAttvika purANAs too, the same is implied as follows,

jitendrIyO jitakrodhastattvajnAna vichintaka....yogAbhyAsaratascasyA rudradhyAyI bhavet sadA (padma purANa ~ svarga khAnda)

[Being of controlled senses, having conquered anger, always contemplating on the knowledge related to the self called "tattva" as it is the Real....engaging himself in Yoga of the form of repeated contemplation of bhagavAn as the means to attain the self, one must recite the rudrAdhyAya.]

To attain the vision of the self, bhagavAn is the means. Hence, the rudrAdhyAya contains a praise of the appropriate kalyANa guNAs of bhagavAn that should be contemplated upon to realize the nature of the individual self.

surApaH svarNahArI cha rudrajApI jale sthitaH / rudraikAdashajapyAddhi pApanAsho bhaveddvijaiH / (~garuda purANa)

[The drinker of wine, the stealer of gold, can recite rudradhyAya as prAyascitta while situated in water. By a japa of rudrAdhyAya 11 times, all sins obstructing the knowledge of the nature of the self are destroyed]

These acts like drinking wine etc are due to wayward senses. Thus, the rudradhyAya of eleven anuvAkAs arose for quelling the eleven senses and mind.

The first anuvAka is solely dedicated to quelling the mind which is the chief, then each anuvAka is intended for each indrIya.

And there is also this pramANa:

**madyaM pItvA gurudArAn cha gatvA steyaM kRRitvA brahmahatyAM cha
kRRitvA | bhasmachChanno bhasmashayyAM shayAno rudrAdhyAyI muchyate
sarvapApaiH || -- shAtApatIya**

[On drinking liquor, illicit relation with the wife of one's preceptor, stealing (gold etc.), killing a brAhman (brahmahatti doSha), one shall become purified of all sins by becoming covered in ashes, sleeping in a bed made of ashes, and chanting the RudrAdhyAya.]

If you look at that instruction, it is again linking the Rudram to sins committed by wayward mind/indrIyAs. The idea is this - wearing of ashes prescribed there is simply an anga of a vrata called "pAShupata". As the Ishavasya Up. says the body ends in ashes, wearing bhasma signifies vairAgya - it means one considers this body as perishable. The chanting of rudrAdhyaya confers jnAna and is a separate component.

Some upAsakAs of bhagavAn are permitted to adorn ashes using the mantra "agnirIti bhasma..." etc. That is what Shiva himself does when he wears ashes, he has adopted that brahmavidyA as part of his upAsaNa.

As rudrAdhyAya is not a mokShopAya vidhi but a mere anga for indriya nigraha, it has not been given importance (rightly so) like the status of an upaniShath by vedAntAchAryAs. But it has been well explained by sri vaishnava AchAryAs in other contexts. The majestic definitions of AchArya rAmAnuja for karma and jnAna yogAs make it easy to discern what these sections talk about in metaphors from a mile away.

Now, what form and attributes of Brahman are conducive for quelling the senses? The gods collected mantra-s in such a way that the form and qualities described together by the 11 anuvAkAs match the goal of indriya-nigraha.

They chose the form of sankarShaNa, the lion-headed Lord. Because sankarShaNa is the presiding deity of the jIva, whose nature is to be realized. Because his key attributes are jnAna to guide the upAsaka and bala, the strength to destroy sins.

The attributes to be meditated on, however, belonged to another form, which was superimposed on SankarShaNa. Vide,

***daShendrIyAnanaM ghoraM yo manorajanIcharaM viveka sharajAlena samaM
nayati yogInAM***

[The Lord destroys the terrible rAkshasa that is the mind (Ravana) with ten heads formed by the ten senses of the Yogi by the use of the arrows that provide knowledge of discrimination (between body and self).] (~sAtvata samhita)

As rAma's deeds, actions and qualities were geared towards destroying the wayward mind and senses and attracting it to himself, his qualities became most appropriate for the Rudram.

Thus, the devata praised by the Rudram is the combined form of "rAghava-simha" - the form of sankarShaNa, superimposed with qualities of rAma. This form has been acknowledged in rAmAyaNa, where rAma compares himself to a lion many times and by AchAryAs like shrI vedAnta desikan in raghuVira gadyaM.

Relationship between ShatarudrIyaM and Shiva

Now, a question arises - Is not the popular opinion that Shiva is the referent of the Rudram? The answer - that is the opinion of Shaiva SiddhAntIs and ShaktAs and the Shaiva Agama-s like kAmika etc which prescribe it for temples run on those AgamAs, which are considered outside the Veda by both brahma sUtrAs and mahAbhArata. The VaidikAs/VedAntins have never considered it to be so, something that is reflected even in works of advaitins. Rudram is chanted during pradoSham for Lord narasimha in all viShNu temples and routinely otherwise.

Do not purANAs describe RudrAdhyAya as a Shiva-stuti? No. Only the purANAs like skanda, linga and shiva which are of limited authority as per Manu Smriti 12.95 and to be rejected when they conflict with the Veda.

What about ithihAsa? No ithihAsa attributes Rudram to Shiva. There are some sections in the MB that do so - these have been declared by commentators like Arjuna Mishra to be interpolations from Linga, vAyu purANAs etc and that they are not present in the actual palm leaf manuscripts. They also have not been quoted by any vidvAn prior to the 14th century, VaiShnava or Shaiva, which proves this. Furthermore, that they are interpolations is very clear by the fact that

certain shlokAs from irrelevant sections have been wrongly inserted as a praise of Shiva - only due to the limited (mis)understanding of those shlokAs by the interpolator. This is a very easy method to spot an interpolated section.

Even so, a logic exists for certian purANAs and the shaiva Agama-s making rudra the god of this section. The fact is, the 11 rudrAs are the presiding deities of the 11 senses as per BrihadAraNyaka Upanishad. Lord Shiva, the chief rudra, also grants knowledge of Brahman to upAsakAs, something associated with the mind again.

The aim of the Rudram is to quell the wayward mind. So, when certain purANAs and Agama-s "modify" the status of the mind-associated rudra devata to the status of Brahman for the sake of certain classes of people, those mantra-s like mahAmrityunjaya mantra and the rudram etc which are intended for appeasing the mind, are also "modified" by arthavAdAs and attributed to the mind-associated god. This modification is mere arthavAda and not to be taken as reality.

Even in these purANAs which attribute the Rudram to Shiva, the actual truth of the rudrAdhyAya being a means to quell the senses as opposed to shiva worship is revealed. For eg: In this section of the Skanda purANA,

<https://www.wisdomlib.org/hinduism/book/the-skanda-purana/d/doc423684.html>

This section says all the major vices like kAma, krodha etc became afraid due to rudradhyAya, implying its' true nature. Even in the midst of modifying this section of Veda to a praise of Shiva for the sake of some people, the essential nature of the fruit conferred by the Rudram has been subtly identified.

Neither is it entirely wrong to chant Rudram to please Shiva. In the shloka "alingo linga mUlam" in Linga purANa 2nd chapter, the tattva is indirectly conveyed that the Shiva Linga represents the embodied self, with the top part of the Linga representing the pure nature of the self and the pITha or base being the prakrti/body it is associated with. Shiva is the "sAdhaka rUpa" - his role is to assume forms to enlighten upAsakAs on how an ideal upAsaka should conduct himself. So all his forms reflect tattvAs of the meditating jIva, and the shiva linga is no different. It is for this reason that even these Shaiva purANAs recommend rudradhyAya, a section that is an accessory for meditation on the

self, for worship of the Shiva Linga. SankarShaNa is also the direct empowerer of Shiva.

If the shiva linga is consecrated in accordance with pAncharAtra or such which alone is validated by brahma sUtrAs and mahAbhArata, an upAsaka seeking knowledge of the self can indeed worship by abhisheka while chanting Rudram. The intent would be to reflect on the nature of the self as distinct from the body by seeing the Shiva Linga, pleasing Shiva who confers knowledge by chanting the Rudram which is a praise of sankarShaNa, the creator and upAsya mUrthy of Shiva. The srauta sUtrAs do seem to imply this type of worship for minor rites. However, there is no adhikArin for this today.

Thus, even the Shaiva purANAs do not recommend Rudram for Shiva merely because of the occurrences of names like "rudra, shiva etc" but because there is a connection in terms of the tattva-s (shiva, the mind, the self, sankarShaNa). This connection is thus exaggerated in the same manner as the status of Shiva is exaggerated in these purANAs. But to worship him independently of these tattva-s with Rudram is nonetheless "avidhi-pUrvakaM" as kriShNa says in the gIta. Just as Shiva only leads one to Brahman, the rudrAdhyAya leads one to the meditation on the self, which can in turn lead to mokShOpAya. Neither confer mokSha directly, but both are exaggerated as such by arthavAdAs in these purANAs.

Thus, in summary, the goal is to quell the senses and attain a vision of the self. The means to do this is to meditate on appropriate guNAs of lord rAma, superimposed on the form of sankarShaNa (the rAghava-simha avatAra). If we understand that Rudram is always geared towards this goal, then we know that whatever meanings it contains will be strait-jacketed within the tattva-s of karma and jnAna yoga-s. That way, we won't make many mistakes with interpretation as previous commentators did.

With that in mind, here is the first anuvAka.

1ST ANUVAKAM

Mantra 1

om namastE rudra manyava utOta ishavE nama:|

namastE astu dhanvanE bAhubhyAmUta tE nama:||

Meaning: O Rudra, destroyer of the disease of SamsArA! Salutations to your anger and also to your arrow signifying all weapons. Salutations to your bow and to your two arms

***samsArA rug drAvaka iti rudra:* - He is Rudra as he is the destroyer of the disease of SamsarA.**

The meditation is for the cessation of one's anger in the form of attachments clinging to the mind. Such attachments have led to transgressions being committed, which in turn has stirred the anger of bhagavAn.

That being the case, what is the medicine to calm one's senses, wean them away from sense objects and pacify bhagavAn? It is that very anger of his, directed at us when we commit sins.

Because anger of bhagavAn is a kalyANa guNa that is by nature purifying. Hence, by meditating on his anger, our own anger is quelled and by that, desire for sense objects ceases. When desire ceases, one does not harm himself or others in pursuit of objects beyond attainment. That leads to the knowledge of the self as the higher goal, which pleases bhagavAn and satiates him. Hence, the rk exhorts one to meditate on his anger.

The Being addressed here is Lord rAma. Why? Because the very anger of the Lord was directed at the Ocean King for not heeding his call. The Ocean is samsArA. The Samudra rAja is the jIva who is the sovereign of samsArA as all objects of enjoyment are for him. He indulges in pravrtti mArga of bhoga and invites the anger of the Lord.

As that incident has these inner meanings which are relevant to the current upAsaNa, the rk superimposes the anger of rAma at the ocean king, on the form of SankarshaNa for meditation.

evam uktvA dhanuSh pANiH krodha visphArita IkShaNah |babhUva rAmo durdharSho yuga anta agnir iva jvalan|| (~ vAlmiki rAmAyaNam)

[Speaking thus, Rama with his eyes made larger by anger and wielding a bow with his hand, became dreadful to look at, as a blazing fire at the end of the world.]

The salutation to his arrow, according to SrI ranga rAmAnuja muni, is in fact a metaphor of all weapons and ornaments like chakra, etc and not just the arrow. For he imparts knowledge by his weapons, vide,

daShendrIyAnanaM ghoraM yo manorajanIcharaM viveka sharajAlena samaM nayati yogInAM

[The Lord destroys the terrible rAkshasa that is the mind (Ravana) with ten heads formed by the ten senses of the Yogi by the use of the arrows that provide knowledge of discrimination (between body and self).] (~sAtvata samhita)

His anger is saluted to remove our own anger, ie, gain vairAgya. His arrow is saluted to gain jnAna.

Next, his bow is saluted why? viShNu sahasranAma has the term "sudhanvA" - he is the wielder of a beautiful bow that protects the devAs from asurAs. The idea now is that, having acquired vairAgya and jnAna, his bow will now eliminate our enemies which are the karmas obstructing a vision of the self, like it eliminates the asurAs by its' shower of arrows.

Finally, the rk salutes his arms. In the sahasranAma, we come across "vIrabAhu", "viShvabAhu" etc. The reason is, his arms uproot the evil-doers, they are decorated with glorious ornaments that appear beautiful for the devotees as they protect. Hence, the salutation is to the arms which perform the sum total of all the actions of his anger, bow, arrow - they protect the jIvAs.

Mantra 2

yA ta ishu: shivatamA shivaM babhUva te dhanuH|

shiva sharavyA yA tava tayA no rudra mRuDaya||

Meaning: O Rudra, One who makes us weep in joy! Your arrow signifying all weapons becomes the conferrer of knowledge of the self for me.

Your bow becomes the eliminator of my karmas for me, which were obstacles to meditation on the self.

Your divine form which confers protection of my mind concentrated with meditation on the self has become auspicious for me, as it sustains my meditation. By these, you make us, ie myself and my mind, rejoice (in the experience of the self).

Three times "shivatamA", "shivaM" and "shiva" have been used. The reason is because they each have 3 different meanings. This nuance has been missed by commentators like Sayana; for each confers auspiciousness differently.

The anger of bhagavAn is gone now, so that guNa is not meditated on. Now, his anugraha is being meditated on.

The weapons of bhagavAn confer the knowledge of the self and hence they are "shivatamA" - they confer the highest form of auspiciousness, as the self is the

highest goal under the domain of the Lord. "ishu" or arrow is signifying all his weapons as they are all a single class (suddha-sattva).

The bow eliminates the karmas and manifest enemies obstructing one from undertaking meditation on the self and this is another auspiciousness conferred.

As for "**sharavyA**" - "shara" is the arrow that according to mundakopaniShad is the mind concentrated in meditation on the Atman. "vyen" to cover - his divine body that confers protection in the form of being the means to sustain such meditation. He is meditated upon to attain the vision of the self. That has become "shivA" - yielded the fruit of the form of steadiness of meditation on the self.

Why "us" is used in "**tayA no rudra mRuDaya**"? The self trains his senses and mind to meditate on his nature, opposed to sense objects. Such upAsakAs often personify the mind, which is a close friend of the self even as per gIta 6.6. So, "us" means "me and my mind are both delighting in the self, due to your grace".

Earlier, "rudra" meant he destroyed samsAra dukhA. Now here, "rudra" means, "he makes one weep in joy at experiencing him". Meditation on bhagavAn's divine body is a means to experience the self, is implied here. That is made clear in the next rk, where the upAsaka meditates on the divine body of the Lord, as a means to attain the self.

Mantra 3

yA te rudra shivA tanUragOrApApakAshinI|

thayA nasthanuvA shantamayA girishanthAbhichAkasIhi||

Meaning: O Rudra (the destroyer of the disease of samsAra), the creator of giriSha, shine out to us with the body of Yours that is most agreeable on account of causing happiness (shantamayA), and which is auspicious (shivA), which is not terrible (aghorA) and which is of the nature of burning all sins (pApakAshini).

This mantra also occurs in the ShvetAsvatAra Upanishad (mantra 3.5). It has been commentated upon by srI ranga rAmAnuja muni.

Here, bhagavAn is once again called Rudra. In this case, he is again the destroyer of the disease of samsAra, but to avoid redundancy with the first rk, the interpretation is this - having gained knowledge that meditation on bhagavAn is a means to attain a vision of the self, the upAsaka is happily meditating on Lord's divine form. That divine form destroys all sins, and that quality of the Lord in association with the form is hailed as "rudra" as it destroys the misery of samsAra. The gAyatri mantra contains the "bharga" shabda which denotes the divine form that parches all sins.

As mentioned earlier, the upAsaka used his newly gained knowledge and started to meditate on the Lord's divine form as a means to attain the self. As a reward for his bhakti, he received a vision of the Cosmic form of the Lord, which has everything as its' body. This frightened him; hence, he requests for a more accessible, soothing form that he can meditate on.

Arjuna too makes the same request in the gIta:

*Ma te vyatha ma ca vimudha-bhavo drstva rupam ghoram idrn
mamedamvyapeta-bhiih prita-manah punas tvam tad eva me rupam idam
prapasya (~Gita 11.49)*

[You do not need to have anymore the fear and bewilderment produced by this gigantic and terrifying form. I show you again the earlier benign form familiar to you. Free from fear, with a loving heart, behold the same earlier form of mine]

*arjuna uvaca ~ drstvedam manusam rupam tava saumyam janardanaidanim asmi
samvrttah sa-cetah prakrtim gatah (~Gita 11.51)*

[Arjuna said ~ One who is fit to be prayed to by people (janArdhana)! I have regained my composure now, on seeing your human-like form, which is unique to you, so full of auspicious qualities like beauty, youth etc and is so pleasing to look at. I have become myself again.]

He is also referred to as Girishantha. This is explained by srI ranga rAmAnuja muni as follows: *girisam tanoti giriShanthaH*. giriSha refers to pArvati pati rudra. `Anta' refers to limit, which refers to bhagavAn being the limit, ie, origin, source, cause or birthplace of this giriSha.

"pApakAshini" - pApadAhika vaiShnavI sAtvikI tanu:

"shantamaya" - sukhapradaya atyantAnukulyA.

Why mention he is the creator of giriSha here? Because now the focus has shifted to meditation on the divya mangala vighraha of bhagavAn. The qualities meditated on are that of rAma, but the form is that of sankarShaNa, who just so happens to be the one who empowers rudra as well. Hence, to highlight that the form is that of sankarShaNa's, he is identified here by his most well-known attribute as the creator of rudra.

Our pUrvAchAryAs say that nammAzhwar has a darshan of the VishvarUpam as nIrAy nilanAyth... (ThiruvAimozhi 6.9.1) and that being dissatisfied with this form, he requests bhagavAn to show his more accessible forms in the next pAsuram maNNum viNNum magizhak (ThiruvAimozhi 6.9.2). So, it is literally the same for all meditators.

Mantra 4

yAmishuM girishanta haste bibharshyastavE |

shivAM giritra tAm kuru mA himsI: purushaM jagath ||

Meaning: O girishanta (Creator of giriSha), O giritra (Lord, who is propounded in the VedAntA), shoot that auspicious arrow you hold in your hand (to destroy the obstacles to my knowledge of Brahman). Do not cause injury to the JivAtmA who is migrating in the samsAra (purusham jagat).

This is another mantra that occurs in the ShvetAsvatArA Upanishad. It has also been commented upon by srI ranga rAmAnuja muni, which I have reproduced here.

In the previous rk, upon the veda purushan's request, bhagavAn changed his terror inspiring vishvarUpam into his usual divya mangala vigraham. With this change, the kalyAna gunams of bhagavAn could be enjoyed properly.

Now, while enjoying these kalyANa gunams and the divya mangala vigraham, there is another danger. This comes in the form of obstacles like samsAric temptations, tApatrayam that can interrupt Yoga. The Yogi is also prone to committing minor transgressions due to these, even during a state of jnAna.

So the upAsaka asks the Lord to discharge his arrow at the enemies that are obstacles to the knowledge of Brahman, and asks him not to make him fall into the blinding ditch of samsAra (mA himsI: purushaM jagath).

The same happens in srimad rAmAyaNam. When samudra rAja appeases the anger of SrI rAman, he gets a reply from bhagavAn that his arrow needs a target. Upon hearing this, samudra rAjan makes the following statement:

tairna tatsparshanam pApam saheyam pApakarmabhiH || amoghaH kriyatAm rAma tatra teShu sharottamaH | (~ vAlmiki rAmAyaNam 2-22-33)

[(Samudra rAja said:) I am not able to bear that touch of those wicked people, the evil doers. O rAmA, Let this excellent arrow that is never rendered in vain and which was meant for me initially, be released over them there.]

Even the tattva is the same here. Samudra rAja is "puruShaM jagat" - the jIva in the ocean of samsAra.

Note that again, it is the half-man, half-lion form of sankarShaNa being meditated on by usage of "creator of giriSha". But the quality of discharging the arrow at the enemies is that of shrI rAma. Such a beautiful fusion, isn't it?

"giritrA" - "gI" means vedAnta. vedAntapratipAdatvaM is implied by this (tatra trAyatE pAlayatE).

When meditating on the divine form, one must also offer salutations to the divine weapons. The anvaya can also be taken as "astavE yAm bibharshI tAm shivA kuru".

The wish of the upAsaka is now granted. With all his enemies subdued, he happily sets about to meditating on the Lord and performing desireless action. The next few rks reflect that mindset.

Mantra 5

ShivEna VachasA tvA GirisAccha VadAmasi|

YathA na: sarvamijjagadayakshmagum Sumana asat||

Meaning: giriSha (One who rules over speech)! We, ie, myself and my mind, strive to attain you by karma yoga prescribed in the Vedas so that all the accessories to kAmya karmAs that fills this Universe, becomes free from ills (of attachments) and agreeable (for upAsaNa)

As the meditation is on the never-ending kalyANa guNAs of bhagavAn, he is called giriSha here - "one who rules over speech" - meaning, speech cannot describe him fully (*yato vAcho nivartante aprApya manasA saha:*).

By karma yoga, which is loving services without desiring fruits, dedicated to Brahman and the means prescribed in the Veda to attain discriminative knowledge of the self, one attains bhagavAn. "ShivEna VachasA" - refers to the Vedas, which confer auspiciousness in the form of means to attain Brahman and the self. "vadAmasi" - signifies all actions of the senses engaged in karma yoga.

By such desireless action, all the accessories to karmas such as wealth, cattle, offspring etc become free from the ills in our perception, meaning, we no longer have attachment to them even if we indulge in them. They become agreeable to the nature of the self, as they are used only so much as is required for upAsaNa, without excess.

By such desireless action, the mind, which can be an enemy or friend, is completely cleansed of impure thoughts. Hence, next rk lauds such a mind.

Mantra 6

adhyavOchadadhivaktA prathamO daivyO bhishak|

AhImsccha sarvAn jambhayan sarvAmsccha yAtudhAnyah||

Meaning: May that mind, which speaks, ie, expresses for me (karma yoga), speak/act for me (jnAna yoga), the foremost friend (for meditation on the self), associated with the self that is "divya" or wonderful (by meditation), the healer of the distress of samsAra on account of that. That mind destroys

all the experiences like kAma, krodha, rAga, dveSha, etc which are "snakes etc" and the attachments which maintain such experiences.

This rk now talks about a mind engaged in jnAna yoga. This state was attained by the previously described karma yoga, which is performance of services to Brahman with no desire for the fruit, and by abhyAsa yoga, which is repeated contemplation on Brahman.

The mind is "**adhivaktA**" - "speech" in the Veda always refers to all actions of the senses. These are directed by the mind and so they constitute actions of the mind. Thus, the mind speaks or performs actions for the self at all times - karma yoga.

"**adhyavOchata**" - May such a mind engaged in karma yoga, speak in my favor - again, "speaking" signifies actions of the senses directed by the mind. ie, May it shine out the self to me, which is the jnAna yoga arising from karma yoga, whose experience is agreeable for me. Gita 2.29 says one hears about the self from shAstra, one speaks about it to others, one meditates on it - so all senses are engaged in the self.

It is not possible for all this to be referring to bhagavAn. For that would make "adhivaktA" and "adhyavOchata" redundant as both essentially indicate the same function. It would be like saying, "O destroyer of karmas! Destroy my karmas!" - When he is already addressed as destroyer of karmas, what is the need to make a plea for the same?

But for the mind, there is no redundancy. The mind is "adhivaktA" - it produces all sorts of desireless actions that constitute karma yoga. So, the prayer would be "adhyavOchata" - now produce the experience of the self in the form of talking about it, hearing about it, contemplating on it, that is jnAna yoga. See the nuance employed by shruti here that many commentators have missed.

Furthermore, there are mantra-s in atharva veda which use the same words like "**yAtudhAnyah**" when describing the mind. It is very clear cut.

This mind is "**prathama**" or the first/most important relative of the self. gIta 6.6 says the mind is a bandhu for the kaivalyArta or seeker of the self.

It is "**daivya**" as it shines out the self by meditation and is associated with it. The self is "divya" as it is wonderful, beautiful, sublime - the gIta 2.29 calls it "aShcarya-vat". The mind associated with it by contemplation is thus "**daivya**" and is a medicine for the distress of samsAra (bhishak).

Such a sAttvik mind, destroys the snakes, etc of samsAra which are the various vices. Note that bhAgavataM 12.13.21 mentions "samsAra-sarpa-dastam". It also

destroys "yAtudhAna-s" - those attachments to sense objects that hold or maintain "yAt" - union with these durguNAs.

Now that the mind is ready for contemplation on the nature of the self, the upAsaka commences meditation on the various states of the embodied self during transmigration in the next 2 rks. This is done to further create disgust/dispassion for the way we transmigrate in samsAra.

Mantra 7

Asau yastAmrO Aruna uta Babhrussumangalah|

Yeh che mAgum rudrA abhitO dikshusrithAh sahasraSO vaishAgum heDa ImahE||

Meaning: That (self) is dark red in some births as tamas predominates. It is red in some births as rajas predominates. It is also reddish brown or yellow in some births as sattva mixed with more tamas and less rajas predominates.

It is white which is extremely auspicious as sattva predominates with minimal rajas and tamas.

And those innumerable modifications of prakrti that are surrounding this self, in all directions, called "rudras" as they make us weep, we (the self and mind) remove their hostility or anger (attachment)

Not many would be able to understand this rk, if it wasn't for the fact that the shAnti parva of mahAbhArata offers a clear explanation as follows:

ShaDjIvavarNAH paramaM pramaNaM kR^iShNo dhUmro nIlaMathAsya madhyam . raktaM punaH sahyataraM sukhaM tu hAridravarNaM susukhaM cha shuklam (~ shAnti parva, MB)

[The jIva has six colors in various births based on the predominance of triguNAs, this is known from the Vedas which are the highest authority. These include black (kriShNa), smoky (dhUmra), dark blue (nIlaM), red (raktaM) which again makes experiences of sense objects endure. Then there is yellow or reddish brown (haridra) which causes bliss and white, the purest (shuklaM)]

Based on the colors for triguNAs (white = sattva, red = rajas, black = tamas), we get a palette that the jIva is associated with.

In a nutshell, the rk condenses all the darker colors (births) as one color - "tAmra" or red that is very dark - this includes black, smoky and dark blue ones are bad births in which tamas predominates with rajas, or rajas predominates with tamas.

Next is "aruna" which is a more obvious red. Red is the intermediate juncture, when rajas predominates but sattva rises above tamas.

Then, "babhru" - yellow or reddish brown - essentially the color of turmeric (haridra). This is when sattva predominates, with tamas and less of rajas. If taken as yellow (pingala), it means sattva shines more as compared to the other 2. If taken as a reddish brown, it means the red and black has become dull (rajo and tamo guNAs). This is the birth as a god (devatva) when one can enjoy pleasures in devaloka.

"sumangala" is white which is any birth that is most conducive when sattva predominates and rajas is more than tamas. It is very auspicious.

Accordingly, these births correlate to different stages of the jIva's journey to knowledge of the self. By karma yoga or desireless action, the jIva proceeds from the darkest births and attains to white. All this is described in that shAnti parva section.

Each color corresponds to births like plants and germs, animals, men, gods, etc. We need not go too deep into which color is which, for the sake of brevity. Should be obvious white is the best.

The purpose of enumerating this is to constantly dwell on the struggles of the embodied self in samsAra for attaining dispassion, and to show how the embodied self is travelling to a state of knowledge by karma yoga.

Next, the reference to "rudrAs". The identity of these rudrAs is revealed in the same shAnti parva:

**aShTau cha ShaShTiM cha shatAni yAni; mano viruddhAni mahAdyutInAm
shuklasya varNasya parA gatir yA; trINy eva ruddhAni mahAnubhAva**

[The eightfold substances of prakrti and the sixty which are also numerous and antagonistic to the jIva called "mana", highly shining out to the self for experiences. The highest object of attainment is the self which is white color or pure by nature. The three guNAs are indeed checked by such attainment of the self]

The 8-fold prakrti substances are earth, water, fire, air, ether, manas, mahat and Ahamkara.

The sixty are the 16 modifications of matter, 12 months, 5 seasons, 2 ayanas, 1 year, the 8 directions and subdirections like east, southeast etc., 8 kinds of gods (brahmA, prajApati, devA, gandharvA, yakSha, rAkShasA, pitrs and piSaca) and 8 kinds of aiShvarya (aNimA, mahimA, garimA, laghimA, prApti, prAkAmya, Ishitva and vaShitva)

These sixty are also "shatAni" as they are diversified numerous based on karmas, degree of guNAs, abodes etc. These esoteric tattvAs are well-delineated in gIta and svetAsvatAra upanishad.

These eight and sixty which are called numerous (shatAni) in the ithihAsa, are the "rudrAs" in the rk as they make us weep - note the ithihAsa uses "shatAni" while the rk uses "sahasraShO" which simply means their diversity is huge. We remove their hostility to us by attaining vairAgya by constantly contemplating on how disgusting their experience is. Or, it can mean, we remove their anger which is simply our attachment to them. Upanishath calls attachment as "mrga" or anger.

Now, what happens when the upAsaka does not attain that "white" birth which is extremely auspicious (sumangalaH) and considers "yellow" or attainment of devaloka as the supreme most birth? Next rk contemplates on the possibility that a Yogi may not be able to achieve the highest state and also talks of a way to overcome it.

Mantra 8

Asau yOavasarpati nIlagrIvo vilOhitaH |

utainam GopA AduSaNadrusAnnudahAryah |

Utainam vishvA bhUtani sa drashto mR^iDayAti nah||

Meaning: That (Self) which is satisfied with "yellow or reddish brown" birth as a deva, descends (to manuShya loka), as one with a mind filled with tamo guNa (nIlagrIva), as reddish or endowed with rajo guNa (vilohitaH).

Even this embodied self can be seen as distinct from the body by those who protect their senses from sense objects by karma yoga (gopA) or by those who remove objects of enjoyment from their minds by jnAna yoga (udahAryah).

And that self which is seen by all the senses (in this manner), may experience of it make us (me and my mind) rejoice in its' bliss.

Some yogins may not progress to meditation on the self, being ensnared by the objects of enjoyment in devaloka. Upon exhaustion of their karmas, they descend to the manuShya loka. They will be upset as their enjoyment has come to an end, as a result of which they possess tamo guNa (anger at not attaining objects) and rajo guNa (desire for attaining impossible objects)

nIlagrIva - "grIva" does not only mean a neck. "grI - nigarane" to swallow, van is unAdi affix (nipAtana). It refers to anything that swallows or causes to descend - the latter meaning being any passage or opening downwards. It refers to the mind, associated with descent into "tamo guNa" that is "nIla" or dark in color.

"vilohitaH" - reddish, which is the color of rajo guNa.

But who can escape this situation?

Those who are called "gopAs" as they protect their senses (go) by desireless action of karma yoga can see the self clearly, as distinct from the body, and not be affected by desires.

Those who remove the contemplations of objects of desire from their minds by meditation on the self via jnAna yoga can also see the self. They are "udahArins" - those who take away "waters" (from their minds). Here, "waters" refers to the subtle elements of prakrti that constitute objects of enjoyments.

By karma yoga or jnAna yoga, all the senses (viShvA bhUtAni) can see the self. That is to say, one meditates on it, talks of it, hears of it from the Veda, etc - all his senses are engaged in the self.

Bhatta bhAskara quotes a pramANa which he says is in shatapatha (haven't checked), that attributes this mantra to being situated in Aditya. He takes it as referring to the sun, but every vedAntin agrees that "Aditya" is a name of the self.

This state, as was mentioned earlier, is attained by the grace of bhagavAn, who is meditated upon to attain such a vision. Hence, the Veda puruSha now again expresses his gratitude to bhagavAn and contemplates on his glorious deeds in the next rk.

Mantra 9

namo astu nIlagrIvAya sahasrAkshAya mIDhusHe |

atho ye asya saTvAnohaM tebhyokaraM namaH ||

Meaning: I bow down to Lord rAma, the One who casts the rAkShasAs down into the darkness of samsAra (nIlagrIva), the One who has innumerable forms (sahasrAkShA), the showerer of arrows like rain (mIDhushe). I also bow down to his auspicious attributes which are his followers

This mantra requires a somewhat elaborate explanation. Bear with me.

"grIva" again does not mean neck but a passage or opening that causes to descend. Thus, "nIlagrIva" means "One who is the means (passage) for the AsurAs being cast down into the darkness of samsAra. "nIla" can refer to black or dark blue color and means darkness of death/lower births filled with tamo guNa as we saw earlier. The Lord is nIlagrIva as he sends the asurAs to adhogathi as per:

**tAn ahaM dviShhataH krUrAn sansAreShhu narAdhamAn kShhipAmy ajasram
ashhubhAn AsurIShhu eva yoniShhu AsurIM yonim Apanna mUDhA janmani
janmani mAm aprApyaiva kaunteya tato yAnty adhamAM gatim (~ Gita 16.20)**

Specifically, this mantra refers to an event in Yuddha Khanda where the vAnara sena being oppressed, took refuge in rAma, who entered the battlefield.

**anIkan dashasAhasran rathAnAM vAtaranhasAm | aShTAdashasahasrANi
kuMjarANAn tarasvinAm || chaturdashasahasrANi sArohANAn cha vAjinAm |
pUrNe shatasahasre dve rAkShasAnAM padAtinAm || divasasyAShTame
bhAge sharairagnishikhopamaiH | hatAnyekena rAmeNa rakShasAn
kAmarUpiNAM ||**

[Within a matter of three hours, with his arrows looking like tongues of flames, Rama killed an army of rAkShasAs, capable of changing their form at will, including ten thousands chariots possessing the swiftness of the wind, eighteen thousand strong elephants, fourteen thousand horses with their riders and a full two lacs of rAkShasAs fighting on foot.]

That explains "nIlagrIvA". But how did he accomplish this? The term "sahasrAksha" explains this. It means "One who has innumerable eyes" here but does not refer to omniscience. ShrI ParAShara Bhattar says that the Vedic maxim decrees a part can denote the whole, and so "eyes" refers to several forms which have those eyes. Thus, it means "he who has innumerable forms".

Here is the shloka,

**te tu rAma sahasrANi raNe pashyanti rAkShasAH | punaH pashyanti
kAkutsthamekameva mahAtmanA || 93-6-27**

[Those rAkShasAs for their part saw thousands of Ramas in the battle-field, while at other times, they saw only one Rama in that great battle.]

He killed them by appearing as though he was many. This is the meaning of "sahasrAksha".

Next, the actual tools of destruction, ie, his arrows, are celebrated by "mIDhushhe" - he showered them with a rain of arrows. As per,

**tato rAmo mahAtejA dhanurAdAya vIryavAn | pravishya rAkShasan sainyaM
sharavarShaM vavarSha ha || 93-6-18**

[Thereupon, rAma of great splendour and prowess, taking up his bow and entering the army of rAkShasAs, streamed forth showers of arrows]

And then the rk says, "I also bow down to his followers" - the auspicious attributes that follow him in all his forms. Because these attributes are praised distinct from the Lord as an arthavAda to glorify them over his nature (svarUpa)

itself. But since the attributes are glorious only because of being associated with his nature, it is not a doSha.

Finally, a question. Why is this a wondrous feat? This deed of rAma has been highly praised by all our AchAryAs. Azhwars, Periyavacchan Pillai, Nampillai, Vedanta Desikan, Manavala Manunigal, etc. - every Acharya alludes to this incident unfailingly, characterizing it as something beyond mind and speech. And now, even the shruti is singling this out for praise. But this was just a battle. Surely there is some special reason?

There is. The inner meaning of course. The superficial meaning is that rAma used the gandharva astra to appear as though he was in many places, and destroyed the rAkShasAs. The tAtparya is this:

1) The rAkShasAs represent various dangers of samsAra. The close associates of the Lord like sugrIva, hanuman, vibhIShana etc who appealed to him for destroying these rAkShasAs represent the AchAryAs who seek the Lord's protection for us.

2) "gandharva" - means "That which supports the embodied self". It represents the shAstra. Then, "gandharvAstra" is the weapon of the shAstra - the knowledge of Brahman, and more specifically, his auspicious attributes.

3) The same Lord appeared as many due to the Astra. This means, by knowledge of Brahman from shAstra, one sees the same Lord diversely in innumerable forms, with innumerable auspicious attributes. Such a perception completely destroys the rAkShasAs which represent indulgences in samsAra.

So you can see the relevance to jnAna yoga here, in the form of the Lord being the means to destroy samsAric attachments. Hence this mantra is included in the Rudram.

Then, finally, the Lord tells his close associates the following:

*abravIchcha tadaa raamaH sugrIvaM pratyantaram | vibhIShaNaM cha
dharmaatmaa hanuumentaM cha vaanaram || jaambavantaM harishreShThaM
maindaM dvidameva cha | etadastrabalan divyaM mama vaa tryambakasya
vaa ||*

[Then, Rama spoke also to Sugreeva, Vibhishana, Hanuman, Jambavan, Mainda and Dvidida, who were in close proximity to him as follows "This divine astra exists either with me or with the knower of the three Vedas or three states (Tryambaka).]

"Tryambaka" here does not refer to Rudra. In reality, the term is a common noun, applicable for objects like mind, etc in shAstra in many places. In current context, rAma is simply saying that the gandharvAstra resides with him, the Supreme Brahman or with Tryambaka - someone learned in the Vedas, or someone who perceives correctly the 3 states (bhoga sthAna, bhogya sthAna and bhogopakaraNa sthAna).

Consider this - if the term denoted Rudra, what is the need for rAma to say this in secret to his close associates and not even the rest of the vAnara sena? Obviously, the superficial meaning is that this astra prayoga is parama-rahasya that only a proper upAsaka can possess. Of course, rudradeva himself is an upAsaka, so not wrong to say he possesses this skill.

That much is the superficial meaning though. Inner meaning is this, The astra represents the auspicious attributes of Brahman. Rama says in reality the following:

"This astra (knowledge of bhagavad-kalyANa guNAs that destroys sins) resides with me, the Supreme Brahman (for prapannAs), or with the upAsaka who perceives the 3 states (Tryambaka)."

For those who performed sharanAgati/prapatti, the Lord himself is the means. So, he himself displays his kalyANa guNAs to the prapanna, without any effort required from the prapanna.

But an upAsaka strives to know Brahman by his own self-effort. The Lord is not the direct means for the upAsaka, but only the indirect means. Thus, an upAsaka gains knowledge and perception of those kalyANa guNAs by his own efforts. So it can be said that the knowledge of bhagavad guNAs (the astra), resides with the upAsaka and not the Lord.

Hence, rAma, by saying, "**mama vA tryambakasya vA**" is confirming the presence of 2 paths to moksha, ie, prapatti and bhakti. The "vA" shabdham means two categories of people choose either the Lord or their own self-effort as the means to attain this knowledge.

Thus, this rk has celebrated the auspicious attributes and forms of the Lord that act as the means to realize the self.

So now, the upAsaka considers himself a jnAni and one dear to the Lord, as stated by him in gIta. He remembers the anger the Lord had previously and thus exhorts bhagavAn now to provide recognition of his own status as a "mahAtma".

Mantra 10

Pramuncha DhanvanastvamubhayorArthinayorjyAm |

YAsCha tE hasta ishavaH ParA tA Bhagavo vapa||

Meaning: Hey bhagavAn who shines with the six auspicious attributes! I am a jnAni now. So untie the strings at both ends of your bow. Those arrows in your hands signifying all weapons, which you aim at those with wicked minds enjoying pravrtti mArga, lay them aside.

"Arrows" signify all weapons. These weapons exist to protect his devotees and uproot the evil doers. They are targeted at those whose aim is pravrtti or bhoga and thus cause harm to others. The upAsaka now says he is not one of those people, but one who belongs to the class of devotees who needs to be protected. Hence, he asks bhagavAn to lay down the weapons as a mark of recognition that he has accepted the upAsaka as a mahAtma.

How did this upAsaka get the idea that bhagavAn will lay down his weapons in respect of him? Well, there is precedence, as below:

*brahmavirbhirmahAbhAgairbrAhmaNairupashobhitam | taddRRiShTvA
rAghavaH shrImAMstApasAshramamaNDalam || abhyagachChanmahAtejA
vijyaM kRRitvA mahaddhanuH | (~Aranya Khanda, vAlmiki rAmAyaNa)*

[That glorious and great resplendent Rama on seeing those precincts of hermitage that is graced with Brahmans who are highly fortunate as they have received the grace of the Lord, who are the knowers of the Veda, neared it, unstringing the bowstring of his great bow.]

Mantra 11

avatatya Dhanusthvagum sahasrAksha satEshudhe |

NisIrya salyAnam mukhA Shivo nah sumanA bhava ||

Meaning: Extending your bow in protection, O you who have innumerable forms, who have numerous auspicious attributes in each form that protect my meditation on the self, having blunted the desires which are the paths (mukhA) of the painful experiences (shalyAnAm), become a conferrer of the bliss of the self (ShivaH) and one who has an agreeably broad mind to us (me and my mind)

"sahasrAksha" - As mentioned earlier "He who has numerous eyes" implies having numerous bodies containing those eyes. Hence, it means he has innumerable forms such as the one in the sun, milky ocean, in the heart etc for the upAsaka to meditate on.

"satEshudhe" - "Arrows" refer to concentrated meditations of the mind on the Atman as per mundakOpaniShad. What holds, contains or protects such meditation? It is the auspicious attributes of bhagavAn, innumerable in each

form, whose contemplation in turn sustains such meditation. Hence, these are many or "shataM".

"nisIrya salyAnaM mukhA" - The term "mukhA" means face, mind, mouth or any opening in general. Thus, it represents those desires that are "openings" or "gateways" for painful experiences. "shalya" means anything causing distress or pain. "shalya" can also refer to the senses impelling one to sense objects (pain) as per viShNu purANa. Meditation on bhagavAn has blunted such desires.

"sumanA" - He who has a great, broad and gentle mind to his devotees. No matter how much he does for them, he is never satisfied. Even if he has done so much for them that they do not deserve, he still considers his favors as inadequate. Vide,

*govindeti yadAkrandat krshNA mAm dUravAsini |rNam pravrdhamiva me
hrdayAt na apasarpati || (MB 3-58-22)*

*[That cry for help uttered aloud by Draupadi even from afar, calling me
"govindA" - that cry is never away from my mind like a debt increased with
interest accumulated on it]*

The upAsaka wants the Lord to assume this disposition towards him. What would be the favors he wants from the Lord? The Veda puruSha summarizes them below.

Mantra 12

vijyaM dhanuH kapardinO vishalyO bANavAn.h uta |

aneshaNasyesHava Abhurasya nisHangathiH ||

Meaning: For the upAsaka with matted locks called "Kapardi", may the bow signifying praNava be arranged with the string that is paramAtma dhyAna. May the mind which is filled with Brahman which is the aim or target (bANavAn) be arranged with the arrow that is concentrated meditation on the Lord.

May the arrows signifying the jnAnendriyAs and karmendriyAs which impel one towards sense objects be rendered incapable of causing pain. May avidyA or prakrti (body) which covers the Atman, signified by the scabbard, be rendered powerless.

Azhwars often refer to Shiva as "sadayana" (matted haired one) because matted hair signifies upAsaNa, and by this Shiva is identified as an upAsaka. The same logic here. "Kapardi" does not refer to the Supreme Being or to anyone in particular but to the upAsaka meditating on the true nature of the self, as "matted hair" means upAsaNa.

The mundakopaniShad explains the analogy of bow, arrow and target. The bow is praNava, or the knowledge of the Upanishads.

The bow is arranged with the string - SrI ranga rAmAnuja muni explains that drawing the bow-string means, placing the Atman, mind and senses facing the paramAtma after withdrawing them from sense objects, making them averse to the latter.

"bANavAn" - A container for "bANa" which means aim. It refers to the mind filled with Brahman that is the aim as per mundakOpaniShad. The arrow, as per the Upanishad, is the concentrated meditation on the Atman. So, the mind that contemplates on Brahman as the target is fixed with the concentrated meditation on the Atman.

viShNu purANa says the karmendriyAs and jnAnendriyAs are arrows as they impel one towards sense objects. The same purANa calls the scabbard as signifying avidyA that covers the true nature of the Atman.

"vijyaM", "vishalyaH" have been interpreted by Sayana etc as "without string, arrow". This is not correct, as they have taken "vi" as denoting a separation or removal. It in fact denotes arrangement here - the bow is arranged with the string, with the arrow - made ready for upAsaNa.

It is not enough that bhagavAn grants all these. It is possible that after granting this state, it is once again lost. So the next few rks once again dwell on the rakShagatvaM of the Lord, and contain the plea of the Veda PuruSha to the Lord and his weapons to protect that state at all times, when it has been gained.

Mantra 13

yA te hetirmIDhusHTama haste babhUva te dhanuH |

tayA-smAnvishvatastvamayakshamayA pariBhuja ||

Meaning: BhagavAn who showers all desires of his devotees (mIDhusHTama)! The Chakra you hold in your hand, becomes your bow which exists solely to protect your devotees. By that bow, which confers knowledge that is free from the disease of samsAra dukha, you protect us at all times.

There are two facets to this. Firstly, SudarShana is called "AyudheShvara" - all the other weapons of both bhagavAn and that of other gods like rudra, indra etc arise as amShAs of SudarShana only. Thus it is said that the chakra (heti) transforms into the bow. Only SudarShana is called "hetirAja".

Nammazhwar says that all his weapons become very angry at the enemies of his devotees and become ready to remove the sorrows of the devotees, regardless

of whether he has actually given permission to them - kAi Sina Azhi Sa'ngu vAL taNDu Endi em iDar kaDivAnE!

Thus, in this state of anger towards the enemies of his devotees, the fiery Chakra of the Lord transforms into the mighty bow, S'arnga, wielded by Lord rAma. As below,

"dhAryate kshatriyaih cApo na Arta Sabdo bhaved-iti" -

[The bow is always carried by the kshatriya-s so that there may not be the cry of distress anywhere.]

srI rAma carried that bow to protect the riShIs in dandakAraNya, to whom he respectfully unstrung his bowstring. The veda puruSha, having asked him to unstring his bow, asks for the same protection. Veda puruSha considers himself to be as worthy as those riShIs.

The bow, as do all his weapons confer knowledge upon meditation on their tattvas as they are subhAShraya. This is mentioned in shrI vishNu purANa.

Why did SudarShana transform into his amSha, the bow? To carry out the will of the Lord, which is sAdhu paritrANAm and duShkrta vinAshaNu. Thus in reality, it is the sankalpa of bhagavAn that is the basis of the actions behind these weapons. That sankalpa or will is saluted in the next rk.

Mantra 14

namaste astvAyudhAyAnAtatAya dhRsHNave|

ubhAbhyAmuta te namo bAhubhyAM tava dhanvane||

Meaning: Salutation to your will which is your weapon, which is not endeavoring to cause injury to me (the karma yogin), which is capable of harming my enemies, the karmas (for me, the jnAna yogin). Salutations also to both your arms and your bow which is protecting at all times (my meditation).

"Ayudha" denotes his will which is the prime weapon he uses to uproot evil-doers and destroy the sorrows of his devotees. He indeed bears his weapons only as a symbol of his desire (will) to protect his devotees - says Bhattar.

That divine will will manifest in the form of anger at transgressions due to pravrtti dharma and grace when the path of nivrtti is followed.

So the veda puruSha says, "You have resolved not to cause harm to me, who am not indulging in sense enjoyments of pravrtti, but am dedicating fruits of my actions to you via karma yoga. Not just that, your will has resolved to harm my enemies which are the karmas and also the manifest troubles like rAkShasAs who may prevent me from meditating on the self via jnAna yoga".

This signifies his most important guNa according to Bhattar - protection of his devotees at all costs, under all circumstances, in all places, at all times. That is summarized in the latter half of the mantra.

His arms, as mentioned earlier, uproot the evil-doers, they are decorated with glorious ornaments that appear beautiful for the devotees as they protect. Hence, upon destruction of the karmas, the protection of bhagavAn is assured.

Then, his bow ensures that protection stays stable at all times. Just as rAma and lakShmaNa guarded the sleeping vAnarAs with bows in hand, staying awake all night, he is ever watchful that the hard earned upAsaNa of the jIva does not again come to ruin.

This latter action of continuing to confer protection even after commencement of upAsaNa is elaborated in the next rk.

Mantra 15

pari te dhanvano hetirasmAnvRNaktu vishvataH|

athO ya ishhudhistavArE asmannidhehi tam.h||

Meaning: May the arrows discharged from your bow, cover us at all times, ie, protect us (me and my mind engaged in meditation on the self). Also, keep far away that avidyA of yours, the form of prakrti, which is like a cover for the arrow that is concentrated meditation on the self.

Arrows being discharged from his bow is a meditation on the kalyANa guNAs of rAma specifically. It can also be symbolic of the power of all his weapons like chakra, shankha, nandaka, kaumodakI etc.

"ishhudhi" is prakrti or avidyA which is a cover for the arrow which the mundakOpaniShad refers to as concentrated meditation on the self.

It is called "ishhudhis tava" - "Your avidyA" because it is his body and belongs to him, as he keeps it under his control. kriShNa says, "mama mAyA duratyayA" - He owns that mAyA which is prakrti.

ANUVAKA 2 - CONTEMPLATION ON THE PATH OF PRAVRTTI

In the second anuvAka, the upAsaka, who is now an avid seeker of the self due to the grace of the Lord, begins his journey of meditation. Always the steps in meditation to achieve a vision of the self are as follows -

- 1) Develop vairAgya towards sense objects by constantly contemplating on their ephemeral nature, their distinction from the self and how their indulgence keep you in samsAra
- 2) Meditate on the Lord's auspicious form to completely wean away from sense objects
- 3) Meditate on the Lord considering his nature as similar to the self you seek to attain (in terms of unrestrained knowledge, lack of karmas etc)
- 4) Meditate on the nature of the pure self as the same in all.

1) is accompanied by karma yoga or desireless action.

In this anuvAka, the meditation is basically at step 1) - The contemplation of indulgences in sense objects as disgusting. This is proven by the following pramANa in the shatapatha brAhmaNa:

**teShAM vA ubhayatonamaskArA anye | .anyataratonamaskArA anye te ha te
ghoratarA ashAntatarA ya ubhayatonamaskArA ubhayata
evainAnetadyaj~nena namaskAreNa shamayati (~shatapatha brAhmaNa)**

[Some of those mantra-s (of a different nature) have double "namaskArAs" on both sides. Other mantra-s (of a different nature) have single namaskArAs. Those (mantra-s describing senses) which are most formidable and opposed to sattva, have double namaskArAs on both sides. By "yajna" or karma yoga and by "namaskArA" or relinquishment (of attachments), he appeases the senses]

Here, it says, the the mantra-s which describe the senses (ie, mind associated with the senses) as "ghoratarA" meaning, very formidable as they are indulging in sense objects and causing harm, and "ashAntatarA" or of the nature opposed to sattva, as having 2 namaskArAs. When the mind is in a state of sattva, one namaskArA is used.

This provides the primer for our understanding - until as long as 2 namaskArAs are used, we must assume all mantra-s are describing some exceedingly negative or frightening qualities. Good things happen only when the double namaskArAs give way to single namaskAra mantra-s. By taking the guidance provided so clearly by the shatapatha brAhmaNa, we shall not stray into misinterpretations.

The reason is, when one is meditating on how frighteningly the mind can cause bondage, he says "nama" twice in the intensity of warding it off. So, "nama" here does not mean "salutations". It means "not mine". The upAsaka is contemplating on such a terrible mind as not his state of mind.

It is only when one namaskAra is used, that "nama" assumes the form of a conventional salutation.

So with that understanding, we begin the second anuvAka.

namo hiraNyabAhave senAnye dishA.n cha pataye namaH|

Meaning: Not mine is the mind with arms decorated with gold signifying hankerings for sense objects (hiraNyabAhave), the leader of the senses that go towards sense objects (senAnye). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that extend in all directions ie, procure all objects of enjoyment (dishA.n cha pataye) .

To develop dispassion for objects of samsAra by meditation on their bad qualities, the upAsaka begins to contemplate on the path of pravrtti first. The journey of a bhogI typically begins with the desire for sense objects. He uses the Vedas which contain "flowery words" as per gIta (traiguNya viShaya veda) to secure his ends like svarga etc. What happens to him, forms the basis of anuvAkAs, 2,3 and 4.

"namaH" thus means, "Not mine". These mantrA-s are not addressed to Brahman. Rather, they denote the mind, or the state of the mind, that is not the state of the upAsaka. He is saying, "I say that this wicked mind is not mine". The shatapatha shruti had earlier explained this.

"hiraNyabAhave" - The term "bAhu" means arms, which in turn implies strength. Knowledge of the form of contemplation is also a form of strength and so it refers to contemplation with knowledge of several sense objects that are desired by a

person on the path of pravrtti. "hiranya" means gold and in the Veda, "gold" signifies any object of desire or desire itself. Thus, "golden arms" means "hankerings on objects of desire".

When these mantrA-s end with "pataye" - it refers to the mind, as the possessor of senses endowed with a certain quality. Mind is the "pati" or possessor of the senses. Here, "diShAM" for instance means the senses are going in all directions for sense objects, or appropriating objects of enjoyment in all directions.

"pati" can also mean "master" but that is a more ambiguous interpretation as "master" can imply one has conquered the senses. Better, the meaning "possessor" indicates the mind is associated with such senses.

Rest is self-explanatory.

namo vR^ixebhyo harikeshebhyaH pashUnAM pataye namaH |

Meaning: Not mine is the mind of the form of desires that are the resort for experience (vR^ixebhyo), of the form of reddish brown rays that are attachments to sense objects characterized by rajo-tamo guNAs (harikeshebhyaH). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses with attachments to objects (pashUnAM pataye).

"vR^ixebhyo" - A tree is anything that is a resort or gives shade. "vRkSha" is derived from "vRj" - varaNe - to seek or resort to.

Anu gIta has the following,

bahUnyavyaktavarNani puShpANi cha phalAni cha visR^ijantau mahAvR^ikShau tadvanaM vyApya tiShThataH (~anugIta, MB)

[In that self which is a forest, there are many great trees (desires) that produce flowers (fragrance/ruci-s) and fruits (experiences) of indistinguishable colors (mixture of sattva, rajas and tamas)]

Attachments are "keShAs" or rays of light as they shine out the sense objects, which are of the nature of rajo guNa mixed with tamo guNa (harikeShas).

Upanishads refer to anger as an animal. So, "paShunAm" refers to senses with anger or attachment to the sense objects, as is clear.

namo saspi~ncharAya tviShImate pathInAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that is associated with desires for fruits of the Veda like svarga, that are sattva mixed with rajas/tamas as yellowish-red (saspi~ncharAya), the mind that is shining, ie, illumining the means prescribed by the Vedas for such fruits (tviShImate). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that are paths as performers of means like jyotiShthoma etc (pathInAM pataye).

The colors have already been explained as referring to triguNa combinations. The idea is, such a person who had the desire for sense objects as described in the previous mantra will be naturally drawn to the perishable fruits and means prescribed in the Vedas such as svarga etc. He will dutifully perform the required means like jyotiShthoma etc to attain these worlds and enjoy bhoga.

namo babhlushAya vivyAdhine.annAnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that abides in a body that is yellow or predominantly sattva as a deva (babhlushAya), piercing or destroying all karmas which were obstructing such enjoyment (vivyAdhine). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that are "food" as they enable experience of objects in devaloka (annAnAM pataye).

Attaining devaloka by works which remove his karmas that were obstacles to such attainment and becoming a deva, the person enjoys bhoga. But all good things come to an end, so the next mantra indicates that he will fall down back to samsAra, but still feeling his desires are not satiated.

namo harikeshAyopavItine puShTAnAM pataye namaH |

Meaning: : Not mine is the mind of the form of contemplations of desire for sense objects (harikeSha), invested with loss of such experience (upavIta). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that are "full" with unsatiated desires (pustanam pati)

"hari" means yellow or golden. "keSha" refers to rays which are shining, ie, thoughts of sense objects that shine out as desirous.

upavIta - upa-vye - invested with loss.

When the time period in svarga is over, he returns back to manuShya loka, but his desires are still not satiated and he feels as though he has experienced a great loss.

namo bhavasya hetyai jagatAM pataye namaH |

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that is a terrible weapon for the self existing in samsAra (bhavasya hetyai). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that move towards unattainable objects (jagatAm pati).

Being frustrated at not being able to get more experience of svarga etc., he loses sAttvic disposition and the mind turns into a terrible weapon.

"jagatAm" is in plural here. The word signifies movement.

Next, he gives way to base emotions.

namo rudrAyAtatAvine kShetrANAM pataye namaH |

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that causes weeping in the form of anger (rudra), clinging to or fixed on unattainable objects (AtatAvin). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that are abodes for cruel actions due to anger (kShetrANAm pati)

Slowly, he is undergoing a degradation of his status. Earlier, he had desires, but was still a sAttvic person virtuously performing Vedic sacrifices to attain them. But now, the non-attainment and perishability of those desires is transforming him into a frustrated person, depriving him of reason.

BrihadAraNyaka Up. refers to mind as "rudra" as it causes one to weep.

"kShetra" means abode and the senses of his become abodes of cruel actions and thoughts in his desperation to get the objects of his desire. They are cruel as they are removing his knowledge of the self.

namo sUtAyAhantyAya vanAnAM pataye namaH .

Meaning: Not mine is the mind connects with other objects, ie, mamakAra (sUta), which has conceit, ie, ahamkAra (ahantya). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses which are forests, ie, abodes of frightful experiences or dangers (vanAnAM pataye)

sUta - bAndhaNE - To establish a means of connection or communication with. This person now starts to establish connection with other objects, claiming it as his own. This is "mamakAra".

"ahantya" is ahamkAra.

Senses are forests as they are like an abode of frightful experiences. Thus, this person has become one with ahamkAra and mamakAra.

namo rohitAya sthapataye vR^ikShANAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind which grows or expresses that loss of discrimination (rohita), which is the chief enemy of the self (sthApata). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses which destroy the means to attain the self.

"prAdurbhavati iti rohitah" - The root "ruh" means that which grows or expresses. The mind expresses a loss of discrimination, ie, it forgets that its' initial endeavor was to attain the self by controlling the senses.

vrkSha - chedana - to cut away. The senses being directed to external activities destroy all the means to attain the self by their actions. gIta 2.63 describes this.

Namo mantriNe vANijAya kakShANAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that possesses "mantrAs" or those Asuric qualities like dambha, darpa, etc that preserve bondage by their understanding of the body as the self (mantriNe), to the mind that produces expression of external senses towards indiscriminate frutive actions (vANijA). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses which limit the field of knowledge by frutive actions (kakShANAM pataye)

Mantra - mananAt trAyatE - The qualities like pride, arrogance etc are based on the fundamental abhimAna of the body as the self and this understanding is the

"manana" by which they preserve (trAyate) bondage. The mind has these qualities and hence is called "mantrin".

"kakSha-s" are enclosures. The dharma-bhUta-jnAna of the jIva is contracted by these senses due to their wayward actions.

namo bhuvanta.ye vArivaskR^itAyauShadhInAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind which is the cause of abiding in the body, ie, considering the body as the self (bhuvanta.ye), which creates devotion to the body (vArivaskR^itA). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses which are holding attachments that shine out sense objects to the self (auShadhInAM pataye)

bhuvantaya - bhuvanaM tanoti bhuvanta - That which is the cause (of abiding) in the body. Ie, considering the body as the self.

vArivaskR^ita - That which creates devotion or attendance in the form of care for the body.

oShadhI - oSha dhIyatE - Those that hold or contain, ie, have contact with (dhIyate) the "oSha-s" - those that shine, ie, the attachments that shine out sense objects which shine out to the self.

namo uchchairghoShAyAkrandayate pattInAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind which cries loudly, ie, expresses deep seated likes and dislikes or rAga and dveSha (uchchairghoShA), which causes one to weep due to harming oneself by these qualities (krandayate). Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses that move towards sense objects (pattInAM pataye).

namo kR^itsnavItAya dhAvate satvanAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that covers the self which is "complete" by nature (krutsnavitaya), which causes the self to move in samsAra (dhAvate).

Not mine is the mind which is the possessor of senses which are supported by the sense objects in samsAra (satvanAM pataye).

"kR^itsnavItAya" means to cover the self which is "kR^itsna" or the "complete one" in its' pure state as it possesses apahatapAma etc. Or, it can mean the self is this entire world as it is everywhere. The mind covers the true nature of this self.

The senses are called "satvanAM" as they follow - go after - sense objects which keeps the self in samsAra.

Thus, this anuvAka depicts how a person who even abides by the Vedas to gain fruits like svarga etc, which is the path of pravrtti, nonetheless attains to ruin, so that he becomes one who is always transmigrating in samsAra. The gIta warns of this in the shloka 2.45.

ANUVAKA 3 - THE CONTEMPLATION ON ASURA BHAVA

The previous anuvAka described the descent of the self which engaged in pravrtti marga or fruitive actions of the Vedas into various vices which brought harm to himself of the form of ignorance. Now, that intensifies in the form of harm to others. For kAma, krodha etc do not just cause sva-himsa, but also para-himsa.

To summarize, sva-himsa was described in the 2nd anuvAka. The jIva had gained ahamkAra, mamakAra and a burning desire for viShayAntara sukha. This anuvAka describes how the jIva becomes Asuric in svabhAva and activities of the mind related to para-himsa which arise on account of that, and which pushes the jIva into samsAra even further.

namo sahamAnAya nivyAdhina AvyAdhinInAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind with pride unwarranted of one's learning or lineage (sahamAna), who wounds others with harsh words (nivyAdhina). Not mine is the possessor of senses which wound people by speech, mind and deed (AvyAdhinInAM pataye)

That is seen in the case of duryodhana who, due to pride of his lineage, spoke hurtfully to great jnAnIs like vidura thinking them to be lower than him:

**dhigastu kShattAramiti bruvANo darpeNa matto dhR^itarAShTrasya putraH
(~ Sabha Parva, MB)**

[Duryodhana, intoxicated by pride, said "Fie on you, KShatta (Vidura)!"]

These people don't even have that great a lineage or learning to be proud about, but nonetheless, their arrogance is staggering.

namo kakubhAya niSha~NgiNe stenAnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that is of sublime speech that deceives (kakubha), which cleaves others away from dharma (niSha~NgiNe). Not mine is the mind that is the possessor of senses, that stealthily take away the discrimination of others (stenAnAM pataye).

"kakubhA" means anything sublime or excellent. It refers to the sublime or lofty speech arising from the mind of certain people who have perverted knowledge and logic, and who use these sweet words to deceive. bhIShmAchArya censures them as below:

**antaHkShurA vA~NbhadhurAH kupAshChannAstR^iNairiva
dharmavaitaMsikAH kShudrA muShNanti dhvajino jagat . kurvate cha
bahUnmArgAMstAnhetubalamAshritAH . (~ ShAnti Parva, MB)**

[They have a sharp (cruel) mind but are of sweet words. They are like a pit hidden by straw. They of low conduct, these ensnarers, rob the world bearing a standard of dharma or righteous appearance of works which is deceptive. Resorting to the strength of perverse logic, they establish diverse paths or religions opposed to the Veda]

This is pride arising from learning which is inappropriate to their stature. The example of Vandin in the MB whose ego due to his learning was quelled by Ashtavakra in a debate which exposed Vandin's false knowledge that misled everyone.

These people speak sweet words that everyone wants to hear, but inside, it is all poison. They pretend to uphold dharma, they speak in highly intellectual tones, but their knowledge and reasoning is perverted.

In contrast, our AchAryAs do not speak sweet words that everyone wants to hear, such as "Rudram is indeed praising Lord Shiva", or "All gods are equal". These would be what others want to hear from them. Words of our AchAryAs in contrast appear sharp or harsh for the general public, but inside, they are all

sweet. It is not they ever intend to hurt or offend the feelings of anyone. But even bhagavAn says in gIta that the truth often appears like poison at first, while whatever is not truth appears like nectar at first.

Everybody knows which party is more popular.

The mind of these people is "niSha~NgiN" as it, by it's persuasive speech (which is a function of mind), removes others from the path of dharma, cleaving them away. The senses possessed by such a mind are thus "stenA-s" or stealthy thieves as they sneakily lead others away from dharma.

namo niSha~NgiNa iShudhimate taskarANAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that clings to anger (niSha~NgiN), filled with attachments that contain pain for others (iShudhimat). Not mine is the mind which possesses the senses that rob people of their possessions (taskarANAM pataye).

This refers to 2 guNAs - anger (krodha) and violence (paruSha). The "niSha~NgiN" is the mind that clings to attachments that are the reason for anger. Gita 10.4 speaks of these guNAs of the asurAs.

"iShudhimat" - The mind possesses attachment to objects that they have no right to. These contain the "arrows" which are a metaphor of the form of causing injury to others.

Those who have anger covet the possessions of others. They are thus said to have senses that commit actions to steal the possessions of others. rAvaNa, coveted Sita who was rAma's property, who he had no right over.

Thus the senses are "taskarA-s" who openly steal the material possessions of others, as opposed to earlier when they stealthily stole the discrimination of others by enticing them to adhArmic darShaNA-s opposed to the Veda.

namo va~nchate pariva~nchate stAyUnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that goes astray in ignorance of what should and should not be done (va~nchate), who goes astray greatly in interchanging realities (pariva~nchate). Not mine is the mind who is the possessor of senses that steal or appropriate what belongs to bhagavAn, ie, the Atman (stAyUnAM pataye).

This is the quality of "aj~nAna". The term "va~nchate" refers to ignorance in the form of being confused between what should be done and what should not be done. This is rAjasIka buddhi. An example would be considering Hari as equal to all gods and end up propitiating them all equally, due to an inability to discern the differences between them as enumerated in shAstra.

A still greater ajnAna is "parivanchate" - tAmasIka buddhi. In this, rather than confusion, there is actually a distorted clarity in that the higher reality and the lower realities are completely reversed or interchanged, and a lack of discriminating knowledge that certain Agama-s have indeed committed this interchange or reverse of realities and advocate practices inimical to the Veda. They are mesmerized by the realities propagated in these Agama-s and led astray. Manu too condemns certain smritis which have meanings opposed to the Vedas and only have partial authority (Manu Smriti 12.95).

One must note that rAjasIka and tAmasIka buddhi exist even in those with vairAgya or bhakti. Because many darShaNa-s opposed to the Veda do have people of upright standing, who can be considered as renunciates, etc. But all this "external sattva" does not mean their buddhi is sAttvika. It solely refers to their understanding of tattva-s. gIta talks about these buddhI-s.

Such a mind is indeed engaging in actions that steal what is rightfully, a property of nArAyaNa, the Atman. They dedicate that Atman to themselves (by fruitive actions), or to other entities lesser than nArAyaNa. Vide,

yo.anyathA santamAtmAnanyathA pratipadyate .kiM tena na kR^itaM pApaM choreNAtmApahAriNA (~Adi Parva Parva, MB)

[He who is of one nature (as belonging to nArAyaNa), who however presents himself as another (as belonging to himself or others), is like a thief who robs the self that belongs to bhagavAn. Of what sin is he not capable?]

I am saying all this here because that is the correct interpretation of this mantra, which I am not shying away from. No other intent to pass judgment on others is meant.

namo nicherave paricharAyAraNyAnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that has lowly conduct (*nicherave*), who move away from *shAstric* injunctions (*paricharA*). Not mine is the mind which possesses senses that are abiding in "forests", signifying a collection of terrible actions (*AraNyAnAM pataye*).

Gita 16.7 describes these people.

"*nicheru*" - "*carati*" refers to moving or conduct, the prefix "*ni*" implies lowly conduct. This is in the form of a lack of internal cleanliness (*ajnAna*) and external cleanliness which is association with impure symbols, practices etc.

Such people have no knowledge of the means prescribed in the Vedas for not only liberation (*nivr^tti*) but even worldly aims like *svarga* etc (*prav^rtti*). Thus, they are "*parichara*" or those who have completely moved away from the *shAstra*.

The senses are said to be abiding in forests. Just as a forest is a collection of trees, this represents the senses abiding in a vast collection of terrible activities like not doing what is prescribed by *shAstra*, doing what is prohibited by *shAstra*, eating prohibited food, entertaining thoughts which shouldn't be contemplated etc.

namo sR[^]ikAvibhyo jighAsadbhyo muShNatAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind that associates with various views that hold arrows which cause harm (*sR[^]ikAvibhyo*), with intent for destruction of the world (*jighAsadbhyo*). Not mine is the mind which possesses senses that destroy others (*muShNatAM pataye*).

gIta 16.9 describes these people.

sR[^]ikAvibhyo - The mind has various view points that are said to hold "weapons" as they cause harm. *gIta* 16.9 describes these as "*etaM drShTim*". These views include lacking the understanding that the self is imperishable, having feeble intellect in that they lack discrimination of the self from the body, etc. As they undertake cruel deeds as a result of these views, these views are said to be holding arrows that cause pain.

Such people cause harm to their own relatives as well as to the world. They transgress the commands of *bhagavAn* and also encourage others to do so.

namo asimadbhyo naktaM charad.hbhyaH prakR^intAnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind associated with foul means that carry swords in the form of harm (asimadbhyo), the qualities or actions that move in or follow darkness of ignorance (naktaM charad.hbhyaH). Not mine is the mind that possesses senses which cut away discrimination (prakR^intAnAM pataye).

gIta 16.10 describes this. See how beautifully bhagavAn has described every mantra in a sequential manner in gIta, which makes it easy to interpret these mantra-s without searching for pramANAs in the ocean of shAstra. Now you understand why no other gIta comes close to srimad bhagavad gIta. And even greater, how beautifully AchArya rAmAnuja's bhAShya explains all these tattva-s such that they match even this section of the Veda.

"asimadbhyo" - As these asurAs hold views that the body is the self, they desire unattainable things. Craving to get them, they resort to foul means to acquire them. Since these means cause harm to themselves and others, they are metaphorically said to be holding swords. This is to differentiate them from the previous actions described by "shrukavibhyaH".

"naktaM charad.hbhyaH" - By ignorance in the form of lacking discrimination of what can be done and what cannot be done, they try to accumulate wealth by unfair means, they take vows not prescribed in the shAstra. These are the qualities or actions of the mind that are said to be "moving in night", ie, ignorance. Even if they undertake actions prescribed in shAstra, as they do it without the understanding that these actions are to be done in service of bhagavAn, they lose their shAstric authority.

namo uShNISHiNe giricharAya kulu~nchAnAM pataye namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the mind which endeavors to attain enjoyments of the form of rajo-guNa or heat (uShNISHiNe), moving about in speech of the form of actions geared at such sensual enjoyments (giricharAya). Not mine is the mind possessed of senses that remove deficiency in desires (kulu~nchAnAM).

gIta 16.11 explains this. These people undertake actions to attain objects of their desires. They have a firm view that there is no mokSha, svarga etc. But their desires are not lacking in the sense that they are near infinite and would take till mahApraLaya to satiate, as it were.

"uShniSha" - uShnaM ISatE - "uShniShin" is the mind that endeavors to attain "heat" that is rajo guNa, of the form of sense objects.

"girichara" - "girau" refers to speech of the form of all actions of the senses. The mind moves about in such actions to attain these desires.

"kulu~nchAnAM" - The senses that pull out or tear or remove the deficiency in desires, ie, they ensure the desires are never satiated and are countless.

namo iShumad.hbhyo dhanvAvibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the arrows that are the senses with desires for sense objects that hold pain (iShumad.hbhyo) and the senses with knowledge of the Vedas concerning acquisition of such objects (dhanvAvibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

From here on in, it is only a summary of what was already said. This is for further emphasis, highlighting the intensity of disgust that the upAsaka is adopting in his contemplation of such activities. Basically, starting from the first action of the person on the path of pravrtti in anuvAka 2 until what was described in anuvAka 3 till now.

There is no redundancy as repeated meditation is recommended to develop vairAgya. Or, this set of mantra-s can be taken like so - "On account of what I said so far, I tell such a mind now - "you are not mine". So, earlier it was a contemplation of "not mine" regarding mind and senses, now it is of the form of direct censure by telling the mind, "Because of this, you are not mine".

It might also be that earlier it was mere contemplative knowledge, now it is such contemplation while undertaking karma yoga or the path of desireless action. So now, while performing desireless action, the upAsaka is telling his mind, "you are not mine, ie, I will not let you become that". Anything is fine.

"bows" are often connected to thoughts in shAstra and here it refers to knowledge of various means in the Vedas for acquisition of fruitive objects.

The change is evident. "pataye" is no longer used. This is done by the Veda puruSha to make us realize that there has been a break in the continuity.

Won't describe this in detail much as it was already covered.

namo AtanvAnebhyaH pratidadhAnebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which produce or employ such Vedic means for acquiring objects (AtanvAnebhyaH) and the senses that approach the means with a desire for the fruits (pratidadhAnebhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo ayacchadbhya visrujad bhyascha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that procure desired objects for the self by attainment of devaloka etc (ayacchadbhya) and the senses that remove such experiences of objects upon their expiry (visrujadbhyascha). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo asyadbhyo vid.hdhyadbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that go to such objects of enjoyment in having unsatiated desires (asyadbhyo) and the senses that cling to anger due to non-attainment of objects (vid.hdhyadbhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo AsInebhyaH shayAnebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are seated in actions that are not to be done (AsInebhyaH) and the senses which are "sleeping" or numbed in the sense of not doing what is to be done (shayAnebhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo svapadbhyo jAgradbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that are sleeping or ignorant of the endeavor to control the senses for realizing the self (svapadbhya) and that are awake or intent on the material objects (jAgradbhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo stiShThad.hbhyo dhAvadbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that are established in rAga-dveSha, ie likes and dislikes (tiShThad.hbhyo) or the senses that move towards material objects (dhAvadbhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

namo sabhAbhyaH sabhApatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are associated with sense objects that are assemblages of the elements of prakrti (sabhAbhyaH) and the senses which possess the experiences of such sense objects which are also of such nature (sabhApatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

"sabha" means an assembly of anything. Sense objects are made of an assembly of elements like prithvi, ap, etc. And as the experiences are perishable, they can also be said to have this quality. "sabhApati" is used for experiences to distinguish from "sabhA" which is association with the objects in the first place (by aprthak-siddhi).

Namo ashvebhyo.ashvapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are uncontrollable like horses (ashvebhyo) and which possess the desires which are also difficult to tame like horses (ashvapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

This ends the anuvAka.

ANUVAKA 4 - CONTEMPLATION ON ASURA GATI

In the 2nd anuvAkam it was described how the person who became addicted to sense objects succumbed to svahimsa in the form of unrequited desire and anger. That led to parahimsa in the 3rd anuvAka, which cemented his status as a nitya-samsArin and one with asura bhAva.

This anuvAka dwells on how these asurAs act in samsAra, having been ensnared in it. It talks of the gati they attain. Basically, it is continuing the story of the 3rd anuvAka.

nama AvyadhinIbhyo vividhyantIbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that wound in the form of contemplations of the fruits of desires (AvyadhinIbhyo) and the senses which wound by various kinds of thoughts (vividhyantIbhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

The third anuvAka, before the summary mantrA-s, ended with the statement that the mind is possessed of unsatiated desires (reference: uShNISHiNe giricharAya kulu~nchAnAM pataye). So this anuvAka picks up from that. These asurAs, having uncontrollable desires, are now experiencing further intensification of those qualities.

In a way, this is also beautifully picking up from the last mantra of the "summary mantra-s" in the second anuvAka, as it flows naturally from the last mantra which talked about uncontrollable senses and desires. Either way, it is a continuation whether we take those last set of mantras as "summary" or a change in viewpoint via actual performance of karma yoga.

"avyAdhinI" - The senses which wound by acting on various desires and thinking about various fruits of such desires.

"vivyAdhInI" - The senses hurt by various thoughts and deeds like - "Now this land and son has been acquired by me. I am going to get other things. I have money which I earned by my own talent. I am going to make more money." ityAdi.

gIta 16.12-13 describes this. Both svahimsa and parahimsa are implied by "wounding".

namo ugaNAbhyastR^ihatIbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are of a higher class, ie, rule over everything (ugaNAbhya) and the senses which crush the enemies (tR^ihatIbhyashcha). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

"gaNa" refers to a class. "ugaNa" means superior class. The asura considers himself as independent and the actions of his senses reflect that he is not subordinate to anyone.

"tRmhati" - He thinks, "Today this enemy has been killed. I will soon kill the other enemies too."

This is mentioned in gIta 16.14.

namo gR^itsebhyo grutsapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are very sharp or dextrous in the performance of works (gR^itsebhyo) and the senses that possess sharpness or intelligence in a perverted fashion (grutsapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

grutsa - Bhatta bhAskara has pointed out that this has a meaning of "clever, wise, sharp" but also has a negative connotation to it. gIta 16.15 explains this - the asura has senses which conduct actions and thoughts that possess (pati) the "grtsa" or perverted intelligence like - "nobody is equal to me, nobody has secured such distinction as I have".

"gratsapati" - Such a person has senses which, lacking any true knowledge, that possess (pati) perverted knowledge (grtsa) about diverse things. Again, gIta 16.15 explains this.

namo vrAtebhyo vrAtapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses associated with "vrata-s" or works (vrAtebhyo) and the senses that possess the fruits of works which are the titles and names of honor (vrAtapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

gIta 16.15-17 explains this. The asura performs yAgAs etc in shAstra not out of devotion to bhagavAn, but knowing that by doing so, others will praise him as their master and he will gain fame, adoration etc. As he also lays claim to the fruits, not having devotion to IShvara, his senses are "vrAtapati-s" as they possess (pati) the "vrAta-s" - fruits belonging to works, which are various titles as "performers and masters of sacrifices".

namo gaNebhyo gaNapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that follow desires for enjoyment keenly (gaNebhyo) and the senses which possess multitudes of desires (gaNapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

It is not redundant to repeat the attachment to desires again here. Because, when actions are done out of initial desires, those desires only grow like fire to which fuel has been added. This is a sure path to a foul hell, as per gIta 16.16.

"gaNebhyo" - refers to followers. "gaNapati" - the senses which possess desires in "gaNAs" - multitudes, to indicate that they can never be satiated.

namo virUpebhyo vishvarUpebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which have unnatural actions and knowledge (virUpebhyo) and the senses which exhibit perfections as it were (vishvarUpebhyo). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

These asurAs perform the rituals in a manner contrary to shAstra. gIta 16.17 describes it as "avidhi-pUrvakaM". That is implied by "virUpa" - unnatural actions. The term "rUpa" means characteristics in the form of actions and knowledge.

These asurAs also consider themselves as perfect in every way and as their actions reflect that, the senses are called "viShvarUpa" - "characterized by perfections". The term "stabdhAH" in gIta 16.17 indicates this.

namo mahadbhyaH kShullakebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which perform actions that reflect ego (mahadbhyaH) and the senses that are malicious towards the Supreme Lord (kShullakebhyo). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

gIta 16.18 explains this. The senses perform actions that reflect ego of the form of, "I require no help from anyone to do this. My own power is adequate. I can get everything by my mere will, etc."

Such actions are intended with hate against bhagavAn, which he declares in gIta 16.18 as "**mAmAtmaparadeheShu pradviShantaH**" - "That asurA hates me, who am residing in their body and the bodies of others.

namo rathibhyo.arathebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are being supported by the body, ie, sensual gratification (rathibhyo) and the senses which are opposed to the knowledge of Brahman as revealed in the vedAnta (arathebhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

Both gIta 7.15 and 16.19 shlokAs describe four types of asurAs. The first two are described here.

The mUdhaH is one who engages in self-gratification. Hence his senses are "rathibhya" or supported by the pleasures of the body which is a chariot as per kenopaniShad.

The narAdhama is one who has no authentic knowledge of the Lord as revealed in the vedAnta. He has some knowledge about the supremacy (paratvaM) of bhagavAn, but is not aware of his accessibility (saulabhya) and turns away from him. These people have senses that are "arathebhya" or opposed to the (knowledge of the) Veda which is a chariot or vAhana for bhagavAn, or that which carries the seeker to his desired end (hence a chariot).

namo rathebhyaH rathapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which are "chariots" as they enable movement away from bhagavAn by warped discrimination and actions (rathebhyaH) and the senses which possess "chariots" or thoughts and actions which carry one away from bhagavAn (rathapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

gIta 7.15 and 16.19 explain the remaining 2 types of asurAs.

The third type is one with "mAyayA-apahrta-jnAna". They get swayed by deceitful reasonings of kudhRShTIs and get deprived of their judgement and their actions reflect their warped knowledge. They possess senses called "rathebhyaH" which are chariots that carry the self away from bhagavAn. Or, the senses themselves move away from bhagavAn by warped actions, so they are chariots.

The fourth type are those with "asura bhAva" whose hate for bhagavAn simply increases as they gain more knowledge of his greatness. Their senses are called

"rathapatibhya" as they indulge in thoughts and actions of hatred towards bhagavAn which carry the self or themselves away from the Lord.

Technically, only the 4th type are asurAs proper, but as the rest are all equally bad, bhagavAn calls them all asurAs.

namo senAbhyaH senanibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which always stay with desire who is their master (senAbhyaH) and the senses which are leaders of the self to low births in samsAra (senanibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

"Sena" as "inena vartate iti senA" -- "svAmin saha" - One who is always with the master is sena.

What is the reason for these asurAs acting the way they do? The root cause is given in gIta 16.21 as desire, anger and greed.

So, the senses are "sena-s" as they always stay with the root cause that is desire. Anger and greed are forms arising from desire, so they are not required to be mentioned separately.

Such senses are also "senAnIs" or leaders/commanders as they lead and command the self into lower births by their vile thoughts and actions.

namo kShattR^ibhyaH sa.ngrahItR^ibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which cut (away) one from shAstra by their actions (kShattR^ibhyaH) and the senses which lay hold of ownership over actions (sa.ngrahItR^ibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

gIta 16.23 explains this. Besides desire-anger-greed triumvirate, there is one more reason why people become asurAs and that is because of their lack of reverence for the shAstra.

"kShattR" means to cut. The senses, by their actions, transgress the Veda which is the command of bhagavAn and thus cut away one from shAstra. Then, they do actions which are dictated by one's own desire, as opposed to the shAstra. So

they are "samgrahItR-s" or those senses who bestow or lay hold of the ownership of actions - ie, he thinks he can do as he pleases rather than actions of the shAstra.

namostakShabhyo rathakArebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that destroy happiness in this world (takShabhyo) and the senses that make "chariots" or the bodies that sustain samsAra (rathakArebhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

"takShati" means to cut off or destroy. The senses that act by transgressing the shAstra, one destroys all happiness he could possibly get in this world like svarga etc.

"rathakAra-s" - The senses that by actions make bodies (by accruing sins) which are chariots as they carry the jIva from one birth to another in samsAra. The idea is, such a person does not attain liberation either.

Thus, happiness of both worlds are denied to him. This is mentioned in gIta 16.23.

namo kulAlebhyaH karmArebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which adorn (the mind) with contrary tattvA-s and the senses which perform contrary actions. To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

Why does transgression of shAstra lead to grief? Because the shAstra prescribes what is to be accepted and not to be accepted, both in terms of tattvajnAna as well as karmas to be performed.

The person who transgresses shAstra engages his senses in tattva-s contrary to those prescribed by the shAstra, by the act of hearing, speaking, listening about them from veda-bAhya shAstra or other sources. Thus, his senses are called "kulAlA-s" - "kula" refers to the tribe of contrary tattva-s that adorn (al) the mind.

Besides a lack of discrimination of tattva-s, they also have a lack of discrimination in what is to be performed and what is not. Hence, they perform contrary actions. "karmAra" is related to working or crafting in the form of contrary actions.

namo pu~njiShTebhyo niShAdebhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which accumulate objects of enjoyment (pu~njiShTebhyo) and the senses which torture others for their benefit due to such desires for objects (niShAdebhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

"punjiShta" means to accumulate. "niShAda" - itarAm sAdayati pIDayati iti niShAda - One who tortures others for his benefit.

It is not redundant to describe all this again. Firstly because this is describing the outcome of shAstric transgressions, which is similar to the previous outcome of anger resulting from non-attainment of sense objects. These veda bAhya actions lead naturally to sense enjoyment and hence that is described again.

Secondly, the veda puruSha here is describing the natural course of a person with Asuric svabhAva in samsAra. And this is precisely what samsAra is, revolving endlessly from sinful birth to sinful birth, repeating the same sinful actions. Such contemplation induces disgust and dispassion for the sense objects which is necessary to realize the self.

"Torturing others" need not just be physical. Since this person has grasped wrong tattva-s, he might also be teaching it to others and influencing them to follow a wrong path.

namo iShukR^idbhyo dhanvakR^id.hbhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses which make "arrows" of the form of bringing pain on account of loss of the objects of enjoyments (iShukR^idbhyo) and the senses which make "bows" that are repeated contemplations of the unattainable objects of enjoyment (dhanvakR^id.hbhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

As mentioned earlier, the redundancy is not a flaw as it is describing the same thing in a different context - the context of an asura having transgressed shAstra-s and descended into a rAkShasa birth, as opposed to previous contexts of pain at non-acquirement of svarga-bhoga etc.

"arrows" signify various experiences of pain on non-attainment of objects. As objects are many, so are the pains. The "bows" are used to wield the "arrows" -

Repeated contemplation on those objects with longing intensifies the pains. In shAstra, "bow" is often linked to thought.

namo mrugayubhyaH shvanibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that are united with anger of the form of attachments to the unattainable objects (mrugayubhyaH) and the senses that keep dogs, ie, that are ineligible for performing actions prescribed in the Vedas to attain liberation (shvanibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

mRga - animal - refers to the anger in the form of attachments as per the mahAnArAyaNopanishad. "mrugayu" means being united with such anger.

The senses are described as "keepers of dogs". The term "dog" is a metaphor for unclean acts (asauchaM) that renders one unfit for vaidika kAryAs. The following pramANa illustrates that,

svarge loka shvavatAM nAsti dhiShNyaM (~ mahAprasthAnika parva, MB)

[There is no place in svarga for those who keep the company of dogs.]

The means prescribed in the Vedas lead to mokSha which is also called "svarga". So "svarga" here can be taken as the liberated world.

namo shvabhyaH shvapatibhyashcha vo namaH

Meaning: Not mine are the senses that are dogs as they take away the merits of prior works by their lowly actions (shvabhyaH) and the senses that possess dogs, ie, impure actions that make them ineligible for performance of actions prescribed for svarga etc (shvapatibhya). To you, who are the mind possessing such senses - I say "not mine".

shunA dR^iShTaM krodhavashA haranti yaddattamiShTaM vivR^itamatho hutaM cha (~MahAprasthAnika Parva, MB)

[The devas called "krodhavAsa-s" take away the sacrifices that have been performed as well as the oblations, if seen by a dog.]

The wayward senses not only makes one ineligible for actions prescribed in the Veda as mentioned previously, but they also remove any merit or fruits gained by

legitimate actions like vedic sacrifices etc. As the krodhavAsa-s take away any sacrifices or gifts when seen by a dog, so when the person with wayward senses seeks to use articles procured by him legitimately for evil purposes, they are also taken away.

Not only that, he is no longer even eligible to perform those sacrifices. Meaning, he becomes ineligible for even the portions of Vedas which recommend actions for fruits like killing enemies, svarga etc. To sum up:

- "Keeper of Dogs" signified the senses were ineligible for means prescribed to attain mokSha in the Veda.
- "Dogs" signified the senses, being unclean, removed any merit or fruit acquired even legitimately via prior acts prescribed by the Veda.
- "Possessing dogs" means the senses are doing various impure acts that render them ineligible for even the means prescribed in the Veda for perishable fruits or lower goals like svarga, killing enemies etc.

(A clarification: I am a dog lover too, so chill. It is not that bhagavAn hates dogs. Just as a shUdra is not permitted to chant the Vedas but still can attain bhagavAn, dogs are considered impure for some vaidika kAryAs but there is no hate in shAstra for those adorable mutts. :wink:)

The end result is, such a person stays forever in samsAra, in the lower worlds, never even attaining the abodes of the gods. With that this anuvAka and the discourse on asura gati is concluded.

If you are feeling fairly depressed after reading all that, relax. Things pick up from here on as the Veda PuruSha embarks on a glorious meditation of Brahman and the self. More on that later, we are done with the hard part.

ANUVAKA 5 - ABHYASA YOGA

The 4th anuvAka concluded the meditation on the various aspects of how hankering after sense objects can lead to samsAra, to develop dispassion on it. Karma Yoga was also initiated by the Veda puruSha about three quarters into the 3rd anuvAka, indicated by a break in continuity.

As karma yoga is desireless action by loving services to Brahman, it is necessary to cultivate a deep love for Brahman. Note that this love is not some ordinary bhakti - it is a deep, incessant meditative form of love that is difficult to develop. To attain this state, bhagavAn recommends abhyAsa yoga - repeated contemplation on his deeds and qualities to develop a ruchi for them while engaging in karma yoga.

That is what the 5th and 6th anuvAkAs do. Note that the double namaskArAs give way to single namaskAra here, so it means the mind is now in a state of sattva as the shatapatha brAhmaNa pramANa quoted earlier declared. So, "namaH" properly means only salutations here, in the sense of "I am not mine, nether are my possessions - all are yours".

But there is more.

The upAsaka, in these 2 anuvAkAs, meditates on two different sets of kalyANa guNAs of bhagavAn which are contradictory to each other. This is called "agatitagatanAsAmarthya" - ability to reconcile opposites.

Swami nammazwar, in the thiruvaimOzhi, hails Oppiliappan, the Lord of thiruviNNagar divya desam, as the One who reconciles contrasting attributes as follows:

**nalguravum selvum naragum suvarkkamumAy, velpagaiyum naTpum viDamum
amudamumAy, palvagaiyum parandaperu mAnennai yALvAnai, selvammalgu
kuDittiru viNNagark kaNDEnE**

So what the Veda puruSha does is, he describes one set of guNAs which help his devotees and another set of guNAs which destroy the evil-doers. The names on the left indicate the guNAs that help the devotees, while the names on the right indicate what he does to evil-doers.

There is also a bit more. The names are interconnected. So, if you take just the left side names and read them together, you will get a sequential progression of the activities of bhagavAn. If you take just the right side names and read them together, again, you will get a sequential progression of activities. If you read left, right, left, right - then also you get a sequential progression. Just try it for yourself for anuvAkAs 5 and 6 - Read just the left names first, then the right names only, then take them all together. This is the magic of the Vedas!

Now, a question - why meditate like this? Because the aim of the Rudram is to control the senses for realization of the self, which is called "nivrtti mArga". This involves renouncing sense gratification, which is "pravrtti mArga". So, the guNAs of bhagavAn that aid the nivrtti mArga upAsakAs (his devotees) and destroy the pravrtti mArga asurAs (the samsArIs), is very relevant.

How to figure out which side names denote nivrtti and which denotes pravrtti? By the occurrence of "vyuptakeSha", which is a clear indication of his guNa of subduing the asurAs, it is clear that the names describing his guNAs against the asurAs are on the right side.

With that, let us begin understanding this magnificent anuvAka. All of the names are described in the viShNu sahasranAma as well. The greatness of shrI parAshara bhattar is that, only his viShNu sahasranAma bhAShya fits the context of these mantrAs as well. Other sahasranAma bhAShyAs may be etymologically correct, but do not get the context right.

Mantra 1

namo bhavAya cha rudrAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to the One who is the source of happiness for those devotees on the path of nivrtti (bhava) and the one who gives misery of the form of fruits of actions to non-devotees (rudra)

The mahAbhArata states "*ShivaH ShivAnAM aShivaH aShivAnAM*" - *[He is the conferrer of auspiciousness for devotees and inauspiciousness for non-devotees.]*

There are two types of people - those on the path of nivrtti/mokSha who seek him and those who are interested in pravrtti/enjoyment of worldly pleasures via

fruitive actions prescribed in the Vedas. Former is auspicious, latter is inauspicious.

"rudra" - "rutiM dadAti".

Mantra 2

namaH sharvAya cha paShupataye cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is the destroyer of the sins of his devotees (sharva) and the possessor of anger towards non-devotees that is the cause of sins (paShupatayE)

Sharva - How is he the source of happiness for devotees as stated previously? In viShNu sahasranAma, bhattar interprets "sharva" as - "sva sharIra bhUtAnAm ashubhamapi shRNAti iti sharvah" - He who destroys sorrows of his devotees who are his bodies.

"paShupati" - The mahAnArAyaNa upanishad refers to anger as "paShu". Thus, he is the possessor (pati) of anger (paShu). The non-devotees on the fruitive path of action through the Vedas incur his anger by their activities aimed at sense gratification. They have no knowledge that they are his body and he is their self, or that the fruits of actions must be dedicated to him. They cause harm to themselves and others in the course of such fruitive endeavors which incur the anger of bhagavAn manifests in the form of pApAs or sins.

So he is the remover of sorrow and the cause of sorrow for each group.

Mantra 3

namo nIagrIvAya cha shitikaNThAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who destroys ignorance of the devotees (nIagrIva) and to the one with a dark voice, ie, confusing speech for the non-devotees (ShitikaNTha)

"nIagrIva" - After destroying sins obstructing knowledge, he imparts knowledge to his devotees. As mentioned in previous anuvAKAs, "grIva" is that "which causes to descend, or swallow". "nIla" is a dark color indicating ignorance. The devotee in samsAra is called nIla as he is covered by ignorance and has no knowledge of karma, jnAna and bhakti yogAs. shrI yAmuna muni says, "na dharma niShtoshmi

na ca Atma vedi, na bhaktimAn" - I do not know karma, jnAna or bhakti". For such a jIva who is ignorant of the means and yet desirous of attaining a vision of the self, bhagavAn is "nIlagrIva" as he is the cause of their ignorance being "swallowed", ie, he destroys their ignorance and grants them knowledge (dadAmi buddhi yogaM taM ~ gIta 10.10).

"ShitikaNTha" - As the previous right side name indicated, those on the pravrtti mArga, abusing the means prescribed in the Vedas for fruitive actions, have incurred his anger in the form of pApa-karmas and committing sins against gods and others. For them, he becomes one whose voice or speech representing all his actions (kaNTha) is dark (shiti) - he confuses them by employing various means to turn them away from the Vedas.

The term "kaNTha" can mean sound or speech, which always denotes all actions of the senses. "Shiti" means a dark color and hence signifies ignorance.

mAyA mohena te daityAh prakAraih bahubhih sadA |vyutthApitA yathA naishAmtrayIm kaScit arocayat || hatASca te'surA devaih san-mArga paripanthinah || (vishNu purANa - 3.18.34)

[By his powerful skill, he confounded in several ways their minds, and led them astray, as a result of which there was no one amongst them who had a liking for the veda-s. They became averse to going in the right path, and they were easily disposed of by the gods.]

Thus, for his ignorant devotees, he destroys their ignorance and they gain knowledge. But for knowledgeable non-devotees, he destroys their knowledge and they gain ignorance.

Mantra 4

namaH kapardine cha vyuptakeshAya cha

Meaning: One with a bewitching form of the tortoise that destroys the sins of his devotees (kapardin) and One with a bewitching form comprising the shaven head that creates sins for the non-devotees (vyuptakeshA).

"kapardin" is a name of kUrma as he bears the "kaparda" - the marine/cowrie shell. Thus the shAnti parva, while listing the avatArAs of the Lord, calls kUrma by this name as below,

"kapardine varAhAya ekasR^ingAya dhImate" (~shAnti parva, MB)

He destroys the ignorance of his devotees and grants knowledge as the previous name said. How? This name explains that his bewitching form is the means for that, which destroys all sins.

Why specifically mention kUrma here? Because his form is the one that is mentioned to be specially blissful and bewitching for his devotees in shruti and smriti. Vide,

kUrmamupadadhAti | raso vai kUrmo rasamevaitadupadadhAti (~ Shatapatha brAhmaNa)

[He yokes himself to the form of KUrma (by meditation). Brahman who is KUrma is verily bliss, it is this bliss he bestows (on the meditator).]

And also,

hiraNmaya 'pi bhagavAn nivasati kUrma-tanuM bibhrANas tasya tat priyatamAM tanum aryamA saha varSha-puruShaiH... (~ bhAgavataM 5.18.29)

Which says the prIyatama rUpa of kUrma is worshipped by bhaktAs in hiranmaya-varSha. Thus, it is a bewitching form that destroys sins for the devotees.

In contrast, VyuptakEsha, or shaven headed refers to Buddha avatAra as per the following pramaNa:

tato digambaro muNDo barhi-patra-dharo dvija |mAyA moho'surAn SlakshNam idam vacanam abravIt || (~ VishNu PurAnA 18.2)

[Approaching the daitya-s engaged in ascetic penances, He approached them in the semblance of a naked mendicant, with his head shaven, and carrying a bunch of peacock's feathers, and addressed them in gentle accents thus.]

punaSca raktAmbaradhRk mAyA-mohah a-jitekshaNah (VP 3.18.16)

[He was clad in crimson robes, and had eyes which were unconquered; and He deluded the minds of all by His mAyA]

He creates ignorance for the asurAs as per the previous name. How? This name explains that asurAs too become enamored of his bewitching form. Seeing his form, they thought he was exceedingly trustworthy and hence become deceived by him to leave the path of dharma. This is indicated by the nAmAs "sundaraH, sundaH, ratna-nAbhaH, sulochanaH" in the sahasranAma.

He as kUrma has a form that was bewitching for his devotees and destroyed their sins, becoming a means for liberation. He as the mahA-moha mUrthy had a form that was bewitching for the asurAs and caused them to accumulate more sins by trusting in that form, which became a means for samsAra.

Mantra 5

namaH sahasrAkShAya cha shatadhanvane cha

Meaning: One who is omniscient as the innerself, beyond the sense organs, for his devotees (sahasrAkSha) and whose bow is the diversified sAttvika ahamkAra from which the sense organs arise (shatadhanva) for the non-devotees

"**sahasrAksha**" - This is a name that indicates para-vidya according to Bhattar. As he is the innerself of all, he is sarva-sAKShi and hence omniscient. The devotees meditating on his form, understand that he is beyond the sense organs as the innerself of all. Thus, they gain this higher knowledge of the para vidyA.

"**shatadhanvanE**" - This can mean "manifold bow" or "many bows". The bow shArnga supports the diversified sAttvika ahaMkAra in the form of organs of knowledge and action as per viShNu purANa. So this nAma means, he who, by his bow, supports the manifold senses. Accumulating more sins, the non-devotees become dependent on the sense organs and do not see the Lord who is beyond the senses.

bhUtAdim indriyAdiM cha dvidhAhaMkAram IshvaraH / bibharti sha~NkharUpeNa shAr~NgarUpeNa cha sthitam // (~ viShNu purANa 1.22.68)

[He supports tAmasa and sAttvika ahaMkAra (from which the senses arise) in the form of the conch and the bow]

A small note: "sahasraM" and "shataM" are used here for a purpose respectively. "sahasraM" means literally numerous - implies omniscience here. Whereas, Bhattar hints that "shataM" can be used in the sense of "many-in-one" - Many indriyAs supported by the bow.

Mantra 6

namo girishAya cha shipiviShTaya cha

Meaning: He who is the Ruler of the Vedas as the object of attainment for his devotees (girisha) and who has entered other objects of attainment which are his rays for the non-devotees (shipiviShTa)

Girisha - The devotees, understanding the para vidyA that is beyond the senses as the previous name indicated, consider him the sole object of attainment. So they adopt various brahma vidyAs to attain him using the guidance of the Vedas. "girau" refers to the Vedas.

shipiviShTa- According to Bhattar, it means he who has entered filling with the rays (mayah, tAn sampravishTah - vyAptavAn iti shipiviShTa). The non-devotees, on the other hand, only trusting their senses, consider the sense objects as the sole objects of attainment. These sense objects are illumined by their senses, hence they are rays (shipi-s). Unlike those devotees who use the Vedas to illumine bhagavAn, these asurAs use their senses to illumine sense objects. It is bhagavAn who sustains these sense objects as well, so he is said to enter into them.

At this point, note that if you take these names as denoting any other god other than viShNu, you will never be able to get exact opposite guNAs because there aren't that many described for them. Neither would you be able to string meanings so that left side and right side align separately in a continuity and also with each other. Try it for yourself if you want. An indication of who this anuvAka is talking about.

Mantra 7

namo mIDhuShTamAya cheShumate cha

Meaning: Salutations to the One who drenches the devotees scorched by samsAra with rain (mIDhuShTama) and to the sustainer of arrows or the senses impelling the non-devotees to sense objects (iShumat)

For his devotees who are fatigued by the heat of samsAra and resort to him using brahma vidyAs, he drenches them with the rain of his nectar like effulgence ("vRShah" nAma in sahasranAma).

For the non-devotees who are seeking the sense objects, he further tightens the snare of samsAra (pASha-s) -- he sustains their senses that impels them towards those objects, aggravating their taste for sins and even denying them the objects they seek. The name "tantu-varadhana" indicates this in the sahasranAma.

"Arrows" signify the senses as they impel one towards sense objects according to viShNu purANa.

Ani indriyAni ashesAni buddhi karma AtmakAni vai | Shara rUpANI ashesAni tAni dhatte janArdanah || (~viShNu purANa 1.22.73)

[All the senses which are jnAnendriyAs and karmendriyAs, are present in the form of arrows, in JanArdana's form.]

"iShumat" - One who sustains (mat) these actions of the senses. Earlier, "shatadhanvanE" also in a way signified these senses, by denoting sAttvika ahamkAra which gives rise to them. But the reason for 2 different terms is to show that earlier, the senses were described as the means for perception for asurAs; here it is that these senses impel the asurAs. So, there is no redundancy.

Mantra 8

namo hrasvAya cha vAmanAya cha

Meaning: He who feels he has done very less for his devotee as he acts for their benefit (hrasva) and He who is minute or small for non-devotees as he conceals his greatness and does not act for their benefit (vAmana).

"hrasva" refers to smallness or insignificance. bhagavAn has given his devotees all they seek and even more than they want. But even after giving them everything, he feels like what he has done is very insignificant. As kriShNa lamented,

govindeti yadAkrandat krshNA mAma dUravAsini |rNam pravrdhamiva me hrdayAt na apasarpati || (MB 3-58-22)

[That cry for help uttered aloud by Draupadi even from afar, calling me "govindA" - that cry is never away from my mind like a debt increased with interest accumulated on it]

The idea is that, he acts for the benefits of his devotees. The nAma "anala" in the sahasranAma denotes this.

But for non-devotees who are also seeking certain objects of attainment, he is "vAmana" - very small or insignificant, or minute and difficult to be seen. He conceals himself and does not act for their benefit (janhur nAma in sahasranAma). Vide,

*cakram tad-vAsudevasya mAyayA vartate vibhoh | sApahnuvam
pANdaveshu ceshTate rAhasattamah || (udyoga parva 6.7.2, MB)*

[That discus of the Omni-present vAsudeva acts by his will for the benefit of the pANdavas being invisible (to the eyes of others), O Great King!]

Thus, it means he acts for the benefit of devotees and against the benefit of the non-devotees.

Mantra 9

namo bR^ihate cha varShIyase cha

Meaning: One who is like the great lake that his devotees will find comfort in (bR^ihat) and the great lake or pit in which the non-devotees drown (vArShIyas)

The name "mahAhrAda" in sahasranAma explains both these names. For devotees, as he acts for their benefit, he is like a vast lake in which they bathe again and again but never get satiated.

But for the non-devotees, as he never acts for their benefit, he is like a vast lake again in which they drown, never to rise up. As he declares in the gIta 16.19-20, he hurls the asurAs into the darkness of the lowest births and they never attain him.

Alternatively, "vArShIyas" can also mean a great pit, that he hurls the asurAs into the darkness of raurava etc.

Nampillai adds in Eedu - His quality of "souShIlyaM" or easy accessibility is like a great lake. His devotees delight in him taking forms as yaShoda's son, daSharatha's son, a fish, a boar etc like thirsty people quenching their thirst from a lake. But the ignorant think he was a human born due to karma, he was subject to others and thus drown in that lake.

Mantra 10

namo vR^iddhAya cha saMvR^id.hdhvane cha

Meaning: One who is augmented or grown by the happiness of his devotees (vR^iddha) and One who is augmented or grown in the form of his AveSha-s for the chastisement of the non-devotees (saMvR^iddha).

"vR^iddha" means to be augmented or increased. As he acts for the benefit of his devotees, bhagavAn thinks he has become prosperous only when his devotees become happy. rAmAyaNa says that when vibhIShaNa was crowned King of Lanka, rAma became free from fever and extremely happy.

"saMvR^iddha" is explained based on the nAma "shatrujit-shatru-tApanaH" in the sahasranAma. As he acts against the benefits of non-devotees, he chastises the enemies of the world by investing certain virtuous jIva-s with his own powers (saktyAveSha-s) - like purutkutsa, puranjaya, etc. Thus, he, in the form of purutkutsa/puranjaya etc., becomes augmented as they are invested with his powers.

The idea is, he is augmented by the happiness of his devotees and for the misfortune of the enemies.

Mantra 11

namo agriyAya cha prathamAya cha

Meaning: One who is the foremost in bearing the burden of protection of his devotees (agriya) and One who is the foremost in taking the lead to destroy the enemies of his devotees (prathama).

How does he make his devotees happy? The nAma "kshaminAM-varaH" in the sahasranAma explains "agriya" - he is the foremost in bearing the burden of

protection of his devotees. BhagavAn is so anxious and intense to protect his devotees that he cannot wait until he gets there. He is said to have felt relieved only when he saw Gajendra safe.

Then, the nAma "vyagraH" in sahasranAma explains "**prathama**" - He is very zealous when it comes to destroying the enemies of his devotees and brooks no delay. This way, he brings about their misfortune as mentioned in the previous nAma.

Thus sri kriShNa was eager to destroy the enemies even ahead of Arjuna,

*Ye yanti yantyeva Sini-pravira! Ye'vasthita satvaram te'pi yantu |
Bhishmam rathat pashyata paatyamanam Dronam ca sankhye sa-ganam
maya'dya ||... rathat avaplutya visrijya vahan || (MahaBharata, Bhishma
Parva 59.86)*

["O Satyaki! Those who have gone, have gone for ever. Those who are still left, let them all go at once. You will see now that Bhishma is thrown from his chariot, and also Drona with his army". So saying, Krishna jumped down from the chariot, and leaving the horses, advanced forward against Bhishma with a chariot wheel as a weapon.]

Thus, he is zealous in both protection of devotees as well as destruction of non-devotees.

Mantra 12

nama Ashave chAjirAya cha

Meaning: One who is quickly implementing all actions for purification of his devotees (Ashava) and quickly implementing all actions for the elimination of the non-devotees (Ajira)

How does he protect his devotees? Very quickly. The nAma "mano-javaH" says he is as quick as thought in purifying his devotees. Mere recitation of his names immediately destroys their sins. A mere touch of his is like an unparalleled medicine. Thus he says in gIta 9.31, "**kShipraM bhavati dharmAtma**"

How does he destroy his enemies? Very quickly as Kalki etc.

Thus, he is both quick in anugraha and quick in nigraha.

Mantra 13

namaH shIghriyAya cha shIbhyAya cha

Meaning: He who is swift in giving away his wealth to his devotees (shIghra) and who is very quick in taking away the wealth of non-devotees (shIbhyA).

In what way is he quick in protection of devotees? The nAma "dhaneShvara" in sahasranAma implies he is very quick to bestow wealth on his devotees.

In what way is he quick in destruction of non-devotees? The nAma "vegavAn" in sahasranAma implies that he is very quick in showing his supremacy and lordship and thus it results in the wealth of non-devotees being taken away. Despite being a child, he nonetheless lifted the govardhana and quickly took away the pride of Indra, a God. He took away the lives of Putana and SakatAsura. He also quickly took away rukmini from shishupAla. Thus, he is quick to remove their wealth.

Mantra 14

namo UrmyAya chAvasvanyAya cha

Meaning: One whose appearance is auspicious and delightful for his devotees (Urmya) and whose sound is inauspicious and frightening for non-devotees (Avasvanya).

What is the reaction of devotees to his protection? "Urmi" means to become manifest. The nAma "sudarShaNa" in sahasranAma states that his manifestation pleases his devotees, who become delighted in mind.

What is the reaction of non-devotees to his destructive activities? "Avasvan" - His sound (svani) strikes them down (ava). gIta in the beginning says that the mere sound of the pAnchajanya scared the kauravas so much they felt they were defeated before the war had even commenced. Hence, his sound is inauspicious and frightening for them.

Now, we have contrasting attributes - delight and auspiciousness for devotees, fear and inauspicious for non-devotees. But there is one more guNa. For his devotees, he is visibly manifest. For non-devotees, they are struck down by his mere sound, ie, they don't see him.

That last guNa of being seen and unseen is brought out in the next mantra.

Mantra 15

namaH srotasyAya cha dvIpyAya cha

Meaning: One who moves towards those who are devoted (srotasya) and who abides in a shelter (his mAya that is prakrti) which conceals him from those not devoted to him (dvIpya).

Why are devotees delighted by his protection? "srotas" root is "sru" - to move. He moves towards his devotees. The reason is, devotion is the means to see him. Hence, he is known by them very well.

Why are the wicked afraid by his destructive actions? For the wicked, he conceals himself by his mAya that is prakrti and remains unseen. "dvIpa" means a shelter or refuge --- prakrti is his refuge for hiding himself. An unknown thing always causes fear.

ANUVAKA 6 - ABHYASA YOGA CONTINUED

As in the previous anuvAka, this section also dwells on the contrasting attributes of bhagavAn. It must be taken as the constant practice of abhyAsa yOgam through several births to ready oneself for upAsaNa. The Veda is not mere vAkya, but anuShtANa vidhi as well.

These set of names pick up from where we left off in terms of continuation. So, consider the story as continuing only.

Mantra 1

namo jyeShThAya cha kaniShThAya cha

Meaning: One who is the oldest for his devotees during his births (jyeShThA) and the one of a smaller stature for the non-devotees (kaniShTha)

Last mantra of previous anuvAka said he is known and unknown by his devotees and non-devotees respectively. How?

He is the eldest as he existed before all beings. He is older than Brahma, the self-born because he created Brahma (vishNu sahasranAmA - jyEshta).

This tattva is well comprehended by his devotees even when they see him as rAma, kriShNa etc. The vivekIs know him this way. But the ajnAnIs consider his birth thus,

"avajAnanti mAm muDhA" (gIta 9.11) - they think he was born of karma, as opposed to the fact that he is born of his will and for the sake of protecting us. Some also think he is of equal or lower stature to brahmA, rudra etc who have limited glories, so he becomes those lesser gods for them. Or worse, they think he is devoid of all attributes, or one with the Universe or a shUnya.

Thus, he is known as the oldest and hence most glorious by his devotees, but as one of a smaller stature and hence with limited glory by the non-devotees.

Mantra 2

namaH pUrvajAya chAparajAya cha

Meaning: One who is born at the beginning of the world as viShNu for the protection of the devotees (pUrvajA) and one whose birth is of a different nature, ie, for destruction of the non-devotees (aparajA)

In what way is he known as the Supreme Being or the oldest by his devotees? By his avatArAs which are for the sake of protection. **"pUrvajA"** means he is born among the trimUrti for the sake of protection of the devotees at the beginning of creation, as below,

*gatiSca nastvam pUrvajo jagatah prabhuh |rakshArtham sarva-bhUtAnAm
vishNustvam upajagmivAn || (~ MB Udyoga Parva 12.11)*

[You are our refuge; You are the first-born amongst the gods. You are the Lord of the Universe. You have assumed the role of vishNu for the protection of all the worlds.]

"aparajA" means "One whose birth has a different cause (apara) for the non-devotees". He is born to eliminate them who, not knowing him and thus thinking he is born of karma as mentioned earlier, go against him and his devotees.

"paritrANaya sAdhunAM vinAShaya ca duShkritAM" - He is born to protect his devotees and destroy the non-devotees.

Mantra 3

namo madhyamAya chApagalbhAya cha

Meaning: One who is the pride of his devotees (madhyamA) and one who is against the pride of the non-devotees (apagalbhA)

In what way does he protect his devotees by his births? "madhyama" means being the central part or middle of anything. He is the source of pride to his devotees and this makes him "central" in their glory or happiness. He allowed the yAdavAs to destroy their enemies, indulge in drinking and merrymaking etc, constructed the great city of dvAraka for them and brought the pArijAta.

In what way does he destroy the asurAs in his births? "apagalbhaya" - He who is opposed (apa) to the pride (galbha) of the non-devotees who oppose him. He chopped off the hands of bANa, killed rAvANa etc.

The nAma-s "darpa-hA" and "darpa-daH" in the sahasranAma illustrate these guNAs.

Mantra 4

namo jaghanyAya cha budhniyAya cha

Meaning: One who arises from the end part, ie, known by the vedAnta to his devotees (jaghanyA) and who is belonging to (associated with) the depths, ie, impenetrable for the non-devotees (budhniyA).

Why does he protect his devotees in his avatArAs? "jaghanya" means one who arises from the end, or last part of anything. vedAnta is the conclusion of the Vedas. Thus it means, his devotees attain him easily by shAstra-jnAna.

Why does he destroy the asurAs in his avatArAs? For those who do not have knowledge of the vedAnta, he is impenetrable like the depth of a bottomless pit or the ocean floor. The nAma "durgaH" in the sahasranAma suggests this.

Mantra 5

namaH sobhyAya cha pratisaryAya cha

Meaning: One who exists in shruti and smrti for his devotees (sobhya) and One who exists in contrary movements in the form of veda bAhya ShAstra for non-devotees (pratisarya).

How do his devotees have shAstra-jnAna? "sobha" - The term "Ubha" indicates dvandva and refers to shruti and smriti. His devotees always follow shruti and smriti which are his commands to serve him.

Shruti:smriti: mamaiva AgyA-yastAm ullanghya vartatE AgyAcchEdI mama drOhI mama bhaktOpi na Vaishnava "

[The one who does not abide by my commands set forth in the Sruthi and Smriti are great offenders.]

Why don't the asurAs have shAstra-jnAna? "pratisarya" indicates "retrograde or contrary movement" and thus represents the Agamas which he created for the non-devotees ("krtAgama" nAma in sahasranAma). They follow the commands of these Agamas.

Mantra 6

namo yAmyAya cha kShemyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with "yAma" or desireless services with dedication of fruits to him by his devotees (yAmya) and One who is in the happiness or material pleasures for the non-devotees (kShemya).

What is the fruit of jnAna? Those devotees who have bhakti and follow shruti/smriti commands, understand him to be attainable by restraint from sense objects. Thus they dedicate all fruits of Vedic works to him. "yAma" means restraint of the form of refraining from ownership of the fruits of actions.

What is the fruit of ajnAna? For the non-devotees, he is the innerself of various pleasures in the world that they indulge in due to the Agamas created by him. The name "vAjasaniH" in the sahasranAma indicates this. Bhattar points out that a Kshapanaka (Buddhist) takes a vow to devour mouthfuls of curd rice every morning. Hence, it is a metaphor to indicate they will have a taste for the fruits of actions no matter how renounced they may seem, as their paths only lead to samsAra.

Mantra 7

nama urvaryAya cha khalyAya cha

Meaning: One who abides in the fertile field (devoted mind) of the devotees (urvarya) One who abides in harsh acts detailed in the Agama-s of the non-devotees (khalya).

Karma yoga of the previous nAma results in bhakti yoga and that is described by the first nAma "urvarya".

nAnmugan thiruvandhAdhi pAsuram 23 and the sahasranAma "AnirvinnaH" explain "urvarya". It means, one who exists in a field sown with crops. The field is the mind, the seeds are the puNya or virtuous deeds such as services etc sown by the jIva. bhagavAn is the farmer who waters the seeds, germinates them, removes the weeds. He himself prompted the sowing of the seeds as well. Thus we get the plants called bhakti.

Uninterrupted meditation with love is the outcome of the previous nAma which talked of abiding by shruti and smriti with karma yoga and bhakti. bhagavAn himself says, "dadAmi buddhi-yogam taM" (gIta 10.10).

Pursuit of fruits mentioned in contrary Agamas on the other hand, result in movement away from bhagavAn. The nAma "khalya" means abiding in anything rough or coarse. "khala" also means "threshing" and thus indicates "hiMsa". "khalya" is one who abides in the harsh acts that are propagated by the boudha-jaina Agamas. It means, he himself practiced those acts and followed the precepts propagated by those Agama-s to set an example and deceive the asurAs. The nAma "krita-karmA" in sahasranAma indicates this. Those acts are harsh as they are against the Vedas and the asurAs engage in them.

Thus, bhagavAn works hard for both people. For the former group, he waters the seeds etc and grows the plants of bhakti. For the latter, he himself works in practicing the commands of the perverted Agama-s. One results in bhakti or movement towards bhagavAn, one results in dveSha or movement away from bhagavAn.

Mantra 8

namaH shlokyAya chAvasAnyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who uses praiseworthy words for his devotees (shlokya) and who uses words that limit the truth for non-devotees (avasAnyA).

How does bhagavAn work hard for devotees? "shlokyAya" - "shloka" means praise and refers to words that are worthy of praise. He abides in such words - "abiding" means "being dependent on". He is thus dependent on such words in the sense of using them for the sake of his devotees. The name "vAgmi" in sahasranAma indicates this. As below,

*shTo mohah smr*tir-labdhA taaat-prsAdAn mayA acyuta | sthito'smi
gata-sandehah karishye vacanam tava || (18-73)*

[Achyuta! By your Grace (in the form imparting the gIta) my ignorance has now gone; I have regained my memory, and now I am steady and free from doubt and am ready to act according to Your instructions]

buddhimAn madhurAbhAshI pUrvabhAshI pryam vadah - [rAma is wise and speaks sweet words; He is the first to speak and also speaks kind words]

bhUyaH kathaya tRptirhi ShRNvatO nAsti mE'mRta - [Speak again, I am not satiated by such words of nectar]

The Vedas are also verily his words.

How does bhagavAn work hard for non-devotees? "avasAnyA" - "avasAna" means a limit or boundary. It is used in the sense of limiting the grasp of, or concealing the truth, and refers to the deceptive words spoken by him. He again abides in, or uses such words for the non-devotees. He speaks very clever and sweet words which concealed and defeated the truth. He was very eloquent and proficient in his arguments. The nAmAs "suvarNa binduH" and "sarvavAgIShvareShvaraH" in sahasranAma convey this.

Thus his words declare the truth for his devotees and untruth for the non-devotees.

Mantra 9

namo vanyAya cha kakShyAya cha

Meaning: One who is abiding in the vast austerities of his devotees (vanya) and One who is abiding in an enclosure or hiding place (ajnAna) as his thoughts were inscrutable and hence cannot be influenced by non-devotees (kakShya).

What is the fruit of the hard work of bhagavAn for both groups?

"vanya" - The term "vanam" means a forest and thus denotes anything vast. The austerities of his devotees are a vast forest of knowledge about the Lord. He abides in such a forest of austerities, meaning, he allows himself to be influenced by them and becomes subject to their commands. The nAma "neyaM" in sahasranAma denotes this. Vide,

"Ag~nyApyo'ham tapasvinAm" (~ rAmAyaNa AraNya 6.22) - [I am agreeable to be commanded by those who practice austerities]

"kakshya" - The term means "enclosure" or "hiding place". It refers to the ajnAna of non-devotees. He abides in this, ie, this ajnAna is a hiding place for him whereby his thoughts are inscrutable for the non-devotees, who hence cannot influence him. The nAma "akShobhyaH" denotes this.

He is thus "vikAra" or subject to change of nature from being the influencer to the influenced for his devotees. He is "avikAra" or not subject to influence by non-devotees.

Mantra 10

namaH shravAya cha pratishravAya cha

Meaning: One who listens to the pure words of his devotees (shrava) and is opposed to the words of the non-devotees (pratishrava).

"suci-shrava" in viShNu sahasranAma explains this.

SucIni SrAvaNIyAni SRNomi iha dhanan~jaya | na ca pApAni gRhNAmi tato'ham vai SuciSravAh || (MB ShAnti parva 344.61)

[O dhanan~jaya! I listen here to all that is pure and agreeable to hear. I do not heed to what is sinful. Therefore I am known as Suci-SravAh]

As he is influenced by his devotees, he heeds their words. As the non-devotees cannot influence him, he doesn't heed their words.

Mantra 11

nama AshuSheNAya chAshurathAya cha

Meaning: One who has a non-material body made of shuddha-sattva that swiftly conquers the bondage of his devotees (AsuSheNa) and One who has

jIvAs like buddha etc as his body (or the form of buddha etc) that swiftly puts the non-devotees in bondage (Ashuratha).

"susheNa" is a name that occurs in the vishNu sahasranAmA. It means, "he who has a body made of suddha sattva and delineated by the panchopaniShad mantras. This body is like an army as it helps him conquer the selves that are in bondage - this is according to shrI parAShara bhattar.

In conjunction with the previous name, when his devotees like Gajendra use pure words to call him, he answers, displaying his divine body that rescues them from bondage.

At the same time, he deluded the asurAs in forms like buddha etc which are actually jIvAs invested with his powers (shaktyAveSha). They were empowered, but their bodies are not made of shuddha-sattva.

"Ashuratha" - "ratha" means chariot and denotes the body. It can mean the literal forms of buddha, etc he assumed, or the jIvAs (buddha etc) who are empowered by him and are themselves his bodies. He makes use of these bodies to swiftly push the non-devotees into bondage.

Mantra 12

namaH shUrAya chAvabhindate cha

Meaning: One who has a desire to obtain the victory of his devotees (shUra) and One who injures or defeats the non-devotees (avabhindat).

The victory of his devotees is them attaining him by virtue of his divine body. The defeat of the non-devotees is their non-attainment of him by virtue of the alpa-sharIrAs of buddha etc. "shUra" occurs in the sahasranAma.

It can also mean, "One who has the desire for his devotees to secure a victory over him and One who is victorious over the non-devotees." This means, he becomes subject to his devotees and independent for the non-devotees. Consider this a secondary meaning.

Mantra 13

namo varmiNe cha varUthine cha

Meaning: One who is covered in the armor that is his divine body for his devotees (varmin) and One who is surrounded by the modifications of prakrti for non-devotees (varUthin).

The nAma "varmin" correlates to "guhyaH" in sahasranAma. The latter means he is concealed by his divine body made of suddha-sattva. "conceal" means, his divyAtma-svarUpa is hidden by that body. "varmin" means wearing armor; this divine body is thus the "armor" that protects his divyAtma svarUpa so that his devotees cannot see it.

When devotees attain him, they often want to experience his divine body which they feel is more enjoyable than even his svarUpa. It is not a depreciation of the svarUpa since the body derives its' greatness from the svarUpa only. But just a preference. Thondaradipodi Azhwar says, "*ichuvai thavira yAn poi*" - "**Would I seek anything other than the divine body?**" - hence, his body is the armor that protects the svarUpa from his devotees.

He adorns a different kind of armor for the non-devotees. The nAma "saMvrttah" explains "varUthin" - He remains hidden from the ignorant. Prakrti, which is also known as mAyA, hides bhagavAn from the ajnAnIs. Thus he is "varUthin". The term also means to be surrounded by a quantity or heap of something, ie, the various modifications of prakrti that hide him.

Their non-attainment of him mentioned in the previous mantra deludes them and prevents them from piercing the veil of mAyA.

Thus, he wears armor for both devotees and non-devotees.

Mantra 14

namo bilmine cha kavachine cha

Meaning: One who abides in a measure (of understanding) for his devotees (bilmin) and one who is covered (beyond the sense organs) by the non-devotees (kavachin).

"bilmine" means one who possesses "bilma" - the quality of a measure or a degree - "so and so". That is to say, he possesses the quality of being known in a particular measure or degree of understanding by his devotees as, "this is ranganaAtha", "this is venkateshvara", "this is the son of devaki", "this is dasharatha's son". It can

also mean, his auspicious qualities can be defined as so-and-so like svAmitvaM, vAtsalyaM, soushIlyaM, soulabhyaM" etc.

So, as the previous mantra stated his devotees meditate on his divine body, they cognize and define him by such measures or degrees as per their inclination. He assumes whatever form and guNAs that his devotees want, "**ye yathA mAma prapadyantE**" (*gIta 4.11*), **tamar ugandha evvuruvaM, avvuruvaM thAne** (*mudhal thiruvandhAdhi*).

For the non-devotees, he is "kavacin" or beyond the range of understanding because the previous mantra said he is hidden from them by prakrti. As he is hidden by prakrti, he is beyond the reach of sense organs, they thus cannot grasp him. It is only devotion that reveals him, but the lack that devotion. The nAma "mahA-mAyaH" in sahasranAma denotes this.

Mantra 15

namaH shrutAya cha shrutasenAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is well-known as one who does not let his devotees slip (shrutA) and One who is well-known as the binder of non-devotees to bondage (shrutasenA).

"shruta" means one who is famous. The name "prathita" in the sahasranAma indicates this. How is he famous? As one who never lets his devotees fall. We saw that he assumed whatever name and form they wanted in the previous mantra, so he never lets them fall.

yasmAt na cyuta pUrvo'ham acyutastena karmaNA" (~ShAnti Parva, MB)

[I have never let those who have resorted to me fall, hence I am known as Achyuta because of this act of mine.]

"shrutasenaya" - "shruta" means famous and "sena" is to be taken as "bandhana" from the root "si". It means, "famous binder" - He is well-known again as one who lets his non-devotees fall by binding them in samsAra.

This concludes the anuvAka.

ANUVAKAM 7 - BHAGAVAD UPASANA

Having practiced abhyAsa yoga by meditating on bhagavAn's kalyAna guNA-s over many auspicious births which allows him to cultivate the necessary love needed for bhagavAn, the yogi is finally ready to meditate on bhagavAn via the upAsaNAmArga as a means to visualize the pure state of the self.

How can meditation on bhagavAn lead to the realization of the self? The jnAna yogi meditates on the divine body of bhagavAn which is the means to destroy sins and attachments to sense objects. Then, he realizes the similarity of bhagavAn to the pure state of the self in that both of them have uncontracted knowledge, are devoid of karmas, thirst, hunger etc. Thus, by meditating on this state of bhagavAn, he achieves the perception of the similar state of the self. The superior nature of viShNu is his "paramaM padaM" celebrated by the shruti, his lower "padaM" being his divine body. The jIva's nature in the pure state is similar to this nature of his (*paramaM sAmyaM upaiti*).

The practice of that upAsaNAm is therefore, described in this anuvAka, culminating in the visualization of bhagavAn, whose nature is similar to the self.

The 18th pAsuram of ThirukkurunthAndakaM by thirumangai azhwar is a succinct summary of this entire anuvAka. Even the wordings are similar.

Mantra 1

namo dundubhyAya chAhananyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who abides in the (acceptance of) drum signifying objects of enjoyment (dundubhya) and who is abiding in (as the means), the act of not being struck, ie, withdrawal of senses (ahananya)

The brihadAranyaka Upanishad (2.4.7) explains the analogy of the drum and the beating of the drum as pertaining to the senses and sense organs. The drum is the source of production of sounds and refers to the objects of enjoyment of the senses that produce experiences. The act of beating the drum is the contact of sense organs with the objects.

So, he is one who is in the drum, meaning, he abides in the dedication of these sense-objects, which are the fruits of actions, to him, ie, niShkAma karmAs. As

Brahman is understood to be the owner of the fruits, he is said to abide in the sense objects, ie, receiving our offerings.

How is that achieved? By restraining the senses from beating that drum/objects causing experience. How to restrain the senses? By the understanding that one is not the doer of these acts, but prakrti is the doer. As this understanding is dependent on services to Brahman, he is in the very act of restraining the senses by being the means for that.

The restraintment of the senses is from external objects here, known as "samaH".

So, the twofold meanings of this mantra are - Consider him the recipient of the fruits and consider yourself as the non-doer. He is the means for this realization.

This is karma yoga.

Note "chAhananyA" is taken as "cha ahananya" and not as "cha Ahananya".

Mantra 2

namo dhR^iShNave cha pramR^ishAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who overcomes the mind (dhR^iShNa), restraining it from inappropriate thoughts and who is the mind carefully deliberating without error (pramR^ishA)

It is not enough to withdraw the senses from external objects and dedicate the fruits to Brahman when the mind is still filled with hankerings for such objects. But the Lord, when propitiated by karma yoga, also subdues this mind, and such subduing is the quality of "damaH".

"dhRSHna" means "prasahana". Lord is called "shatrughna" in sahasranAma as he subdues the mind.

"pramR^ishA" -The root "mR^S" means to deliberate or carefully consider. The mind is without error. How? It is averse to all others other than paramAtma. The mundakopaniShad refers to this as "apramatthena". Since the mind averse to sense objects is absorbed in Brahman, it is called Brahman.

Mantra 3

namo dUtAya cha prahitAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to the Lord who is the mind which is the messenger of prANa as the gatherer (dUta), and the concentrated meditation of similarity that is directed towards Brahman (prahita)

Regarding "dUta" - The kauShitaki upaniShad declares, "prANasya brahmaNo mano dUta.n" - One should have the view of Brahman in prANa and consider the mind as the messenger. When we say "mind", we naturally include the other senses like speech, ear, eye, etc as well which are mentioned to be subordinates of prANa as the housekeeper, informant etc

The mind is "sarvagrAhi" as it is the gatherer of knowledge and renunciation. This mind is called "Brahman" as the dhyAna of the mind is brahma-maya. The atharvaShika says,

sarvakaraNani manasi saMpratiShThApya dhyAnaM viShNuH

[The meditation that is done by keeping all the senses in the mind is called "viShNu", ie, it is "viShNumaya dhyAna" since viShNu is the atishhāna devata for this dhyAna.]

One must be meditating on the Lord and thus considering the characteristic of the Atman being reflected upon in the gross and subtle state.

"prahita" - "To be discharged" - The yogi, reflecting upon the essential nature of the Atman as subservient to Brahman due to his meditation on Brahman, should discharge this meditation at Brahman - meaning, he must now reflect on the similarity of the self with Brahman. The mundakopaniShad says that just as the arrow sunk in the target does not appear different from it, one must understand the highest similarity of the self and Brahman.

Brahman is called the mind as well as the concentrated meditation on account of such meditation being filled with him, as the atharvaShika says.

Mantra 4

namo niSha~NgiNe cheShudhimate cha

Meaning: Salutations to the Lord who is attached to the Yogi (niSha~NgiN) and to the possessor of the divine form that protects meditation (iShudhimat)

"niShangin" is one who is attached. The Lord is called "yogavidAm netA" in sahasranAma - he leads the yogi-s to their goal. Hence, here it means, he is ever in union with the one meditating on him.

And he ensures that such union is never interrupted. How? By his divine form. "iShudhimat" - "ishu" is the arrow signifying meditation, "dhI" means that which covers the arrow, ie, the divine body that covers or protects the meditation. "mat" means he possesses that body.

The bewitching beauty of his body ensures one is not distracted from yoga.

Mantra 5

namas tIkShNeShave chAyudhine cha

Meaning: Salutations to the possessor of keen arrows that impart knowledge (tIkShNeSha) and the possessor of ornaments (Ayudhin)

The meditation on Brahman is not complete without meditating on the divine weapons and ornaments. The astrabhUShaNa adhyAya of viShNu purANa states that unlike other gods, the ornaments and weapons of viShNu are subhAShraya and the tattvas they characterize highlight his unique supremacy.

"tikshneshave" - "arrows" signify all weapons like chakra, kaumodakI, nandaka, sharnga etc. They are sharp as they cut away ignorance and impart knowledge.

"Ayudhine" - The term "Ayudha" can also mean gold used for ornaments. His weapons are anyway ornaments too and viceversa. This refers to Vaijayanti, Kaustubha, shrIvatsa etc.

Mantra 6

namaH svAyudhAya cha sudhanvane cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who has an irresistible will (svAyudha) and a splendid bow (sudhanva)

While meditating on the weapons, the upAsaka pays obeisance to the will of the Lord that is favorably disposed to the success of his upAsaNa. "svAyudha" means will that is always true and unimpeded.

"**sudhanva**" - The name occurs in the sahasranAma. He who has a splendid bow which he uses to end conflicts between devAs and asurAs. When the war between devAs and asurAs broke out for the nectar, he stepped in with his magnificent bow and ended the conflict, ensuring the nectar went to the devas. Likewise, he will quell all the bad qualities which as asurAs and ensure the nectar of experience of the self will be handed to the good qualities which are the devAs.

From here onwards, the attributes and forms of Brahman which are experienced during meditation is described.

Mantra 7

namaH srutyAya cha pathyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with the means directly or indirectly (srutya) and one who is fit or suitable to be the object of attainment (pathya)

"**Srutya**" - Relating to a road or path. The two paths are bhakti yoga and prapatti. He is related to them as he is the indirect means for bhakti yoga and the direct means for prapatti. It can also mean, "he who is associated with the meditation or mind that is only absorbed in him".

"**pathya**" - He who is a fit object of attainment as well.

The upAsaka (veda puruSha) here is one who seeks to experience the self as an accessory to eventually attain Brahman via bhakto yoga. He is not a kaivalyArti who stops at experiencing the self. So he does have the knowledge that Brahman is the highest object of attainment.

He is both the means and the end. That is the idea. And having acquired this knowledge, one can now adopt any of the brahma-vidyAs described in the shAstra for meditation. Those are described below.

Mantra 8

namaH kATyAya cha nIpyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to the One who is the hole - dahara vidyA (kATya) and in the innermost recess of the heart as the size of a thumb - anguShtapramita vidyA (nIpya)

"kAtya" means a hole and refers to the cavity of the heart. This is the dahara vidyA in the Chandogya upaniShad where Brahman is meditated as the small ether within the heart that is yet vast and the ground of all entities like sun, stars etc.

"nIpa" means something deep and hence, "nIpya" means one who is in the depth. It refers to Brahman who is again present in the inmost cavity of the heart, of the size of a thumb, having assumed a resplendent form for meditation.

In both cases, heart is mentioned but the qualities for meditation are different and so these are two different vidyAs.

Note that despite describing many vidyAs here, usually an upAsaka chooses only one to his own liking.

Mantra 9

namaH sUdyAya cha sarasyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with the auspicious qualities that pour out or effuse - bhUma vidyA (sUdya) and One who is in a large body of water which is the Universe of sentients and insentients - Sad Vidya (sarasya)

"sudya" - belonging to or associated with that which pours out or effuses - the auspicious qualities which are abundantly expressed. Chandogya upaniShad teaches bhUma vidyA where Brahman is meditated as characterized by "abundance", which represent his auspicious qualities.

"sarasya" - One who is in a large body of water - "waters" refer to the subtle elements and hence the Universe can be called "water". The sad vidyA taught by Uddalaka to Shvetaketu teaches the meditation of "tat tvaM asi" that the Causal Brahman which is the innerself of the subtle Universe of sentients and insentients is the Effected Brahman which is the innerself of the gross Universe of sentients and insentients.

Mantra 10

namo nAdyAya cha vaishantAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with the gross prakrti as his body - Shandilya Vidya (nAdya) and One who is associated with the form in the Sun - AntarAditya Vidya (vaiShanta)

The shAndilya vidya teaches meditation on Brahman as "sarva sharIraka" - One who has the gross sentients and insentients as his body. The shvetAsvatAra refers to gross prakrti as the river, and so "nAdya" means "associated with the river that is prakrti as his body".

"VaiShanta" - Let us first take "veShanta" - One who is the limit or best part of "veSha" - dwelling (veSham tanoti veShanta). The "dwelling" is the sun. The best part of the sun is the divine form of the hiranmaya puruSha with lotus eyes in the Sun as described in the Chandogya Upanishad. "vaiShanta" is one who is associated with such a form.

Because that form is described separately in the Upanishad, here too, it is said, "he is associated with the form in the Sun" rather than, "He is present in the Sun". The beauty and primacy of the form over his divine nature is thus implied here.

Mantra 11

namaH kUpyAya chAvATyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is in the cave, ie, the jivAtma who is in the cave of the heart - IShAvasya vidya (kUpya) and dwells in the vital breath - prANa vidya (avaTya).

"kupyA" - The first name describes the inner self of the jivAtmA. Since the jIva dwells in the cavity of the heart, and paramAtma is meditated as the innerself of the jIva, he himself is said to be within a cavity. This is called "ahaMgrahopAsaNa" or meditation on Brahman as the innerself of oneself (ahaM), as declared in the IShAvasya Upanishad.

"AvATya" - Again, dwelling in a hole. The vital breath along with jIva is residing in the body which is referred to a hole in the Upanishads. That prANa is to be meditated as Brahman.

Mantra 12

namo varShyAya chAvarShyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is in the form of bliss - Anandamaya Vidya (varShya) and One who is associated with lack of divisions - VaiShvAnara Vidya (avarShya)

"varShya" - Rain or a shower which is very soothing. Thus it is a metaphor for bliss. One who is associated with this bliss, or who abides in the form of bliss, is the Anandamaya Atma.

"avarShya" - One who is in the form of not having divisions, ie, parts (varSha-s). This clarification is only suitable for the VaishvAnaraAtma who is meditated as being limited by parts for the purpose of meditation, but is actually unlimited.

Mantra 13

namo meghyAya cha vidyutyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with clouds in the form of dense fog or mist (meghya) and lightning (vidyutya).

So far, the different brahma vidyAs that the upAsaka would choose to meditate on Brahman were described. Now, what is being described is the final stages of yoga.

The shvetAsvatArA Upanishad describes that when a yogi is excelling in yoga and nearing the end, ie, direct perception of paramAtma, he will see certain signs before the arrival of Brahman. As below,

nIhAradhUmArkAnilAnalAnAM khadyotavidyutsphaTikashashInAm etAni rUpANi puraHsarANi brahmaNyabhivyaktikarANi yoge (~ShvetAsvatAra Upanishad)

[In yoga these forms namely mist, smoke, the sun, the wind, fire, the firefly, lightning, the sphaatika mani and moon appear prior as signs of the manifestation of Brahman.]

"megha" can be taken as a dense fog and hence similar to smoke. He is **"meghya"** and **"vidyutya"** as his imminent manifestation is associated with these signs.

Mantra 14

nama IghriyAya chAtapyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with a clear, glittering white, ie, sphatika mani (ighriya) and sunshine (Atapya).

Ighriya - I have taken Sayana and others' word on this, that it refers to something glittering, white etc. I am not able to place the etymology myself. They take a glittering white thing as clouds, but considering the Sphatika Mani is mentioned in the Upanishad, I believe this is the appropriate explanation.

Not a major issue anyway, as these are mere symbols.

Mantra 15

namo vAtyAya cha reShmiyAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is associated with wind (vAtya) and storm (reShmiya)

And now, the Yogi visualizes Brahman finally, as below.

Mantra 16

namo vAstavyAya cha vAstupAya cha

Meaning: Salutations to One who is dwelling in the JivAtman (vAstavya) and possessing the divine auspicious form with all ornaments and weapons (vAstupAya)

ShvetAsvatAra Upanishad describes that the yogi will, as if through a lamp, visualize Brahman, the unborn, unchanging and pure. As per the Upanishad, this form of Brahman is "sarvatattvaM", ie, characterised by all the weapons and ornaments that stand for various tattvas as described in the astra-bhUshaNa adhyAya of vishNu purAna. He will be seen as the One characterised by all entities through the means of the reality of the jivAtmA.

"vAstavya" means he is residing in the jIvAtma as the antaryAmin. Thus the upAsaka realizes that paramAtma is the SeShin (master) and the Atman is the SeSha (servant).

"vAstupA" - Means he is keeping or protecting that "residence or dwelling place" (vAstu) of his, which is his divine auspicious form, characterized by all tattvas that are in the form of ornaments and weapons described in the astrabhuShaNa adhyAya of shrI vishNu purANa.

In this manner does the upAsaka get the glorious form of the Lord in his mind, who is a means to attain the self. And meditating on the similarity of the Lord with the jIvAtma, he attains to the experience of the individual self.

This anuvAka is concluded.

ANUVAKA 8 - KARMA-SANNYASA YOGA

Intro may be a bit long, but it is necessary. Apologies.

In the previous anuvAka, the Yogi undertook an upAsaNa, considering bhagavAn as the means to attain the self. As a result, a mental perception of the Lord was obtained, as the innerself of the jIva and possessing all glorious attributes like his form, weapons and ornaments.

This perception destroyed all the sins of the Yogi that were obstructing him from visualizing the self. Hence, he now sets his attention on the actual Yoga required to attain the self.

The fifth and sixth chapters of gIta are very relevant to these 2 anuvAKAs. There are basically 2 means to achieve the perception of the self. One is karma yoga or performing all worldly actions prescribed by the shAstra while remaining detached for their fruits. This karma yoga was earlier practiced by the upAsaka for developing love for bhagavAn, but can be continued for attainment of the self as well. The karma yogi will constantly contemplate on the differences between the body and the self, the nature of the embodied and the pure self, and execute his duties. Thereby, he attains one of two results as per his wish - 1) He can attain a perception of the self at some point directly, 2) Or, he can proceed to jnAna yoga having destroyed all attachments through karma yoga.

Which brings us to the second upAya - jnAna yoga, which is cessation of all activities in favor of constant meditation on the self. Thus, the fifth chapter of gIta describes karma-sannyAsa yoga (first method) and the sixth chapter of gIta describes jnAna yoga (second method).

In gIta 5.6, bhagavAn explains that karma yoga is easier to practice and yields the desired result of the JivAtman more quickly than jnAna yoga. Naturally so, because it is easier to engage in actions than constantly meditate on an abstract entity without doing anything. But nonetheless, both means exist.

Now, about namaskArAs. We saw that anuvAkAs 2-4 which described negative things had double namaskArAs that meant, "not mine". These gave way to a more sAttvic state of mind which meditated on Brahman, hence the namaskArAs in anuvAkAs 5-7 meant, "I and my belongings are not mine, they are yours, O bhagavAn!" - a salutation.

Now, in the last mantra of the last anuvAka, it was mentioned that the Yogi saw the Lord as the antaryAmin of the jIva in Yoga. Thus, he understood the jIva as being controlled by and dependent on the Lord. So, the Yoga he undertakes to achieve a perception of the jIva, is only as an accessory for bhakti yoga (which is not explained in this section of the Veda). He understands that the jIva is fully subservient to the Lord and so his desire to experience it is not tinged by selfishness of the form of "I want the blissful experience of the jIvAtma for my enjoyment". Rather, he thinks, "Neither the experience of the jIva or my efforts to attain it are for my enjoyment. They are for progressing to bhakti yoga which is loving meditation on Brahman. So I understand everything I do, belongs to bhagavAn."

So, the "namaH" here again means, "Not Mine". It means, "my actions to attain the jIva, my perception and experience of the jIva and indeed my nature as the jIva, are not mine. They are his."

This is a clarification that is needed. Because there are some, who desire solely to meditate on the jIva to enjoy its' bliss, as they lack a taste for bhagavAn. Such persons are called "kaivalyArtIs" and they get stuck in that blissful experience of the jIva. It is clarified that a jnAna yogi can be a kaivalyArti or one who ultimately wishes to attain bhagavAn. The kaivalyArti understands the jIva as jnAnAnadamaya. But the jnAni goes further and understands that the "jnAna" svarUpa of the jIva is "Seshatva" jnAna or servitude to bhagavAn. That is why the jIva is pure by nature, as it is subservient to bhagavAn.

To show that the Veda puruSha belongs to the jnAni category and not the kaivalyArti category, he uses "namaH" here to insist the jIva is not his, it belongs to bhagavAn. This is exactly what pillai lokAchArya says in mumukkShupadi:

karmam kainkaryaththilE pugum; njAnam svarUpa prakAsaththilE pugum (~mumukkShupadi)

[Karma Yoga that is not done with the thought that they are the means but, done due to desire for loving service to bhagavAn, are part of the service done to Him. jnAna yoga makes the chetana realize the nature of the Supreme which then leads to the realization of the nature of the self as subservient to him. This knowledge, when not used as a means (for one's own enjoyment), belongs within the true nature of the self.]

A final note - we will now look at the nature of the mantra-s in the 8th anuvAka. These mantra-s do not describe paramAtma or rudradevata or any devata. They are all describing the self only. This is to be understood clearly.

The karma yogin's line of thinking is to perform actions while constantly meditating on the characteristics of the embodied self and the characteristics of the pure self separately. Then, he understands that the embodied self is the same as the pure self when devoid of the body and meditates on the embodied self as the pure self. That is the intent of the mantra-s and this type of meditation is described in the jAbala upanishad as well as kaivalya upanishad.

In the first half of the anuvAka, the names on the left hand side denote the embodied self. The names on the right hand side denote the pure self. How do I know which side denotes which? By "namaH tAmrAya ca AruNAya ca" - we already saw what tAmra and AruNa meant in the 1st anuvAka. With that understanding, let us begin.

Mantra 1

namaH somAya cha rudrAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self which is filled with taste or inclination for perishable sense enjoyment (Soma) and the pure self which bestows good in the form of imperishable experience (Rudra).

"namaH" indicates the Veda PuruSha immersed in karma sannyAsa yoga - "BhagavAn! This self is not mine, neither are the fruits of its' actions or experiences, they are yours, who are the indweller I realized earlier!"

"Soma" - sa uti - utpAdayatIti - Associated with riches in the form of cattle, wealth, etc. Or, Soma means "rasAtmaka" - Filled with enjoyment of those objects which is the same meaning.

"Rudra" - rutiM dadAti - that which bestows good in the form of blissful experience superior to sense objects. The bliss of the self is imperishable and far greater than experience of material objects.

It should be understood that the karma yogin is currently engaging in activities like yAga, dAna, japa, sandhyA, agnihotra etc prescribed by the Vedas, while meditating in the manner described in the mantra, with no desire for the fruits.

Mantra 2

namastAmrAya chAruNAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self with mixed sattva that causes such inclination (tAmra) and the pure self that is golden or desirable due to being of the nature of pure sattva (AruNa).

Why is the material experience of the embodied self perishable? Because it is associated with the body made of prakrti and hence the triguNAs - sattva mixed with rajas and tamas. We saw in the first anuvAka that "tAmra" meant a deep red - rajo guNa (Red) darkened by tamas. Technically, sattva is mixed with these two but red and black mixed with white always appears red-black predominantly.

Why is the experience of the pure self imperishable? "AruNa" means "gold". In shAstra, gold denotes any desirable object. It means it is made of pure sattva without rajas and tamas, hence, imperishable in its' experience.

Mantra 3

namaH sha~NgAya cha paShupataye cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self that is going to anger, ie, attachments to non-attainable objects (sha~Nga) and the pure self that is the master of anger (paShupati)

As a result of connection with triguNAs, the self is constantly attached to objects that it cannot attain. In contrast, the experience of the pure self is so blissful that it rises above all attachments. As mentioned in earlier anuvAka, "paShu" signifies anger according to the Upanishads, which in turn denotes the collection of attachments.

We should interpret "pure self" as "knowledge of the pure self" because this is a state of meditation by the karma yogi.

Mantra 4

nama ugrAya cha bhImAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self that is cruel being filled with fruitive actions (Ugra) and the pure self whose knowledge is formidable to the taints arising from actions (bhIma)

Due to attachments to non-attainable objects, the embodied self is constantly doing fruitive actions and is tainted by them. Thus he is a "cruel" one as he is engaging in acts harmful to his nature. But one who knows the self as distinct from the body and performs those same prescribed actions without interest for their fruits, gains no taint or sin. Thus, such knowledge of the self is "bhIma" or formidable to such taints. gIta 5.7 refers to this as "*kurvan api na lipyate*".

We should interpret "pure self" (bhIma) as "knowledge of the pure self" again here. Because the self detached from the body does not perform any such actions at all in the liberated state. Rather, it is the karma yogi constantly meditating on the pure self who performs detached actions.

Mantra 5

namo agrevadhAya cha dUrevadhAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self that destroys the knowledge of the self (Agrevadha) and the pure self whose experience destroys the ignorance that is distant to its' true nature (dUrEvadha).

"agrevadhAya" - "agre" or that which is in front is the individual self dwelling in the body, which is the best part or essence of the body. Hence, it is said to be in front. Alternatively, "agre" can also mean the self, which is prior to the body, as it exists independent of the body. The embodied self engaged in fruitive actions loses all knowledge of the self and gains "DehAtma bhrama" - considering the body as the self.

Such a person is indeed known as the "killer of the self" - the Ishavasya upanishad mantra 3 calls them "Atma-hano janAH". It is metaphorical - if one does not gain a knowledge of the true nature of the self, which exists for the sake of bhagAvAn

by nature, then it is closer to a state of non-existence. The great sins which cause a degradation of the self are implied by this term.

"dUrevadhAya" - In contrast, knowledge of the pure self as distinct from the body, destroys ignorance that is distant or opposed to the true nature of the self that is "jnAnamaya"- knowledge by nature.

Mantra 6

namo hantre cha haniyase cha

Meaning: Not mine is the embodied self that causes injury to others (hantre) and the pure self whose knowledge causes injury to the sins which are also the "others" (haniyase).

"hantrE" refers to the embodied self which, due to thinking the body is the self and focused on care for the body, causes hiMsa to others. We saw this in the 3rd anuvAka in detail.

"haniyasE" refers to the knowledge of the pure self which also causes "parahiMsa" - it destroys the sins which are the "others" as they don't affect its' nature.

Mantra 7

namo vR^ikShebhyo harikeshebhyo

Meaning: Not mine is the self in the form of all bodies like men, deva etc (vR^ikShebhyo) with golden rays of knowledge as the illuminator of all objects (harikeshebhyo)

"vR^ikShebhyo" refers to bodies as per the brihadAraNyaka upanishad:

yathA Vr^ikShas vanaspatiH tathaiva puruSho.amR^iShA (~BrihadArANYaka Upanishad)

[As a large tree is, so is a man. This is true.]

By "men", bodies of all like devas, men, etc are signified.

"harikeshebhyo" - "kesha-s" are rays of light, "hari" is golden color. It refers to the attributive knowledge of the jIva that contracts or expands based on karma. The jIva is of the nature of jnAna which reveals itself as "I" but it also has attributive jnAna that reveals external objects. The latter is dharma-bhUta-

jnAna (DBJ). Contraction or expansion of this DBJ determines the knowledge of beings and is responsible for all differences.

So far, the knowledge of the embodied and pure selves were meditated separately. Now, the karma yogi demonstrates that he has the understanding that the embodied self does not undergo any changes in its' nature due to such association with body, karmas etc. All changes occur in the DBJ or attributive knowledge only, which contracts due to karmas and become infinite upon eradication of those karmas. The nature of the embodied self is unchanged, and so the embodied self is identical to the pure self.

So, the primary teachings of this mantra are as follows:

- 1) The embodied self is the pure self in its' true state, as indicated by the fact that the "ca" has disappeared in this mantra. This is to highlight that the Yogi has merged his meditation of the embodied and pure self to understand they are one and the same. This is a beautiful subtlety of the anuvAka.
- 2) It is present in all bodies (vrkSha-s) in inseparable association. By saying this, the difference of self and body is established. Due to inseparable association only, it acquires the names of the bodies, hence it is verily called as "vrkSha" or bodies.
- 3) It possesses dharma-bhUta-jnAna that illumines all external objects. Only the changes in this DBJ due to karmas are causing differences in knowledge and bodies assumed.
- 4) Due to all individual selves being identical, one can say "self" in singular - the self is in all bodies. Like how "grains of rice" is simply called "rice" because all grains are identical. It does not mean there is only one self.

Mantra 8

namastArAya

Meaning: Not mine is the self which is clear or without the blemishes of prakrti by nature

On account of the above realization, it is understood the self is without the taints of the bodily differences or prakrtic guNAs.

With this clarity, the karma yogin now begins to understand the nature of the pure self as the supreme object of attainment. The succeeding mantra-s have the "ca" back, because they are indicating various characteristics of the self again, but no longer separating it as embodied or pure self.

Mantra 9

namaH shaMbhave cha mayobhave cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that causes happiness - freedom from dualities by its' contemplation (shaMbhave) and which causes pleasure in the form of contentment (mayobhave)

"Contentment" means - seeing no-one as an enemy etc. Viewing the self as the same in all gives rise to that form of contentment.

Mantra 10

namaH shaMkarAya cha mayaskarAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that does good in the form of removing distress of prakrti (shaMkara) and that gives pleasure in the form of bliss (mayaskara)

"shaM karoti iti shaMkara" - the self which does good.

Once one stops seeing dualities and sees no-one as an enemy, all his sorrows caused by prakrti are gone. Then, he gains the experience of the self, which provides bliss.

Mantra 11

namaH shivAya cha shivatarAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self whose experience is agreeable on account of imperishability (shiva) and that is most agreeable as the object of attainment on account of that (shivatarA).

Unlike material objects like svarga etc, the experience of the self is most agreeable as it is everlasting and imperishable. Hence it is "Shiva".

Due to this imperishable experience, the self is the most agreeable object of attainment under the dominion of bhagavAn. Note that bhagavAn himself is higher than the self as an object of attainment, so "shivatarA" means, "highest agreeable object under the control of bhagavAn" only, which excludes bhagavAn from the count. gIta 8.21 uses the term "paramAM gatiM".

Technically, only the self is "Shiva" or agreeable for attainment. Other objects are actually "aShivAs". But since we ajnAnIs can only think of them as agreeable, the self is called "most agreeable of them" (shivatarA) in our language, as it were.

Now, the next few mantras describe how the self is to be attained.

Note: A small diversion. Note that the mantra "namaH shivAya" is used only for the self here. It is not addressed to Lord Shiva. Now, nobody denies that the panchAkSharI is used to propitiate Shiva since nArAyaNa sUKta etc refer to him as "Shiva" only. However, the name "Shiva" and the panchAkSharI is a common noun and applies to many objects in shAstra, like the self here. Hence, this should make things clear that names like "SadAShiva", "parAShiva", "paramaShiva" etc and the corresponding mantra-s are "sAdhAraNa" nAmAs and can never be the ultimate names and mantra-s of the Supreme Being, no matter how their etymologies are derived. They are names, but not the ultimate ones and so when conveying supremacy can only belong to nArAyaNa, the "asAdhAraNa" name of the ultimate reality. One cannot thus say, "The decisive name of the Supreme Being is Shiva". By virtue of this, only a deity connected with nArAyaNa nAma can be Supreme.

In contrast to names like shiva, maheShvara, rudra etc which denote multiple things, the 3 names - nArAyaNa, viShNu and vAsudeva, only denote the supreme reality wherever they are used. Even when the term "viShNu" occurs in the sahasranAma of other deities in certain purANAs, it occurs only in the sense of lakShmi-pati being a manifestation of that devata for arthavAda to elevate the latter, but is never directly attributed to the devata himself. And the names nArAyaNa and vAsudeva do not even occur in those sahasranAmAs.

On account of this, Nampillai has said that all names and mantra-s other than nArAyaNa are kShudra nAma-s/mantra-s. "kShudra" does not mean inferior or base; it merely indicates their relative unimportance/lower fruits. Even names like kriShNa, varAha etc fall in the same category. For eg: "Adi varAha" cannot be the ultimate name of the Supreme Being for the same reason. But since kriShNa, etc were assumed by bhagavAn in his avatArAs and predominantly denote him (though they do denote other things at times), those names are used for dhyAna. The names like Shiva, maheShvara, rudra etc are used when they occur as such in shAstra, but are of a still lesser status as they are more frequently used for other objects.

So we have a percentage, hypothetically - the 3 mukhya nAmAs only 100% used for Brahman (nArAyaNa/viShNu/vAsudeva), the amukhya nAmAs that are used 70% of the time for Brahman and 30% of the time for others (kriShNA, varAha, rAma etc) and other amukhya nAmAs that are used 30% of the time for Brahman and 70% of the time for others like mind, senses, desire, other devatAs etc (shiva, indra, etc). Hypothetically speaking.

When our AchAryAs pointed out this fact, some like appayya dikShita called them "thieves" for "appropriating Shiva nAmAs" for bhagavAn. Go figure. But our AchAryAs were not biased. Rather, they recognized the Parabrahman of the Vedas as viShNu and simply pointed it out. Vishishtadvaita is the only tradition which does not actively seek out others in debates; our gurus produced refutations only as responses and harbored a friendly attitude to all. Hope this clarifies.

Though this mantra does not denote Shiva here, there is a shAstric way to worship him via Linga pUja by chanting Rudram. One can contemplate on the meanings and ask Shiva for the knowledge of the true nature of the jIvAtma, as subservient to Hari, and also ask for knowledge of Brahman. Shiva himself says in harivamSha that he is the means for upAsakAs to attain Hari. And he says in IShvara gIta of kUrma purANa that he abides in kAShi as viShvanAtha to provide knowledge of the self via praNava (tAraka mantra). kAShi is called "Avimukta kShetra" because it is associated with the pure self

called "avimukta" by kaivalya upanishad - whose knowledge is provided by Lord viShveShvara, and that results in the grace of Lord Bindu Madhava.

Such worship will please Shiva as he himself has said in varAha purANa that he abides with those who worship him as a form of nArAyaNa but does not abide with those who worship him without this knowledge, however devoted they may be to him.

Mantra 12

namas tIrthyAya cha kUlyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self which can only be known by the Vedas (tIrthya) and that which abides in the body which is proximate or the limit of the senses and so cannot be seen (kUlya).

"tirthya" - tIrtha - plavana tAranayoH - The shAstra-s are called "tIrthAs" as they purify or carry one across. The self abides in the shAstra since it can only be known by the shAstra. Even logical reasoning such as "my body means I own the body and am not identical" are not enough to deduce the true nature of the self - accoridng to svAmi lokAchArya.

"kUlya" - That which is proximate is called "kUla" and it refers to the body which alone is proximate to or a border or limit for the senses. Thus, one knows the self only through shAstra as abiding in the body which is manifest to the senses; the self itself cannot be seen by the senses.

Mantra 13

namaH pAryAya chAvAryAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self which is the limit of the body as its' inner controller (pArya) and one who cannot be restrained by the body, ie, is independent (avArya)

"pArya" means last or final, the absolute limit of anything. This answers how the self abides in the body - it is the absolute limit of the body as the inner controller of it. And being the controller, it can exist independently of the body, ie, it does not depend on the body for existing.

Mantra 14

namaH prataraNaya chottaraNaya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self whose nature passes over or exceeds the body made of prakrti (prataraNa) and whose realization enables one to cross the distress of samsAra (uttaraNa)

"**prataraNa**" means to pass over in the sense of exceeding or surpassing. As the self is independent of the body, its' nature is superior to the body. "**uttaraNa**" also indicates a crossing over. By realizing this self in this manner, one can cross over the ocean of samsAric sorrows.

Mantra 15

nama AtAryAya chAlAdyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self whose experience is to be attained (AtArya) and which is sufficient by nature, ie, averse to pleasure and pain (AlAdya)

"**AtArya**" means to conquer and refers to the self whose experience is to be attained since it dispels the sorrow of samsAra.

Sayana explains "**AlAdya**" as relating to "alaM" - pUrNatva. The self is sufficient in the sense of being of the nature of bliss and hence averse to pain or pleasure. This explains why it dispels the sorrow of samsAra upon attainment.

Mantra 16

namaH shaShpyAya cha phenyAya cha namaH

Meaning: Not mine is the self whose experience is associated with absence of perception of plurality (shaspya) and that belongs to or abides in the essence of the tattva-s which is paramAtma (phenya)

"**shashpa**" means a loss of consciousness or perception. One perceiving the self is averse to pain and pleasure because he sees the same self in all - he thus loses knowledge of plurality like, "this is a man, this is a deva, this is my enemy, this is my friend". AchAryAs explain 2 possible perceptions - One yogi may see the self everywhere in all and not the bodies, another yogi may see all bodies as having the same self. Just a small difference in perspective.

"**phenya**" - Why does he see the self as the same in all? It is because the nature of all selves is the same - they are all subservient to paramAtma who is their innerself. The term "phena" means froth. It can be the froth of curds

(dugdhaphena) which becomes butter. Hence, it means "essence" which denotes the antaryAmin. That which belongs to or abides in the antaryAmin as a dependent and obedient to him, is the self (phenya). Hence, it is the same everywhere, devoid of all differences. In the sahasranAma, the antaryAmin is called "tattvaM" because in this world, he is realized by churning the tattvas which are curd, to get him who is the essence like butter. The brihadAraNyaka upanishad uses the term "shara" or "cream" to denote "essence" in a similar manner.

Hence, curd, which is the tattvas containing him as the essence (butter) is this world. As Bhattar explains, Bhattar says - dadhi dugdhayoriva dadhisArah chit achitoH vyApti prayojanAbhyAm sArAmShah tattvaM - Like butter which is essence of curd, bhagavān is the essence of all beings as the innerself and imparts their sense of purpose to them (ie, they exist for his purpose).

So "phenya" exists to disprove the possible notion that the sameness of the self is because there is only one self. Rather, "sameness" means identical natures of subservience to paramAtma (Seshatva). When we say "rice" it does not mean there is only one rice grain.

Mantra 17

Namah sikatyAya cha pravAhyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that is associated with the pouring forth of bliss (sikatya) and associated with unbroken/imperishable experience of such bliss

"sik" root means to pour out. "pravAha" refers to continuity. It is a mass of bliss. gIta 6.28 refers to the bliss of the self as "atyantaM" - plenty, unlimited.

Such a karma yogin attains to the experience of the self, which is in abundance and is also unbroken in experience unlike svarga etc. With that, the nature of the karma yogi has been explained.

ANUVAKA 9 - THE YOGA OF MEDITATION (JNANA YOGA)

Having explained the easier means which is karma yoga, this anuvAka explains "jnAna yoga", the more difficult means of ceasing all activities and meditating on the self to experience its' bliss. Obviously, it is far easier to engage the senses in activities as in the previous anuvAka than withdrawing them completely.

The sixth chapter of the gIta explains the meditation on the self. The genius of Vishishtadvaita AchAryAs is in recognizing that the first six chapters of the gIta (as well as 8th, parts of 13th) are describing meditation on the self, not Brahman. It is not the nirguNa brahman of advaita (which obviously cannot be called "shankara", "shivatarata" etc as the Veda just did) or Lord kriShNa himself (as dvaitins think). Thus, only our tradition is able to explain why the Rudram continues to talk about meditation even after realization of bhagavAn in the 7th anuvAka.

The key point is, in the gIta bhagavAn uses terms like "paramAM gatiM" (gIta 8.21), "maheShvara", puruShaM paraM (gIta 13.23) etc to describe the jIvAtma in some places, but the other bhAShyakArAs thought it was referring to bhagavAn or nirguNa brahman. Only the Sri VaiShnava AchAryAs realized that such terms denoted the self.

And this meditation is taught in various other places, like kaivalya and jAbala upaniShads, sanat-sujAtIya and anugIta of mahAbhArata, Ishvara gIta of kUrma purANa, etc.

jnAna yoga yields the same result as karma yoga. It is a far, far harder path. As an example, one bus may reach a destination by a shortcut while another bus may take a more winding route to reach the same destination. Though I am not sure who really practices it, because even a Yogi as great as Lord Shiva tells umA devi in anuShAsana parva of mahAbhArata that he practices karma sannyAsa yoga to set an example for lesser beings. Maybe it just exists as a method and nobody has dared to try it!

So we start from the beginning. The first half of this anuvAka talks about the self dwelling or abiding (in the form of being maintained in meditation) in the mind. So all names mean, "self which abides in the mind, that is of so-and-so quality".

Mantra 1

nama iriNyAya cha prapathyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self which abides in the mind that is barren, ie, divested of all actions aimed at attaining sense objects (iriNya) and the self which is associated with the mind that is the way, ie, jnAna yoga (prapathyA).

This is the stage of *yogAruda* - One who finds satisfaction in the self and does not engage his senses in pursuit of material satisfaction. gIta 6.4 talks about this.

Mantra 2

namaH kimshilAya cha kShayaNAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self which abides in the mind that inquires the nature of prakrti which is perishable (kimShilya) and the self which abides in the mind that is an ideal dwelling place as it has destroyed the attachments (kShayaNa)

"kimshilya" - He who inquires (kim) the nature of "shila-s" - Reference to inert objects like wood, stones etc. persistently signify insentient prakrti in general in shAstra and thus refers to material objects of enjoyment that are made of prakrti. The jnAni inquires, ie, repeatedly contemplates on their nature of being perishable.

As a result of such inquiry hence he destroys attachments in the mind.

gIta 6.5 declares that it is the mind free of attachments that helps the self cross the ocean of samsAra. gIta 6.6 states that the mind bound to sense objects is the enemy.

Mantra 3

namaH kapardine cha pulastaye cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that possesses mind that is free of attachments which allows it to cross the distress of samsAra (kapardine) and that which has a great mind that collects knowledge and renunciation (pulastaye)

"kapardine" - The self that possesses a mind called "kaparda" - a tortoise shell. gIta 2.58 refers to the mind as the shell of a tortoise when the senses are withdrawn into it after destroying attachments.

"pulastaye" -Stayi means to collect, pul- great - Objects to know are many and those to renounce are many. So the self possesses such a great mind with a large collection of jnAna and vairAgya.

gIta 6.8 declares that the jnAni has to have the following types of knowledge: jnAna-vijnAna-trptAtma - the self is different from material substances like the

body, it is eternal, of the nature of bliss, is atomic, subservient to nArAyaNa, is the same everywhere and hence unchanging, having no doubts regarding the self etc. The knowledge to be collected and the things to be renounced is indeed great or in large amounts.

Mantra 4

namo goShThyAya cha gR^ihyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that abides in the mind which is the assembly or confluence of all things made of earth (goShThya) and the self that abides in the mind which perceives it as the same in all (gR^ihya).

"goShThya" - "go" refers to all objects made of earth. "Stha" means an assembly or meeting place, ie, a coming together. "goStha" refers to the mind which is a confluence of all objects made of earth, meaning, they all come together and appear as one. The jnAna yogi considers a lump of earth and a piece of gold as one, who treats friend and foe alike etc as their bodies are all again, material. gIta 6.8 explains this as "**Sama-loSha-aSma-kanchana**".

"gR^ihya" - "gr^iha" refers to anything that is that grasps or lays hold of, ie, makes known. gIta 6.9 explains this as "**sama-buddhi**". The Yogi treats friend and foe, virtuous and wicked people alike. That is because he sees the self as the same in all. Hence, the mind is "gR^iha" or that which grasps the self as the same in all, the self abides in it. We can even take "gR^iha" as the conventional meaning of "servant" - the mind is the servant or subordinate to the self, existing for its' sake only in the form of seeing all as the self.

We can take one nAma as pertaining to objects like gold, earth lump etc and another nAma as seeing the self in all, hence not regarding anyone as friend or foe etc. Or, we can take the first nAma as denoting both these since even friend, foe etc are due to bodies made of earth (go). Then, the second nAma explains the reason for this vision - because the Yogi sees only the self everywhere. This is another beautiful subtlety of the mantras in this section.

Mantra 5

namas talpyAya cha gehyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self associated with the mind that is contented or free of all desires (talpya) and the self that is abiding in the mind which is free of other thoughts or hankerings (gehya)

"Talpya" - Root of "talpa" is given as "tRp" which means to refresh, or to be satiated. Latter meaning fits. "talpa" is the mind that is contented as it is free of desires, "talpya" is the self associated with such a mind. After all, even the conventional meaning of "cot" or "bed" is because one sleeps self-satisfied in it.

"gehya" - The term "geha" means any home or dwelling. When the mind is free of desires for various things, then it will not have multiple thoughts. It will be singly focused on the self. Only such a mind can be a proper dwelling or abode for the self.

gIta 6.10 explains **"talpya"** as "nirAShIH" and **"gehya"** as "yata-chitta-Atma".

Mantra 6

namaH kATyAya cha gahvareShThAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that is in the mind which is a depth or a place of unapproachability of noise (kATya) and the self which abides in the mind in the condition of solitude (gahvareShTha)

"kATyAya" - gIta 6.10 declares that a person seeking to meditate on the self must be in a silent place away from noise (rahasi stithaH). "kATya" means any depth or hole and signifies impenetrability or inaccessibility. It means that the self is abiding in a mind which is like a deep hole or cave inaccessible to noise. If you are in a deep hole or cave, is it not logical to not be able to hear outside noises?

"gahvareshtaya" - "gahvara" means a secret place. The self abides in the mind which has secrecy or solitude. One must be away from even his preceptor, fellow students, disciples etc. gIta 6.10 calls this as "ekAKI".

Since "kATya" denotes an actual place away from noise, the self is said to be in it (**kATyAya**). However, **"gahvareshtaya"** denotes a condition of being all alone and so "STha" is used. A place free from noise is not necessarily lonely. This subtlety is to be noted, as AchArya rAmAnuja beautifully explained how "rahasi" and "ekAKI" did not mean the same thing in gIta 6.10.

Mantra 7

namo hR^idayyAya cha niveShpyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self abiding in the mind that is "hrada" or a deep recess that has emptied all material thoughts (hR^idayyA) and the self which abides in the mind that has restrained the senses made of subtle elements (niveShpyA)

"hR^idayyA" - The term "hrada" refers to an inaccessible, deep hole (parigrihIta nimna). The mind that is cut off from material thoughts is the recess that the self abides in.

"niveShpyA" - "veSpa" means water, which refers to subtle elements constituting the senses. "niveSpa" refers to the mind which has restrained "water" - the shutting off of the senses. The self abides in this mind, hence "niveShpya".

gIta 6.12 refers to this as "yata-chitta-indriya-kriya".

Mantra 8

Namah pAMsavyaya cha rajasyAya cha |

Meaning: Not mine is the self that abides in the body or mind consisting of karmas and the self abiding in the pure state when the karmas become dust.

gIta 6.12 explains this by use of "Atma-viShuddhaye" - To the self, connection with karmas is impurity (signified by dust) and the liberation from karmas is purity. This is to be contemplated on.

"pAMsavya" - "pAmSava" refers to the body consisting of dust - impurities of the form of karma. Or it can mean, the mind connected with dust or meditation on karmas as impurities. The self abides either literally in the body, or meditatively in the mind which is contemplating on the karmas as impurities.

"rajasya" - Andal says, "theyil thoosAgaM" - Liberation consists of the karmas being burnt to ashes, or dust by the fire of Yoga. The self in the pure state, when the karmas become dust, is implied by this. Or it can mean, the mind which is contemplating on such a state too, to maintain continuity of "self abiding in mind".

Mantra 9

namaH shuShkyAya cha harityAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self abiding in the mind that is empty of external cognition and abiding in the mind absorbed in paramAtma who is "gold" or delectable (harityaya)

gIta 6.13-14 explains this.

"shuShkyA" - This refers to the self abiding in the mind that is "shushka" or empty. What is it empty of? Well, in Yoga, one has to focus one's gaze at the tip of the nose to avoid looking at external objects. One should also practice celibacy, not thinking of women. gIta 6.14 refers this to "brahmachAri-vrate-sthithaH" - Thus, the mind is empty of external cognitions and desire for women.

"haritya" - The upAsaka, to attain the experience of the self, meditates on bhagavAn whose nature is similar to the self. It has already been established bhagavAn is to be meditated on for attaining the self. "harita" refers to gold, which in shAstra means anything delectable. bhagavAn says "mat-chitta mat-paraH" (gIta 6.14) - "I am most delectable, think of me as the Supreme Being, focused only on me". The mind absorbed in this bhagavAn is "gold" or most desirable and hence "harita". The self abiding in this mind is "haritya".

Mantra 10

namo lopyAya cholapyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that abides in the placid mind, due to disappearance of desire (lopya) and the self abiding in mind that is going to the supreme state (ulapya)

Both gIta 6.15 and 2.61 explain this.

"lopa" signifies a loss. For a mind that is absorbed in the divine auspicious form of bhagavAn, there is a complete loss of desire for anything else. All the practices declared earlier such as residing in a quiet place, etc would only be useful to control desire, but not eliminate it. It is only the contemplation of the auspicious divya mangala vighraha of bhagavAn that eradicates desire by the roots, uprooting all the sins.

"ulapya" - The root of "ulapa" is "val" which signifies movement. Such a mind would be going to the state described in gIta 6.15 as "**Santim**" - the state of experience of the self which would be free from blemishes of hunger, thirst, sorrow, infatuation, old age and death. As one can see, even paramAtma ever possesses these characteristics, so meditating on him means we attain the similar state of the self. It is the same logic whereby one's last thought in any birth makes him attain a birth similar to that thought.

Mantra 11

nama UrvyAya cha sUrmyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self abiding in the mind that is the wide or spacious as it is containing all tools for fitness of Yoga (Urvya) and the self abiding in the mind with agreeable desire or appearance of knowledge (sUrmya)

"Urvya" - The mind is "Urvi" as it is vast or spacious in terms of possessing all tools for Yoga. These include the qualities described in gIta 6.16-17 - regulation of eating, walking, sleeping, exertion etc. which are all functions of the mind.

"sUrmya" - The mind of above nature is "Su-Urmi" or that which has an agreeable desire or appearance/manifestation of the knowledge of the self. It means the self abides in a mind that possesses knowledge that the self is most enjoyable. gIta 6.18 describes this mind as "viniyataM".

Mantra 12

namaH parNyAya cha parNashadyAya cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that abides in the mind that takes one across worldly matters (parNya) and the self abiding in the mind that goes to the self in meditation (parNashadya)

"parNya" - The term "parNa" means that which takes one across (pAr-tIr). The mind that takes one across worldly matters by by the qualities like moderation etc described above is an abode for the self. gIta 6.19 describes it as "yata-citta".

"parNashadya" - The term "parNa" refers to the self as it takes one across the sorrows of samsAra. "shad" refers to movement. The disengaged mind that goes

to the self in Yoga or meditation is "parNashada" and the self abides in such a mind. gIta 6.19 describes it as "yogaM yunjataH".

So much for the means. Now, the self which has been attained by such means is described in the next set of mantra-s.

Mantra 13

namo.apaguramANaya chAbhighnate cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that raises the mind away from all other things than itself (apaguramANaya) and destroys all sorrow by standing in front of the mind, ie, being perceived (abhignate)

From here on in, the self is being perceived and experienced via Yoga. So the tone shifts from the self being supported by the mind (as was the case so far), to the mind being supported by the self which is being meditated on.

"apaguramANa" - A mind rejoicing in the self is elevated in the experience of the self, away from other objects that are inferior to it. Such a mind is indifferent to everything else, rejoicing in the self that is happiness without a tinge of sorrow. It will never swerve from that state. gIta 6.20 refers to this as "yam labdhva aparaM lAbhaM tataH adikaM na manyate"

"abhighna" - That which kills, by standing in front. The self destroys all sorrow when it is in front of the mind, ie, being perceived. A Yogi does not deviate from it, even when faced with great sorrow. gIta 6.20 refers to this as "dukha saMyoga viyogam".

Mantra 14

nama Akkhidate cha prakkhidate cha

Meaning: Not mine is the self that presses down or subdues the senses & mind by withdrawal from worldly affairs (Akkhidate) and the self that excessively subdues the mind by its' experience of it (prakkhidate)

Last mantra described the indifference to other objects and destruction of sorrow in the experience of the self. This describes how that is achieved. "khidate" means to press down, which can be taken as subduing or overpowering, and the two terms are based on that meaning.

"**Akhidate**" - gIta 6.21 states that the mind has to be withdrawn from worldly attachments to son, land, wealth etc and the senses from pain and pleasure arising due to contact with objects. This can be done only gradually. gIta 6.25 uses the term "shanaiH shanaiH" (gradually).

"**prakhidate**" - The term "pra" indicates intensity. The experience of the self is such that it would make the mind think of nothing other than the self. The mind would think of absolutely nothing else, no matter what it is (good, harmful or neutral).

When all this is done, the Yogi easily attains the perception of the self, revelling in its' bliss. Hence, that perception of the self is described below, as can be noted by the change in the mantra.

Mantra 15

namo vaH kirikebhyo devAna hR^idayebhyo

Meaning: Not mine is the self that is having rays of light, ie, dharma-bhUta-jnAna (kirikebhyo), seated in the minds of those who meditate on it (devAna hR^idayebhyo)

Note that the tone of the mantra has changed again.

"**kirikebhya**" refers to the dharma-bhUta-jnAna or attributive knowledge of the self whereby it illumines all objects. Such DBJ is likened to rays of light. All objects of the senses, including even lights like sun, moon, fire etc are illumined by the self, hence the plurality in the word.

"**devAna hR^idayebhyo**" - "**hR^idaya**" refers to mind and not heart. The "devas" refer to yogis are those who shine out the bliss of the self via meditation. Or "deva" could mean "devabhAva" - having good qualities like sama, dama etc. gIta 6.28 refers to this as "praShAnta manasam".

Mantra 16

namo vikShINakebhyo

Meaning: Not mine are the contemplations of the self which destroy all sins

From here on in, the contemplations of the self in the mature state of jnAna-yoga are celebrated. Why are the contemplations in plural? Because one can meditate

on the self in different ways - as different from the body, as the nature of knowledge, as possessing knowledge, seeing the self only in all beings everywhere, or seeing all gross forms as having the self as its' support, meditating on the self as not being thick, thin, having no color, as subtle etc.

Alternatively, that which is in plural can also indicate all the means which was mentioned so far - being in a quiet place, restraining senses and mind, removing attachments, etc. All these collectively form meditation. I favor the earlier meaning, but either way, the plurality refers to "meditations" only. That is made clear by gIta 6.28, though it uses "meditation" in singular.

"vikShInakebhyo" - The term **"vikShInaka"** means destroyer. The contemplations of the self destroys all sins. gIta 6.28 refers to this as sinless - **"akalmaShaM"**.

Mantra 17

namo vichinvatkebhyo

Meaning: Not mine are the contemplations of the self which remove the qualities of rajas and tamas.

"vicinute" - To disperse or remove. When sins are destroyed, the qualities of rajas and tamas are also eliminated. gIta 6.28 refers to this as **"shAnta rAjasaM"**.

Mantra 18

nama Anirhatebhyo

Meaning: Not mine are the contemplations of the self that has struck down the sufferings caused by delusions of the body

"Anirhata" means to strike down. Once rajas and tamas are destroyed, various sufferings arising from delusions like considering the body as the self, qualities of rAga-dveSha etc are all vacated from the mind. gIta 6.28 refers to this as **"brahma-bhUtaM"** - He realizes the essential nature of the self, which is different from the body and is "brahma" or vast in the liberated state on account of possessing infinite knowledge that spreads everywhere.

Mantra 19

nama AmIvatkebhyah

Meaning: Not mine are the contemplations of the self which grow corporeal, ie, manifests the self in the form of direct perception.

"AmIvatkebhyaH" - "mIvati" - means "sthaulya" - growing corporeal or becoming a form. Following all the steps above is the grand culmination of Yoga - the direct perception of the JivAtman.

Note though, that this anuvAka does not declare that he experiences the bliss in an uninterrupted manner, as the last mantra of the previous anuvAka did. That is because this path of jnAna yoga is so much more difficult than karma sannyAsa yoga, that even the Veda puruSha has doubts whether the Yogi would sustain that meditation uninterruptedly. The Veda puruSha himself has not likely followed this path though he knows about it.

Thirumangai Azhwar similarly declares regarding bhakti yoga - "meimai kANkirpArE" - "The yogIs doing bhakti yoga *may have seen* bhagavAn who is the Real...I wouldn't know, as it is a hard path that I am not sure will be successful"!

There is also more. The veda puruSha also does not really hint at experiencing the bliss of the self though it talks of the self being perceived, unlike the last mantra of the previous anuvAka. He merely says, "They see the self" but not that they revel in its' bliss. Because, the Veda puruSha is unsure and considers whether the effort needed for this path may have produced a mental exhaustion, that the bliss of the self itself may not be as delectable. If you earn a lot of money but work 16 hours a day, 6 days a week for it, would you enjoy the money earned just on the one day you have rest?

SvAmi nAyanAr also remarks in AchArya hrudayaM that yogIs who practice the hardest of upAsaNAs in the Vedas sometimes become so exhausted by it that even if bhagavAn himself appears in their minds, that experience does not seem so great due to the fatigue. What to speak of the self then.

This is also the tattva behind the story of umA closing Rudra's eyes in the mahAbhArata. umA is the experience of the self. The act of closing Rudra's eye is the cessation of perception in the form of desireless action, in favor of this path of jnAna. As a consequence, the world (Vedas) becomes dark and lesser beings are unable to see - idea is, they have no guidance for karma sannyAsa yoga and lack the capacity for jnAna yoga. Thus Rudra explains to umA in a

metaphorical manner that he is engaged in karma yoga to set an example for lesser beings and not this path of meditation. I had written about this before, but atleast now it should be clearer.

So, in the end, even the Vedas recommend karma sannyAsa yoga over jnAna yoga, as bhagavAn does in the gIta, and rudra does in the mahAbhArata.

In this manner, the Yogi attains to the blissful perception of the self. This indeed, is the goal of the ShatarudrIyaM, and therefore this anuvAKa properly concludes the sAdhana outlined in this section. But we have 2 more anuvAKAs left, which we shall see later.

ANUVAKA 10 - PERFORMANCE OF KAMYA KARMAS

In the previous anuvAKAs, we saw that the Veda puruSha had evolved from a state of being associated with attachments to attaining a clear perception of the self, by the grace of bhagavAn. When I say this, I mean that the Veda puruSha enacted this for our sake of course; he is the embodiment of GaruDa, and hence there is certainly no chance of ignorance at any point for him.

In this anuvAKa, he enacts the mentality of one who has achieved this state of self experience, but is now making an appeal to bhagavAn to continue to sustain that experience without break and also evolve to the higher upAya of bhakti yoga, which would lead to liberation. He continues to involve himself in worldly affairs, but only to use them for the benefit of bhagavAn. Thus, he is ever mindful of the fact that such accessories like sons, cattle, wealth etc should never entrap him, but are to be used for the sake of upAsaNa.

Some mantras use plurality, ie, "we surrender to you", "make us happy". Who is the Veda puruSha referring to in plural here? Because he is speaking on behalf of us too, as an AchArya. One who has seen the self, sees himself in everyone else; so he considers joys and sorrows of others as his; hence, the usage of "us, we" etc.

With that understanding, here is a translation of the mantras. I have broken up each individual mantra for clarity as they are a bit lengthy.

Mantra 1

drApe andhasaspate daridran nIlalohita

Meaning: My mind, you who impel the senses towards the self, understanding it as distinct from the body (drApe)! Who are possessed of "food" of the form of meditation on Brahman as the means to attain the self (andhashaspate) ! Who are angry or hostile towards the darkness of ignorance that is prakrti (nIlalohita)!

This mantra is in the form of manopadeSha, or conversation with the mind. It is not addressed to paramAtma. The Vedas and azhwars employ this often as a means to continually reflect on the Real and ensure they are not pulled towards the Unreal. It is an accessory technique for upAsaNa.

Self-explanatory except for "**nIlalohita**" - here, "lohita" or redness is a color that denotes anger. It means the mind is very angry or hostile to "nIla" - the dark color of ignorance. For it makes no sense to interpret "lohita" as rajo guNa obviously here for a sAttvic mind.

**eShAM puruShANAmeshAM pashUnAM mA bhermAro mo eShAM
ki.nchanAmamat**

Meaning: Do not cause fear to these sons of mine and these animals in the form of my attachments to them. Do not destroy them, ie, my jnAna and vairAgya towards them necessary for mokShOpAya. Let none of them perish. Let them not become sick in the form of becoming unfit for upAsaNa.

"**mA bhI**" means, "do not cause any fear in association with these sons, cattle etc in the form of me becoming attached to them. I am not using them for my benefit, but only as divine service to bhagavAn.

"**mAra**" - "Let none of them perish, ie, lose their purpose for which they exist by becoming a means for sense gratification, born of the above attachment."

"**mAmat**" - "Let none of them become sick in the manner of causing me to incur sins using them in a manner as above, inciting bhagavAn to anger" - this is the sentiment. Or it can mean, "let none of them incur the wrath of bhagavAn, ie, may I take care of them well so that they are sAttvic too". Even cattle need to be grown on sAttvic food after all, to be of use to bhagavad kinkaryaM.

The outcome of the mind using these accessories to upAsaNa properly as above is given next.

Mantra 2

ya te rudra shiva tanUH

Meaning: My mind, who are the destroyer of the disease of samsAra (Rudra)!
By your manifestation of the self which is agreeable as it confers imperishable bliss (ShivAtanuH)

"tanUH" means form and hence the manifestation of the self in the mind.

shiva vishvAha bheShajI shiva rudrasya bheShajI

Meaning: Which perception of the self is agreeable as it is the medicine for all the senses (shiva vishvAha bheShajI), which is agreeable as it is the healer of lust or desire towards sense objects (shiva rudrasya bheShajI)

"shiva vishvAha bheShajI" - Experience of the self is medicine for all the senses as it ensures the senses are disengaged from fruitive actions by focusing on it. One thinks about the self, learns about it, hears about it from shAstra, speaks about it, performs desireless actions, etc.

"shiva rudrasya bheShajI" - Even if all the senses are controlled and engaged in the self, Can it be possible that the desire for the fruitive activities is not removed from the mind? No, the experience of the self is the most agreeable medicine for lust present in the mind as well, and this lust is called "Rudra" as it bestows misery or causes weeping. Why is this medicine "shivaM" or agreeable? Because it is far superior and more desirable than the other sense objects that ordinary lust illumines.

In the samvAda between kAShyapa and aila in the mahAbhArata, lust is referred to as "rudra", as below:

pApaiH pApe kriyamANe hi chaila tato rudro jAyate deva eShaH. pApaiH pApAH sa~njanayanti rudraM tataH sarvAnsAdhvasAdhUnhinasti | (~ shAnti parva)

[Kashyapa said, "In consequence of the contemplation on sense objects associated with purva-janma karmas (pApe kriyamANe) done by those who possess attachments (pApaiH), lust known as "Rudra", which is "devaH" as it shines out objects of enjoyment appears here. Indeed, the ones associated with karmas (pApaiH), by their attachments (pApAH) bring forth desire known

as "Rudra", that then destroys all, the virtuous and the wicked alike (without making any distinction).']

kAShyapa goes on to say that this desire causes para-hiMsa, is insatiable like a fire or obscures the self like smoke, so it makes things very clear.

Note that "shivA" is feminine case and "bheShajI" is in nominative singular case, again feminine. The experience of the self is agreeable/beautiful and therefore such experiences are often personified as women in other places in shAstra, as metaphors. "bheShajI" cannot be taken as arising from rudra here.

If anyone thinks terms like "rudra" denote one entity only in shAstra everywhere, they will never be able to interpret such mantras properly.

tayA no mR^iDa jIvase|

Meaning: By that contemplation of the self which is favorable to our true nature, make us truly live in the form of pursuing mokSha sAdhana and keeping away from sins.

Next, the resolve to make steady such meditation on the self and the outcome of that meditation (progress to bhakti yoga) is mentioned.

Mantra 3

imArudrAya tavase kapardine kShayadvIrAya prabharAmahe matim

Meaning: In this manner, we offer our intelligence of the form of meditation (prabharAmahe matim) to the self which bestows good by removing sorrow (Rudra), of the nature of knowledge (tavase), which is possessing bliss that protects the senses (kapardine), destroying karmas that obstruct bhakti yoga (kShayadvIra).

So far, mind and lust were called "rudra". Here, the individual self is called "rudra" as it bestows good in the form of removing sorrows of prakrti.

"tavase" - As the self is of the nature of knowledge, it is not perishable like sense objects and hence a worthy object of attainment.

"kapardine" - The self possesses bliss which protects the senses from engaging in sense objects by its' superior nature of enjoyment. Such bliss is a "kaparda" or

a shell that protects the senses. A tortoise retracts into its' shell whenever there is danger, after all.

**yathA naH shamasad.hdvipade chatuShpade vishvaM puShTaM grAme
AsminnanAturam**

Meaning: By such meditation, possessions like sons and cattle of ours will remain agreeable as accessories for upAsaNa. In this body called "grAma", all the senses will be contented in the experience of the self and free of suffering arising from attachments.

Now, the next step is to thank bhagavAn for maintaining such steady meditation and also to request him for his favor in progression to bhakti yoga. Hence, the next mantra is a prayer to bhagavAn.

Mantra 4:

mR^iDA no rudrotano mayaskR^idhi

Meaning: Hey bhagavAn, who are the destroyer of the disease of samsAra! Make us happy by saving us from samsAra which is a quagmire of attachments. Grant us also the bliss of your divine form (mayaskrudhi).

Now, the Veda is referring to bhagavAn by the term "rudra" here. Note how one term is used to denote so many objects. So when vedAntins tell people not to rush into Upanishads like ShvetAsvatAra or Atharvashikha and think terms like "rudra", "shiva", "shambhu" etc exclusively denote only one devata, there is a logic to it. No bias.

"mayas" refers to the bliss of his auspicious form.

kShayadvIrAya namasA vidhema te

Meaning: You who have destroyed our sins in the form of transgressions of the Vedas which are your commands, we offer you words of "nama:".

As you have destroyed our sins which made us transgress the shAstra, we understand our nature is that of subservience to you - this is the idea.

yachChaM cha yoshcha manurAyaje pitA tadashyAma tava rudra praNItau|

Meaning: By your favor, O bestower of good (rudra), may we attain wealth

useful for maintenance of the body for sake of knowledge and divine service to you, as well as freedom from delusion in the same manner that Manu the father of all beings gained without any efforts, by your grace.

namasA vidhEma - same as bhUyishtAm namOktim vidhEma in Isavasya Upanishad.

What favor did bhagavAn do for Manu? Here is what the Veda is referring to:

tapasA chApi tIvrenA pratibhA.asya bhaviShyati .matprasAdAtprajAsarge na cha mohaM gamiShyati (~ vana parva, MB)

[BhagavAn Matsya said: Manu shall indeed acquire the power of creation of offspring by his austerities and by my anugraha, he will not attain delusion in the form of attachments to them.]

Manu did not even make an effort to attain bhagavAn. Yet, bhagavAn appeared to him as a fish, saved him from the flood and gave him the above boon. Note how relevant the boon is to the topic under discussion - Manu shall indulge in worldly actions like creating progeny, but he shall not be deluded in the form of having attachment to such fruitive actions.

As bhagavAn gave this boon to Manu without any effort on the latter's part, the Veda asks, "In such a manner, ie, without any effort on my part, without you considering my eligibility or lack thereof, give me the boon of engaging in actions as services to you, but with detachment to the fruits".

The reference to Manu is how we identify this mantra as referring to bhagavAn by "rudra". Note that no other deity can fit the context of Manu being favored in the manner as above.

That boon, which Manu got, is now spelled out very clearly in the next mantra.

Mantra 5

mA no mahAntamuta mA no arbhakaM mA na ukShantamuta mA na ukShitam
mA no vadhIH pitaraM mota mAtaraM priyA mA nastanuvo rudra rIriShaH

Meaning: One who drives away the sorrow of samsAra (Rudra)! Do not cause injury (by your mAyA or prakrti) to our knowledge, detachment, mind that is

producing contemplation of the self, and the experience of the self. Do not harm us interested in our father, mother and those dear relatives.

“mahAntaM” refers to knowledge of the self which is great.

“arbhakaM” means emaciated or small and refers to a lessening of attachments. Hence it is detachment.

“ukShanta” is the mind that procreates or produces meditation of the self.

“ukShitaM” is the experience of the self which is “strong” or steady.

It is not proper to take “mahAntaM” as “elders”, “arbhakaM” as child etc. Because parents and children are being mentioned separately later and it would cause redundancy.

The prayer is this - “Hey bhagavAn! Let my knowledge, detachment, meditating mind and the experience of the self not come to harm by your mAyA which is prakrti. Do not harm me even if I am having parents and relatives, as I consider my duties to them as accessories (kAMya karmAs) as desireless services to you and not for becoming attached to them.”

Now, having ensured this knowledge of the self, renunciation of sense gratification and relationship to wealth of the form of relatives, etc is preserved, the upAsaka proceeds to dedicating all these to bhagavAn for proceeding to the next step - bhakti yoga.

Mantra 6

mAnastoke tanaye mA na AyuShi mA no goShu mA no ashveShu rIriShaH
vIrAnmA no rudra bhAmito.avadhIrhaviShmanto namasA vidhema te

Meaning: Destroyer of the disease of samsAra (Rudra)! Do not harm us interested in our children, relatives, longevity of life, cattle or horses. Being angry, do not harm the strong ones viz., jnAna and vairAgya. We do worship you alone always bringing you oblations.

This mantra occurs in the shvetAsvatAra upanishad (except “tanaye” which is omitted in the Upanishad). As my AchAryas have interpreted it, I am merely reproducing their interpretation here. Again, the meaning is,

"These are accessories needed for bhakti, so do not harm me even if I evince interest in children, etc. You are also worshipped by the kAmya karmAs."

"vIrAn" means the jnAna and vairAgya that are yoked to "vIram" in the form of mokShOpAya.

"angry" means he may become angry on account of our offenses.

There is no redundancy. In the previous mantra, the desireless actions were performed as services to bhagavAn for ensuring meditation on the self remained steady. jnAna was knowledge of the self and vairAgya was detachment to sense objects.

But in this mantra, desireless actions are being performed as services to bhagavAn as accessories for developing bhakti yoga. Thus, "jnAna" means the knowledge that the self does not belong to oneself; it belongs to him and so such experience of the self is not done for one's selfish pleasure, but just happiness arising from realizing one's servitude to him. "vairAgya" is not laying claim to ownership of the self, surrendering to bhagavAn.

Note that the order of asking jnAna/vairAgya and possessions like cattle, sons etc to be protected is thus reversed in the 2 mantrAs.

These 2 mantras are identical to the nature of the boon that bhagavAn Matsya granted Manu, and hence they have been explained.

In the next mantra, the outcome desired by such selfless services to bhagavAn is spelled out in a prayer.

Mantra 7

ArAtte goghna utta pUruShaghne kShayadvIrAya

Meaning: Let that mAyA or prakrti which is your body be far from us, as it harms our senses by engaging them in attachments and thus causing ignorance (goghna), destroys the true nature of the self due to such ignorance (puruShAgne) and consequently destroys the strong qualities like knowledge and renunciation needed for pursuing mokSha (kshayadvIra).

Prakrti is his body (*yasya prithvI SharIraM - BrihadAraNyaka Upanishad*). We don't want that body of his. What body do we want as a result of our selfless services to him? Spelled out next.

sumnamasme te astu .

Meaning: Let your agreeable, non-material, auspicious form be for us, ie, may we experience that divine body.

This body is visualized as the object of enjoyment in bhakti yoga.

rakShA cha no adhi cha deva brUhyathA cha naH

Meaning: Protect us, by virtue of sustaining such experience without interruptions. You who sport with the jIvAs by binding them to mAyA (Deva)! Perform various activities for us in the form of being our means (adhibruhi).

"deva" occurs in the sahasranAma, means he who sports with the jIvAs, binding them to mAyA.

"adhibruhi" means - "May you speak for us" - "speech" implies all activities. It means - "Instead of binding us as your name "deva" suggests, may you become the means for our liberation and thus perform various activities of protection suited to that nature of being the means".

sharma yachCha dvibarhAH

Meaning: You who augment knowledge and renunciation (dvibarha), may you further give us the supreme goal or bliss of your divine service at all times, places and states (sharma yacchavi).

"dvibarha" - Means he who augments 2 qualities - jnAna and vairAgya. One understands everything including the self belongs to him and renounces ownership.

"sharma" is a name occurring in the sahasranAma and refers to the Supreme bliss or goal to be attained. That is nothing but divine service.

How will he act in our favor (adhibruhi)? That is described next.

Mantra 8

stuhi shrutaM gartasadaM

Meaning: O mind! Praise for the attainment of all desires, the One whose greatness is well-known, seated on GaruDa who is the chariot of Veda mantras

"stuhi" - "praise" means, "we praise him for attainment of our desires, which is divine service to him".

"ShrutaM" - He whose greatness is well-known. The names "prakAShAtma" and "prithuH" in sahasranAma illustrate this. So it is said "*rAma nAma janaiH shrutaH*" - "*He was well-known as rAma to all people*".

Bhattar says that his greatness was so well-known that even a fool like DhrtarAShtra who was blind externally and internally resorted to him by saying the following:

tvameva pundarIkAkShaH! Sarvasya jagataH prabhuH! tasmAt me yAdavasreShTha prasAdaM kartum arhasi! (~ udyoga parva, MB)

It means, he is well known to protect those who surrender to him by praising him.

"gartasadaM" - He who is seated on Garuda. There is an unknown shruti quote by AchAryAs that garuDa is the chariot of Veda mantra-s as below:

tasya gAyatrI JagatI cha pakshou abhavatAm, ushnik cha trishtup cha prishtyou, anushtup cha panktisha dhuryou, brihatI Eva uktirabhavat,sa Evam cchandO ratham AstthAya Etam adhvAnam anu samacharat

Or, we can say that since the Vedas are a "chariot" as they take one to Brahman, GaruDa is a chariot. Because GaruDa is verily the embodiment of the Veda as below:

suparNOsi GarutmAn Trivrit tE shira: Gayatram chakshu: StOma AtmA SAma tE tanU: VamadEvyam Brihat RatantarE pakshou yagyAyagyaim puccham cchandAmsi angAni dhishNiyA: saphA: Yajoomshi nAma. (~TaittirIya SamhitA)

"gartaH" does not denote a cave here, as in cave of the heart as suggested by other commentators because there would be no need for the Vedas to use an ambiguous word which can also denote a chariot here.

It also does not denote an ordinary chariot. In which case, "raThin" would have been a better word than "gartasadaM". "ratha" is not used by the Vedas here

because it often denotes the body which is also a chariot, or even just an ordinary chariot; so to show that the "chariot" here is not the body or a regular chariot and also not a hole or cavity of the heart (which was earlier called kAtya etc in the 7th anuvAka), the word "gartaH" is used.

The root "gartaH" also comes from "gRR" which means to praise or extol. It is well-known that only the Vedas extol him, and garuDa again, is the embodiment of the Vedas. If someone argues the chariot Rudra used for destroying tripurAsurAs was also the Vedas - as Bhatta Bhaskara interprets "gartaH" as the chariot on which Rudra was standing - we would like to point out that the same root word also means to swallow or devour. GaruDa is well-known for devouring snakes. Hence, going by all this, "gartaH" with all its' etymological meanings only satisfactorily and unambiguously denotes garuDa, the chariot of Veda mantras, the embodiment of the Veda, who swallows the snakes and poisons that constitute sufferings of samsAra.

The Vedas act as a chariot for both bhagavAn (supporting his glories and carrying him to his devotees) and for bhaktas (supporting their upAsaNa and carrying them to bhagavAn). Thus they acted in the latter way for rudradevata during tripura-dahana, doesn't mean he is denoted here.

All this is just theoretical of course. Already seen how the mere term "rudra" does not imply it is rudradevata.

This answers how he protects - by his speedy vAhana, garuDa, by which he swiftly rescues his devotees. garuDa is called "vAyu" for that reason and the sahasranAma refers to bhagavAn as "vAyu-vAhanaH".

yuvAnaM mR^iganna bhImamupahatnumugram

Meaning: Of a beautiful youthful form (yuvAnaM), angry at those transgressing dharma, not formidable on account of assurance of protection (mR^iganna bhImaM), whose form that is formidable to karmas, takes hold of everyone and uplifts them (upahantuM ugraM).

How does he rescue his devotees? By giving them the darShaNam of his beautiful, ever young form, replete with all perfections. The term "yuvAnaM" does not simply mean he looks young - it denotes the overall astonishing beauty and suddha-sattva nature of his divine form.

And when their experience of such a form is interrupted by asurAs like hiranyakashipu, he destroys them - hence he is "mrga" which denotes "anger" in the mahAnArAyaNa upanishad.

"mRga" does not denote "lion" here. For a lion can be called properly as "simha" whereas "mRga" just means a mere animal. Besides, the narasimha tApanIya upanishad substitutes "rudra" in this mantra with "simha", so clearly "mRga" does not mean simha here.

To his devotees, he is "na bhIma" - he does not appear formidable unlike for the asurAs and dispels their fear saying "mA shuchahaH". This is said to imply that the very forms and weapons he assumes for punishing asurAs, is pleasing for his devotees.

He who is fear inducing and not so as well. That is meant by "mrgan na bhIma". As per the following pramANAs:

"bhIShNaM abhIShaNaM" (~ nrsimhottara purANa)

"bhaya-krt, bhaya-nAShaNa" (~vishNu sahasranAma)

bhaya abhayaM karaH kRshNaH sarva-lokeShvaraH prabhuH (~mahAbhArata)

[Krishna causes fear in those who violate the commands of shAstra and dispels fear of those who obey the shAstra]

"upahantuM ugraM" - The narasimha tApanIya upaniShad explains this as "upagRhNAti ugraM" - He takes hold of everyone and elevates them. He destroys their karmas, produces knowledge in them and thus augments them all. Hence, he is "ugra" or formidable to our karmas.

All of the above explains "adhibruhi" from the previous mantra.

mruDA jaritre rudra stavAno anyante asmannivapantu senAH

Meaning: Hey, bestower of good (Rudra)! Praised by us in wonder at your exploits, be favorable to us who are associated with decay of knowledge due to samsAra. Let your divine auspicious form which is like an army with its' qualities, ornaments and weapons, scatter those karmas which are opposed to our true nature.

Due to all of his above actions, we praise him in wonder at his exploits. After all, was not his man-lion form simply astonishing. The nAma "viShrutAtma" in sahasranAma denotes this.

"senA" refers to his body which is like an army ("suSheNa" nAma in sahasranAma). "anyaM" refers to the karmas which are opposed to our nature.

By "gartasadaM", it is clear that only nArAyaNa is referred to as "Rudra" here. Unless you interpreted it as garuDa-vAhana, you wouldn't get the beautiful continuity of thought we have here. Also, the narasimha tApanIya upanishad replaces "Rudra" with "Simha", making it clearer. The very fact that "Rudra" is a substitutable word and also used for several objects shows that it was never the intent of the Veda PuruSha to even give importance to this name in terms of identifying a devata for this whole rudrAdhyaya by it. Rather, it is just used to describe an attribute of whatever object it denotes at various places.

Now, the qualities of bhagavAn who would protect the upAsaka indulging in bhakti yoga was mentioned. It was understood that the self belongs to bhagavAn and is his servant by nature. So next, the Veda puruSha advises his mind to get rid of ego.

Mantra 9

pariNo rudrasya hetirvR^iNaktu pari tveShasya durmatiraghAyoH

Meaning: Let ego, which is the weapon (heti) of the mind that causes weeping (rudrasya), which is causing fear of sin (paritveShasya), of a nature of perverse knowledge in the form of claiming ownership (durmati) and intending to cause harm to the self (aghAya) be expelled.

"Rudra" here refers to the mind. No matter how adept you are at jnAna yoga, you may get a feeling of joy on experiencing the self and thus claim ownership of such joy. This ownership may persist even after worldly attachments are gone and meditation has been successful, hence mind is again called "rudra" in a negative way.

To ward that off, the Veda advises the mind, which causes weeping or misery due to such ownership, to let go off its' weapon, which is the ego or claiming ownership of oneself, which would cause fear of transgressions, which is of a knowledge opposed to the essential nature of the self as a servant and thus intends to harm

the self - cause ignorance of its' true nature. Rather than claiming ownership of the bliss of the self, understand that even that bliss belongs to him, and rejoice in the bliss of that knowledge - that is the meaning.

The mind understands this and obeys, as is expressed in the next line of the mantra.

ava sthirA maghavadbhyastanuShva mIDh.hvastokAya tanayAya mruDaya

Meaning: O Mind who are favorable to us now! Protect the nature of the self by your resolve opposed to ownership of its' experience, for us who are filled with activities in the form of selfless services to bhagavAn. Be favorable to our children, ie, view them as accessories to upAsaNa and do not cultivate ownership over them.

"maghavad" means filled with sacrifice of the form of selfless services to bhagavAn that constitutes worship. Rest is self-explanatory.

"children" signifies all objects like cattle, wealth, sons etc.

Having clearly understood that the self belongs to bhagavAn, the above is summarized in the form of upAya anuShtANa vidhi leading to bhakti yoga in the next mantra.

Mantra 10

mIDhuShTama shivatama shivo naH

Meaning: Mind, who drenches us with rain like torrent of activities constituting karma yoga (miDhuShtama), who are highly agreeable due to understanding the true nature of the self as "subservience to bhagavAn" (shivatama), who confers auspiciousness in the form of removing feelings of ownership over the bliss of the self (shivo naH)!

All are a summary of what was mentioned earlier.

sumanA bhava

Meaning: Become favorable to us by contemplating on that master-servant relationship (SeSha-seShi bhAva) via body-self relationship (sharIrAtma bhAva).

With this understanding, we proceed to bhakti yoga.

parame vrukSha AyudhaM nidhAya kR^ittiM vasAna Achara pinAkaM vibhradAgahi

Meaning: Fixing the knowledge that is the weapon or means (AyudhaM) in bhagavAn that is the highest refuge (parame vrukSha), being full of desireless actions in the form of loving services to bhagavAn (kR^ittiM vasAna), perform the meditation that is bearing or sustaining the (nature of) the self (Achara pinAkaM vibhradAgahi).

"AyudhaM" - The knowledge in the form of body-soul relationship (sharIrAtma bhAva) and the resultant knowledge of master-servant relationship (sesha-seShi bhAva). Knowledge is referred to as a weapon that cuts away ignorance in the mahAbhArata.

"parame vrukSha" - Fix that knowledge in bhagavAn, who is the Highest Refuge. **"vrukSha"** is derived from "vrj" - to seek or resort to - The name occurs in sahasranAma. Bhattar explains he is called "vrkSha" as he is the resort or refuge like a shady tree. Why is he "parama vrkSha"? Because he possesses all things desired by the jIvAs and also puts up with all of their faults. Alternatively, it can also mean his divine auspicious body which is the highest refuge, even more agreeable than the bliss of the individual self.

Next two adjectives explain how we fix such meditation on him.

"kR^ittiM vasAna" - Skanda purANa derives this term as "krtyAtmakaM" - being full of actions in the form of selfless services to him, not claiming ownership of the fruits, only doing them to see him happy and becoming happy by his happiness.

"Achara pinAkaM vibhradAgahi" - With those actions, perform the meditation that bears or sustains the true nature of the self called "pinaka", ie, which is a meditation that is an end in itself. This is bhakti yoga. The self is called **"pinAkaM"** because it is the abode (nAka) that the senses station themselves and drink in (experience) bliss - this is the etymology provided by Skanda purANa. Such bliss of the self in turn is due to its' seShatvarUpa jnAna svarUpa.

Such meditation "sustains" the true nature of the self as it enables a blossoming out of selfless love and services in accordance to one's nature.

All this was an advice to the mind in the form of an injunction to be performed (jnAna). Next, the Veda puruSha puts it into action (anuShtANa).

Mantra 11

vikirida vilohita namaste astu bhagavaH yAste
sahasrahetayo.anyamasmannivapantu tAH

Meaning: SankarShaNa, who possesses the six glorious attributes (bhagavAn)! You who never punish your devotees for your sins (vikirida)! You who possess a deeply reddish or white form (vilohita)! I surrender to you. Let your omniscience in the form of a thousand rays of knowledge (sahasrahetayo) destroy all the karmas which cause us suffering.

"vikirida" means being bereft of anything causing harm, like weapons. It refers to the nAma "avijnAtA" in sahasranAma which means that though he sees the sins of his devotees, he never punishes them for it and even forgives them. Not just that, he even becomes oblivious to their sins.

"vilohita" - Can mean red or white and refers to his divine body. Lakshmi Tantra (10.31) describes the form of SankarShaNa as "*sindUrashikarAkAraM*" - red like ruby and vermillion, so very attractive. If taken as "white", it means the form is suddha-sattva and hence subhAShraya, unlike the forms of other gods etc which are assumed due to karma according to vishNu purANa - hence the sole form worthy of meditation. Note that the form of SankarShaNa is the devatA for the shatarudrIyaM.

"sahasraheti" - The term corresponds to "sahasrAmShuH" in the sahasranAma and means he has a thousand rays of light. "heti" means light, so "sahasraheti" has the same meaning. It denotes his omniscience. He is completely ignorant in one sense that he ignores all our faults, but is completely omniscient in the other sense that he knows all our sufferings and how to remove them. This is the vyAkhyAna of Bhattar.

"namaste astu bhagavaH" - I surrender to you, by offering loving selfless services.

The term "**bhagavAn**" can only be applied to viShNu in the context of supremacy as per viShNu purANa. Thus, the identity of this Being is made known by this

word. Considering that "rudra" has been used to denote so many things, there is zero scope for assuming the term exclusively denotes rudradevata here.

Even the qualities described only suit viShNu anyway. Look at how the other commentators struggled to identify a pramANa for the previous mantra referencing Manu to even show in what situation Manu had requested a favor from rudradevata.

Note that for every mantra making a reference to bhagavAn, the Veda puruSha references a particular characteristic unique to him, such as him favoring Manu, being garuDa-vAhana (gartasadaM) and now bearing the unique name of "bhagavAn" denoting six attributes. This is to ensure - 1) Everyone understands where terms like "rudra" in those mantras denote the Supreme Being as opposed to other objects which were denoted by this term in other mantras in this anuvAka, 2) That only nArAyaNa is being referred to, by terms like "rudra", and not other devatAs.

Now, by "namaha", the Veda puruSha performed loving services to him. That now ripens in the form of meditation on him as bhakti yoga or svayaM prayojana bhakti, as mentioned in the next and final mantra.

Mantra 12

**sahasrANi sahasradhA bAhuvostava hetayaH tAsAmIshAno bhagavaH
parAchInA mukhA kR^idhi**

Meaning: You, who are worthy of worship by Bhakti Yoga, have as weapons or causes of bondage in your hands, as prakrti in the form of innumerable objects of enjoyment that are traps, divided in innumerable combinations of triguNAs. You who are the Controller of all by nature (IshAna)! You must please turn their openings in the form of attachments away from us.

"bhagavAn" also means, "One who is worthy of worship" as per Bhattar in the sahasranAma. What worship? Of the form of bhakti yoga. This also avoids redundancy and thus, again, it denotes nArAyaNa only.

"sahasrANi sahasradhA bAhuvostava hetayaH" - The mahAbhArata explains this,

guNAnghaNashatairj~nAtvA doShAndoSshashatairapi .

hetUnhetushataishchitraishchitrAnvij~nAya tattvataH (~shAnti parva)

[Understanding the forms of prakrti like bodies, senses etc (guNa) by hundredfold combinations of triguNAs (guNashatair), the faults of joy, passion and ignorance arising from the actions impelled by the guNAs (doShashatair) and the births which cause bondage in samsAra by the karmas which are the cause of births]

What the mahAbhArata refers as "shataM", that is called "SahasrAni" here. The idea is, prakrti consists of innumerable objects of enjoyment which are divided innumerable into various combinations of triguNAs, giving rise to innumerable actions impelled by the guNAs, causing innumerable forms of happiness, passion and sorrow arising from such actions, which accumulate innumerable karmas leading to innumerable births.

The Lord holds such prakrti, which is mAyA in his hand as a weapon. Or, "bAhu" can denote strength, he wields it. But he is "IshANa" - The name occurs in sahasranAma - Bhattar explains it means his knowledge is not under the control of anyone or diminished by anything. This suits the current context of him limiting the knowledge of jIvAs by prakrti.

The term "mukhAni" refers to openings. "mukha" can denote a passage or means, or any opening by which one reaches or attains. Thus, they refer to the attachments by which one becomes ensnared in this prakrti.

How to overcome his mAyA? He himself is the means. Realization of our nature as subservient to him and surrendering to him achieves this, as he says in gIta 7.14.

With this mantra, this anuvAka is concluded.

ANUVAKA 11 - THE GUNAS

In the 14th chapter of gIta, bhagavAn stresses that a knowledge of the triguNAs (sattva, rajas and tamas) and how they act to bind the jIva in samsAra is necessary to gain the experience of the self. In the 17th chapter, he classifies food, gods, actions etc in the form of these guNAs. Accordingly, this final anuvAKa describes the workings of these guNAs. It is also continuous with the final mantra of the last anuvAKa which hinted at these guNAs.

There are 10 senses and mind, so there are 11 anuvAKAs.

Mantra 1

sahasrANi sahasrasho ye rudrA adhi bhUmyAm
.teShAsahasrayojane.avadhanvAni tanmasi

Meaning: Those triguNAs - sattva, rajas, tamas - that make us weep (rudras) which are in numerous combinations (sahasrAni), that are numerous in kind such as actions and fruits (sahasraSho), that are possessed by the embodied self (adhi bhUmyAm), their bows, ie, the senses, we cover or protect by a distance of a thousand yojanAs (figuratively).

Though there are only three guNAs, the combinations of them which exist in all beings are innumerable. Even the combinations in 2 predominantly sAttvic persons will not be the same, as the level of each guNa can vary. Hence, they are said to be innumerable.

These innumerable combinations result in innumerable actions geared towards innumerable results of the form of happiness, greed and ignorance. Hence, the idea is that one should realize these guNAs are the doer and not the self.

"bhUyma" refers to the individual self associated with the body. These guNAs do not have any direct contact with the self but inhere in prakrti which then associates with the self.

"teShAsahasrayojane.avadhanvAni tanmasi" - The bows refer to the senses. The viShNu purANa, as has already been noted, does indicate that the bow ShArnga supports the sAttvika ahaMkara that gives rise to the senses. Alternatively, as the bow is used for releasing the arrows, so are the senses the

"bows" that use the string of the triguNAs to release the arrows of fruitive actions.

These bows/senses are referred to as "their bows" - the bows of the triguNAs, to indicate that the guNAs impel the senses and thus have dominion over them, which have nothing to do with the self.

The other commentators believe this statement should be added to the end of each mantra even if not mentioned due to a pUrva mimAmsa nyAya. Which isn't incongruent I suppose.

"**avatanmasi**" - We cover or protect the senses by placing them a thousand yojanAs from the guNAs. The distance is figurative and means one ensures the senses are kept free of anger, desire etc by understanding them to be effects of the guNAs.

Next mantra explains how the self, which is by nature opposed to these guNAs, nonetheless comes under their influence.

Mantra 2

asmin mahatyarNave.antarikShe bhavA adhi

Meaning: In the modifications of prakrti like mahat etc which are a vast collection (mahatyarNave) and in the embodied self which is the "intermediate" (antarikShe), these triguNAs existing together inherently in unevolved prakrti by nature (bhavA), rule by tying the bound self.

gIta 16.5 refers to the triguNAs as "prakrti sambhavA". Hence, they are called "bhavA" to show they exist in the unevolved prakrti.

"**mahatyarNave**" - They cannot be cognized, but become known by their effects when prakrti evolves into its' modifications, one of which is the body. That body, or the modifications of prakrti itself, is called "mahArNava" because "Ocean" denotes any collection of elements in shAstra and not always the literal body of water.

"**antarikShe**" - *antaH svargapRRithivyormadhye IkShyate* - That which can be perceived between svarga and prithvi is the bound self transmigrating to both worlds. Due to association with the body, the self associates with the triguNAs and comes under their influence.

Next 2 mantras explain the effects of these guNAs, beginning with rajo and tamo guNAs.

Mantra 3

nIlagrIvAH shitikaNThAH sharvA adhaH kShamAcharAH

Meaning: Those guNAs in which rajas and tamas are dominant, leading to perverted knowledge (nIlagrIvAH), associated with actions that cause ignorance (shitikaNThAH), destroyers of the true knowledge of the self (SharvA), are the way or means to go down to Earth, ie, samsAra

"nIlagrIvA" - These 2 guNAs cause one to descend (grIva) into the darkness of perverted knowledge (nIla). Those associated with rajo guNa are attached to fruits of actions, which are perishable. Thus they do not go after the imperishable self. Those associated with tamo guNa gain contrary knowledge.

"shitikaNthA" - "kaNtha" means being proximate to, ie, in association with and "shiti" refers to darkness. It means, "associated with actions of the nature of ignorance". Those associated with rajo guNa, being attached to perishable fruits, undertake appropriate fruitive actions. Those attached to contrary knowledge due to tamo guNa perform actions of the lowest quality, thus ending up in the worst of births. These actions are all of the form of darkness.

"sharvA" - *ShRnoti* - The various guNa combinations in which rajas or tamas are the dominant ones, are destroyers of true knowledge of the self. They are clubbed together as both are incompatible with liberation.

"adhakShamAcharA" - They are a course or way (charA) to take one down (adha) to "Earth" which signifies samsAra. gIta 14.14 talks about this and 14.18 uses the term "*adhaH gacchati*".

Mantra 4

nIlagrIvAH shitikaNThA diva rudrA upashritAH

Meaning: Those guNa combinations in which sattva is dominant, destroy ignorance regarding the knowledge of the self (nIlagrIvA), associated with acts of worship of bhagavAn (shitikaNthA), bestowers of good (RudrA), approach or come near the perception of the self .

"nIagrIvA" - Those guNa combinations in which sattva dominates, are conducive for perception of the self. They cause to swallow or destroy (grIva), the ignorance of the self (nIla). gIta 14.18 says sattva leads to direct perception of the self - jnAnam sanjAyate.

"shitikaNthA" - Again, it means, the guNa combinations that are proximate to or associated with (kaNtha) actions that are "white" or pure (shiti). The person with an abundance of sattva dedicates the fruits of all actions to bhagavAn, being disinterested in them.

divam upashRta - approach the perception of the self that is called "divam".

Next, it is explained that all beings are entrapped by these combinations of guNAs, indicating that all 3 must be transcended.

Mantra 5

ye vR^ikSheShu saspinjarA nIagrIvA vilohitAH

Meaning: Those guNa combinations which are in all embodied beings (vR^ikSheShu) - dominantly sattva causing happiness (saspinjarA), dominantly rajas which lead to darkness of the form of sorrow of rebirths (nIagrIvA), dominantly tamas which are of the form of ignorance (vilohitAH)

"vR^ikSha", as has been noted in the 8th anuvAka, denotes the bodies of all beings according to brihadAraNyaka upanishad and hence signifies all embodied selves.

Sattva leads to jnAna that is of the form of happiness, rajas leads to lobha or greed causing rebirths in the middle regions like svarga etc and tamas causes ignorance which leads to very low worlds called "tamas" where there is no chance of jnAna developing. But all 3 bind one to samsAra.

"saspinjarA" is a yellowish-red color and can be taken as those guNa combinations that are predominantly sattva, mixed with rajas and tamas. Sattva at moderate levels, mixed with some rajo and tamo guNAs causes attachment to happiness and can also bind one to samsAra. The example of bharadvAja riShi seeking more and more births to learn the Vedas until Indra advised him to desist is illustrative of this. Thus, one must also not become attached to happiness caused by sattva guNa illumining objects of desire. Rather, one must indeed strive for cultivating more and more sattva guNa, without seeking the happiness that comes from it. Then

he will attain the perception of the self in a state of pure sattva unmixed with rajas and tamas.

"nIagrIva" - Those guNa combinations in which rajas dominates, which causes one to descend into "darkness" of sorrow arising from attachment for fruits of their works.

"vilohita" - a further intensification or darkening of red, since tamas arises from rajas - leads to ignorance.

Alternatively, **"nIagrIva"** can be taken as tamas since it causes descent into the worlds called "tamas" (nIla) and **"vilohita"** can be taken as the red color of rajas. If that is the case, then a nyAya is used to justify a reversal of order - tamas is mentioned before rajas merely to show how there is little difference between the 2 compared to sattva - rajas eventually does lead to tamas. In a similar manner, matsya purANa says several yugAs of brahmA is one yugAs of Shiva, which in turn is a blink of viShNu's eye - though the reality is that brahmA is superior to Shiva and so it is the reverse, but both are that insignificant compared to bhagavAn that it does not matter how they differ amongst themselves. Thirumangai Azhwar also reverses the positions of brahmA and indra in this manner.

So how can one transcend these guNAs or become "guNAIta"? By realizing that the guNAs are the doers and not oneself, thus becoming disinterested in the effects produced by them. To educate us on that, the guNAs are declared to be the actual "doers" in the next mantra.

Mantra 6

ye bhUtAnAmadhipatayo vishikhAsaH kapardinaH

Meaning: These guNAs which are the leaders of the senses in promoting attachments (bhUtAnAmadhipatayo), inciting them to actions appropriate to the results (vishikhAsaH), in association with prakrti (which is a shell) as the doers (kapardinaH)

So, sattva causes attachment to happiness, rajas causes attachment to fruitive acts and tamas causes attachment to viparIta jnAnA or delusion. As attachments are associated with the senses, these guNAs are "bhUtAnAm adhipathi" - the Lords of the senses called "bhUtAs".

"viShikAsaH" - "viShika" means arrows. They are arrows as they impel one to actions that are appropriate to such attachments.

"kapardinaH" - A "kaparda" is a shell and denotes prakrti, which is the shell as it hides the self, or as the body, provides refuge for the self. These guNAs are those that possess association with this prakrti, hence "kapardinaH". The idea is that, these guNAs cause bondage only due to association of the self with prakrti in the form of the body that contains them. The self by its' essential nature has no contact with them. But like iron becoming hot on contact with fire, the self acquires association with these guNAs through the body.

It is to be understood that the self is the non-doer and the guNAs are the agent of action, from all this. gIta 14.20 refers to this as "*gunebhyaH paraM*".

In order to ensure that one can transcend the guNAs, one must understand the type of foods to be consumed and the manner of worship to be performed, both of which are associated with the guNAs. Hence, the next mantra indicates that the type of food influences which guNa is dominant, and the type of worship performed by a person determines which guNa is dominant in him.

Mantra 7

ye anneShu vividhyanti pAtreShu pibato janAn

Meaning: These guNAs abide in the foods, and in the gods, affecting the people who drink (ie, experience)

In gIta 17.4 and 17.7, bhagavAn confirms that the foods preferred by those with dominance of sattva, rajas and tamas are threefold, as are the gods worshipped by these people. One can refer this chapter of gIta for the descriptions of foods, no need to elaborate on them here.

"patra" means a vessel. The gods are vessels as they are "full" of the desired objects to be attained.

In the upper worlds, even the yakShAs, rAkShasAs, pretas and bhUtAs. The sAttvikAs worship the gods considering Hari as the innerself, and attain great happiness. The rAjasIkAs worship yakShAs and rAkShasAs for meagre benefits that confer happiness mixed with sorrow. The tAmasIkAs worship the bhUtagaNAs - those who work for Rudra. All this is mentioned in chapter 17.

Note that this doesn't mean Rudra cannot be worshipped for jnAna, but he does have under his dominion gaNAs like nRRtti who are tAmasIka. That is why he is the master of embodied beings, he tries to set them on the path of knowledge.

Next, the effects of the type of food consumed and the type of gods worshipped are described in the next 2 mantras.

Mantra 8

ye pathAM pathirakShaya ailabR^idA yavyudhaH |

Meaning: Which guNAs (dominant in sattva) are the protectors of the mind that is the means to performance of sacrifices, austerities etc (pathAM pathirakShaya) which procure abundant food of the form of the pleasure of bhagavAn (ailabR^idA), which are hostile to the enemies in the form of prakrti that cause bondage (yavyudhaH)

gIta 17.17 explains that a sAttvic performer of sacrifices does not have a mind interested in any reward other than the pleasure of bhagavAn. Thus he gains the fruit of the happiness of bhagavAn, which is his "food".

This should be taken as the condition of one who consumes sAttvic food and sacrifices to the devAs as a worship of Hari. "pathi" refers to the mind that is the way for the "pathAM" - which refer to the ways or means such as sacrifices and austerities described in the 17th chapter of gIta for sAttvic persons.

Mantra 9

ye tIrthAni pracharanti sR^ikAvanto niSha~NgiNaH

Meaning: Which guNAs (rajas and tamas) proceed through acts like sacrifices, austerities etc that are means to gain fruits (tIrthAni pracharanti), holding arrows in the form of pain due to perishability of fruits and distress due to self-mortification etc (sR^ikAvanto), possessing attachment to further births in samsAra (niShanginaH)

As those who perform rAjasic and tAmasic austerities and sacrifices attain a bad end, both are clubbed together here.

Acts like austerities and sacrifices are called "tIrthAni" as they are of the nature of means - enabling one to cross over.

gIta 17.18-19 mentions that if a rAjasic austerity is undertaken, the fruits are perishable and so fear arises on account of their impending loss (*calaM*). The end result would be temporary (*adhruvaM*).

When a tAmasic austerity is taken, pain arises in the form of performing self-mortification etc which are beyond one's capacity (*AtmanaH pIdaya*) and being beyond his capacity, it will either yield a result equal to or lower to one's effort, or no result at all if it was not completed.

All these lead to samsAra.

For further details on the divisions of sacrifices and austerities, read the 17th chapter of gIta. This should suffice here.

Mantra 10

ya etAvantashcha bhUyAsashcha disho rudrA vitasthire teShAsahasrayojane
. avadhanvAni tanmasi

Meaning: Those guNAs which are so much and their effects like actions, results etc which are more numerous, called "Rudras" as they cause weeping, have become fixed in or entered the embodied self signified by "quarters". Their bows, ie, the senses, we cover or protect by a distance of a thousand yojanAs (figuratively).

This is a summary of what was said - the guNAs are the doers and the self is the non-doer. The self is signified by "quarters" as it has entered all the quarters. The metaphor of the bows was explained in the first mantra of this anuvAka.

Thus, we understand the guNAs are the doer and renounce doership of the actions, considering ourselves as the non-doer, which is described in the next, rather lengthy mantra.

Mantra 11

I split this mantra up for clarity .

namo rudrebhyo ye pR^ithivyAM ye . antarikShe ye divi yeShAmannaM vAto
varShamiShava

Meaning: Not mine are those guNAs which are in the unmodified prakrti (prithviyAM), the embodied self (antarIkShe), in knowledge of the form of their effects as they can be known only from it (divi), whose food or experiences like happiness, greed and ignorance (annaM), becomes movement in samsAra in the form of births (vAta), division as likes or dislikes (varShaM), arrows in the form of pain and pleasure (iShavaH)

gIta 14.25 identifies one who has transcended the guNAs as one who treats likes and dislikes equally (sama-dukha-sukha)

tebhyo dasha prAchIrdasha dakShiNA dasha
pratIchIrdashodIchIrdashordhvAs

Meaning: To those guNAs, with the 10 senses going in all directions like east, south, west, north and the 10 senses associated with the mind, which is higher than them - To those guNAs - I say "not mine" as the non-doer.

The senses go in all directions towards sense objects, and as they are thus closely associated with directions, they are called by those names. The rejection of doership is intensified by the expression of senses and mind all rejecting it.

"dashordhva" - Refers to the ten senses associated with the mind called "urdhva" as it is superior to them.

namaste no mR^iDayantu te yaM dviShmo yashcha no dveShTi taM vo jambhe dadhAmi

Meaning: May they make us happy (by a preponderance of sattva). That which hate, ie, effects of illumination, action and contrary knowledge - and that which hates us - ie, pain due to non-attainment of desires and attainment of disliked objects - that we place in their mouths, ie, I reflect on the guNAs being the doer.

gIta 14.22 explains the haters. "That which we hate" are the effects of guNAs like happiness, action and contrary knowledge from sattva, rajas and tamas. For all these, if they are something we dislike, we hate looking at them. If we like them, we hate the idea of them not being in our sight away. Even in the case of ignorance caused by tamas, sometimes we dislike that ignorance, sometimes we think such ignorance is bliss. This is not proper conduct and we must be disinterested in such effects.

"That which hates us" is the pain arising from non-attainment of the desired objects. It is hostile to us obviously. Note that this is different from saying, "we hate the idea of those objects being away from us" - this statement is a thought, while the pain is the actual realization of the thought. It avoids redundancy.

gIta 14.23 explains "jambhe dadAmi" as "guNa vartante" - By thinking that the guNAs which generate such likes and dislikes are doing their work which have no relevance to oneself, he does not act under their influence and is steadfast in the self. He understands the guNAs are the doer.

"Mouth" also signifies any opening or "means" or a way of acting. So by saying, "I place them in your mouths", it means, "I place the locus of doership of those experiences of pain and pleasure in the actions (mouths) of the guNAs. Hence, I am the non-doer".

This concludes the shatarudrIyaM. Nonetheless, some relevant mantras are chanted along with it, so I will interpret them below.

Mantra 12

tryaMbakaM yajAmahe sugandhiM puShTivardhanam

Meaning: Mind which is the perceiver of bhogya sthAna, bhoga sthAna and bhogopakaraNa sthAna (tryaMbakaM)! We worship (meditate on; yajAmahe) you, as that which is full of fragrances, ie, associated with all auspicious things (sugandhiM), who augments nourishment, ie, jnAna-vairAgya (puShTivardhanam).

"Tryambaka" does not refer to any devata here. It refers to the mind, which is meditated upon as a symbol of Brahman on account of its' purity. The term "Tryambaka" is used to denote generic objects and here it refers to the mind which perceives the triad of the place of experience, object of experience and the instruments of experience.

urvArukamiva bandhanAnmR^ityormukShIya mA.amR^itAt

Meaning: As a gourd (severed) from its' stem (urvArukamiva bandhanAn), may we be freed (mukShIya), from attachment to sense objects that cause death, ie, rebirths (mR^ityor). But not from meditation on Brahman, ie, lead us not astray from upAsana by indulging in sense objects (mA.amR^itAt)

How do we know this mantra denotes the mind? Because the same mantra occurs in a modified form in the Atharva Veda as below:

aryaman yajAmahe sugandhim pativedanam urvArurkamiva bandhanAd pra tvA munchAmi nAmutah

"Tryambaka", a key word apparently identifying a deity for some, is replaced by "Aryaman". If one saw the Atharva Veda mantra only, one might similarly conclude it refers to Aryaman (sUrya) devata!

Even there, it denotes only mind in the context - "aryaman" denotes the mind that restrains darkness of ignorance by (contemplation of) auspicious attributes which are full of bliss (**arInAM tamasAM niyanta** - Nirukta 11.23). "**pra tvA munchAmi nAmutah**" means, "I relinquish you here, ie, when you are associated with the attachments here, but not there, ie, when you are contemplating on that Brahman." Mind is an enemy when fixed in sense objects, friend when fixed in Brahman.

The mantra also occurs in a Rg Veda sUkta where context clearly establishes it refers to the mind. Not to mention Vishnu Purāna also confirms this by using the phrase "**yathA samnidhimAtrena gandhah ksobhAya jAyate manaso nopakartrtvAt**" -- talking about mind being associated with "fragrances" in another context - clear proof that "**sugandhim**" is applied to the mind.

Note that it makes no sense to say "I relinquish you" with reference to a devata. The very fact that "Tryambaka" is interchangeable with "Aryaman" shows that it is not speaking of any devata.

For a detailed study of this mantra in its' proper context (as it is merely added to Rudram), please read parts 1,2 and 3 of this older thread of mine on twitter here -

<https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1288228754242670592.html>

<https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1288574776701722624.html>

<https://twitter.com/DefiledGod/status/1288928800684695553?s=19>

Such meditation on the mind falls in the realm of pratIkopAsaNa as per the brahma sUtra "**brahmadR^iShTirutkarShAt.h**"

"amR^ita" can mean Brahman as the self. Makes little difference, as even the self is contemplated as subservient to Brahman.

Praising the mind that is filled with experience of Brahman and contemplation of oneself as subservient to Brahman, next that meditation is described more vividly, in the form of understanding that Brahman is the owner of all things in the Universe.

Mantra 13

yo rudro agnau yo apsu ya oShadhIShu . yo rudro vishvA bhuvanA.a.avivesha
tasmai rudrAya namo astu

Meaning: To that Lord who bestows good in the form of existence (Rudra), who is in Agni, who is in water, who is in trees and plants, who has entered into all these worlds, to that Lord Rudra, our obeisances.

"Rudra" means one who bestows good in the form of existence. It is by his pervasion in all beings that he makes them exist, imparts them their essential nature and sustains them in a manner that they solely exist for his purpose. By this, his ownership of all objects is clearly brought out.

Because the etymology of "Rudra" perfectly fits the context of pervasion, it is also clear that the term does not denote the name of a specific deity, but indicates nArAyaNa only.

This same mantra occurs in ShvetAsvatAra upanishad where "rudra" is replaced by "deva", thus showing that the mere occurrence of "rudra" does not imply identity of a deity. Shri Ranga Ramanuja Muni has commented on this mantra.

The nAma "tattvaM" in the sahasranAma is interpreted by Bhattar as saying he remains as the essence of all as the antaryAmin, thus imparting their usefulness to them - he sustains their nature of existing for his sake by virtue of that. The same sentiment is conveyed here in this mantra.

"vishvA bhuvanA.a.avivesha" - When he is ever existing as the innerself, how can he be said to be "entering" the worlds as if he wasn't there before? In reality, it is the jIva which was existing in subtle form and then upon evolution of gross forms of prakrti, "enters" the gross universe in the form of devas, men etc. As

bhagavAn is the innerself of this "entering" jIva which is his body, he is said to "enter" by virtue of sAMAnAdhikaraNyam.

Next, the manner of worshipping this Lord is detailed.

Mantra 14

Let us again break this mantra up for clarity.

tamuShTuhi yaH sviShuH sudhanVA yo vishvasya kShayati bheShajasya .

Meaning: Praise him (for attaining the self) who has an auspicious arrow or weapons worthy of meditation and auspicious bow capable of resolving all conflict, who is the abode of all auspicious attributes which are medicine.

Arrows indicate all weapons that are subhAShraya as was previously seen in 7th anuvAka. His bow refers to his will, again seen in the 7th anuvAka.

Having attained the self, the meditation should assume the form of the contemplation of subservience, as below.

yakShvAmahe saumanasAya

Meaning: Worship (contemplate on the subservience of the self to paramAtma) for becoming associated with a favorable mind averse to ego in the form of ownership.

Having understood the self as subservient, it should be offered to paramAtma in self-surrender, as below.

rudraM namobhirdevamasuraM duvasya

Meaning: By actions of karma yoga indicating "not mine", we oblate the self which bestows good (rudraM), which is the self-luminous (devaM), which is not supported by the body or which is other than the body that shines out to the senses (asuraM/adharaM)

"Rudra" here refers to the self which bestows good in the form of knowledge of its' nature as a SeSha. It is surrendered as oblation to bhagavAn who is the SeShin, understanding it as self-luminous and distinct from the body.

There are 2 readings - some have "adharaM", some have "asuraM", but both mean the same. "adharaM" means not supported by the body as it exists independent of it. "asuraM" means other than the body which is called "sura" as it shines out or is manifest to the senses.

When the Veda mantra talks about "worship" 3 times, it should be interpreted differently, rather than taking it the same way all the time and addressed to the same object. Such subtleties have been missed by the commentators

The mind, which has surrendered the self to bhagavAn, is now praised in the next mantra.

Mantra 15

ayaM me hasto bhagavAnayaM me bhagavattaraH . ayaM me vishva\ -
bheShajo.aya shivAbhimarshanaH

Meaning: This mind of mine which is the support has become fit for worship, this mind of mine is the highest abode of wealth in the form of experience of the self. This mind of mine filled with experience of the self is the medicine for all the senses, by virtue of agreeable contact with sense objects (via performance of karma yoga).

"hasta" - This does not mean "hand". It refers to the mind. A hand is anything that supports, or holds, or carries, or performs an action. Thus it is a metaphor for the mind that does all these functions.

"bhagavAn" means the mind has become worthy of worship indicating purity. The brahma sUtraS state that any pure object can be meditated on as Brahman by superimposing the latter's attributes on it. Thus, a pure mind is meditated as Brahman and such injunctions exist in shAstra.

"bhagavattara" - The mind is the highest of those filled with wealth (bhaga) in the form of experience of the self. The others who also have this wealth are the senses, as all senses and mind are engaged in the self. But mind is the leader, so it is the highest.

"shivAbhimarshanaH" - The term "abhimarShana" usually has a negative connotation, like an improper touch or contact. Thus, when sense objects are indulging in fruitive activities, there is improper contact. A jnAni does carry out

these activities in what appears like normal sense gratification to the world, but in reality, his "abhimarShana" is "shivaM" or devoid of interest in the fruits; he is not attached to it.

The best example of "**shivAbhimarshanaH**" is Rudradeva himself - he who gave umA half his body, wanders in graveyards may be regarded as sensuous or unclean by ajnAnIs. However, he is a jnAni who is executing these duties with no attachment to their fruits; umA is the experience of the self and personified brahma vidyA that he is ever associated with; he considers the graveyard as a quiet place for upAsana and also because he wants to redeem the bhUtAs who reside there; he stays in their company to instruct them on the knowledge of Brahman and is not polluted by any impurities. This is explained by mahAdeva himself in the anuShasana parva and is a perfect example of karma yoga.

Next, the fruit of such self-surrender to bhagavAn, as was carried out by the pure mind, is mentioned in the next mantra.

Mantra 16

ye te sahasramayutaM pAshA mR^ityo martyAya hantave . tAn yaj~nasya
mAyayA sarvAnava yajAmahe

Meaning: Hey bhagavAn who are called as "Death"! Your prakrti which is of the form of innumerable fetters that are the combinations of the triguNAs, myriad as they are the cause of innumerable actions, is for the sake of causing injury to the transmigrating self. By this worship of ours of the form of self-surrender, we remove (this veil of mAyA).

This is nothing but "mama mAyA duratyaya.." (gIta 7.15) of course. Self-explanatory.

Brahman is worshipped here as the innerself of Mrtyu. Alternatively, "Mrtyu" can be directly applied to bhagavAn, as he who is "Death" or causer of samsAra for the ignorant and the One who is "Death" to the samsAra itself of his devotees.

Mantra 17

mR^ityave svAhA mR^ityave svAhA

Meaning: I offer this food (myself) in sacrifice (self-surrender) to Mrtyu. I offer this food (myself) in sacrifice (self-surrender) to Mrtyu.

Repeated for emphasis. This means, "I exist as bhogyaM/food for that paramAtma, as I belong to him as his property and can be used by him as he desires".

This is the ripened state of contemplation on the true nature of the self, called "atyanta pAratantryaM". You do not care about what you want, but exist like an insentient being to be used as he pleases. Bharata wanted to go with rAma to the forest with all his heart, but obeyed rAma's command and stayed in Ayodhya. That separation caused him sorrow, but he did not heed his own sorrow in favor of rAma's desire as he felt he could be used by rAma in whatever way the latter wished.

The section ends with a prayer addressed to the sin destroying form of the Lord in the heart.

Mantra 18

OM namo bhagavate rudrAya viShNave mR^ityurme pAhi .

Meaning: Salutation to bhagavAn in the form of the gastric fire (rudra), who is viShNu (in the heart). Protect me from death (samsAra) by meditation on that form of yours.

Unlike the term "rudra" which is a generic term used for many objects, the name "viShNu", due to its' intimate connection with nArAyaNa nAma in the viShNu gAyatri, is never used to denote any object other than paramAtma, who is also the devata connected to the nAma - Lord viShNu. Hence, it is most apt to take viShNu as signifying pervasion associated with the Lord of Sri only.

Even though "viShNu" denoting mere entry or pervasion could have been used for the individual self in the previous anuvAkAs, note how Rudram has avoided doing so. Entirety of shruti and smriti uses viShNu, vAsudeva and nArAyaNa to denote one entity only. These nAmAs are not used to denote other objects like mind, self, other gods as terms like "rudra" do. This uniqueness of the viShNu and vAsudeva nAmAs in turn depend on nArAyaNa nAma, which is the supreme name of Brahman and does not denote anything else. By virtue of this, the devata connected to the nAmAs and denoted by the viShNu gAyatri is Brahman.

Here, "**rudra**" refers to the gastric fire and Brahman (viShNu) as the indweller of the heart. The nArAyaNa sUkta says, "**tasya madhye mahAnagnir...**" - the Lord

has an auspicious form in the heart, through which the gastric fire passes through. Owing to such proximity to gastric fire, Brahman is verily called that gastric fire (rudra).

That form proximate to the gastric fire in the heart, is "*nIlatoyadamadhyasthAd*" as per nArAyaNa sUkta, and that is referred to as "*bhagavate*" here as it is replete with the auspicious qualities.

The following mantra which occurs in mahAnArAyaNa upaniShad is also sometimes added to the above, which obviously points to this interpretation.

prANAnAM granthirasi rudro mA vishAntakaH tenAnnenApyAyasva.

Meaning: You are the knot in which the vital airs are bound. You make one cry (rudra). You are the destroyer of food which is being eaten. Enter into me. Cause satisfaction to the prANAs through that food.

This mantra occurs in the mahAnArAyaNa upanishad and again Shri Ranga Ramanuja Muni has commented on it. The prANAs are dependent on the gastric fire which is the knot (granthi) that binds them. The fire is called the destroyer as it destroys the food that is eaten. "mA viShan" - pervade with your flames for digesting the food.

Om shAnti: shAnti: shAnti:

May there be threefold peace.

This concludes my write-ups on Shri Rudram.

I submit this to the lotus feet of shrI rAmAnuja muni.