

RUDRANAAM SHANKARAS CA ASMI

By: Swami Geeta Mateshwari.

Lord Sri Krishna in verse 23 of chapter 10 while detailing a few of His *Vibhootis* to Arjuna tells that: “*of the Rudras, I am Shankara.*” There are eleven *Rudras*:-

1. Aja
2. Ekpada
3. Ahirbudhna
4. Pinaki
5. Aparajita
6. Triambak
7. Nisha
8. Shambhu or Shankara
9. Haran
10. Ishwara
11. Kapi

Of the eleven *Rudras*, the one known as Shankara is the Lord Himself. Shankara means that who provides welfare and peace.

In the heart of Lord Shankara resides Lord Vishnu and in the heart of Lord Vishnu resides Lord Shankara. The person who speaks ill of either Lord Shankara or Lord Vishnu resides in hell till the time there is the existence of the sun and the moon. A devout wife has the right to praise her husband but she does not have the right to abuse another woman’s husband. In the same manner, you have the right to praise the glory of your beloved Lord but you certainly cannot speak ill regarding any other deity. There may be many names and forms of the Lord. Yet there can be only one Supreme Lord. It is like our bodies are all different but the soul is one.

The holy festival of *Maha Shivaratri* is celebrated in the month of *Phalgun*, on the fourteenth day of the dark moon. The glory of performing worship to Lord Shankara on this day is of the highest

nature. The *Shivaling* is the symbol of a source of light. On this day, this light appeared as ordained by Lord Shiva. The beginning and the end of this light could not be ascertained by Lord Vishnu or Lord Brahma. It was then that Lord Shiva or Mahadeva appeared before them and told them that He had brought forth this light. It shall be known and worshipped as *Shivalinga*. This day shall be known as *Maha Shivaratri*.

“That devotee who with devotion will observe fast on this day and worship Me four times, he will be able to obtain the merits of performing worship for the whole year and in the end, come directly to my *loka*. Nobody will dare to stop him.” The festival of *Maha Shivaratri* is performed ever since.

Lord Shankara is known by various other names. A few of them are Bholenath, Mahadeva, Deva of Devas, Shambhu, Bholebaba, Jatadhari, Gangadhari, Shiva, Trishuladhaari, Damruwala, etc. Each and every name of His can be explained in a beautiful way.

The trefoil leaf of *bilva* tree is very dear to Lord Shiva. Goddess Lakshmi resides in this leaf. Lord Shiva is adorned by three horizontal lines on the forehead and also the trefoil *bilva* leaf is loved by the Lord. The root cause of creation can be understood in the forms of the three Lords: Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesha. They may be thought to be of three *Gunas*, three functions, three ages, three situations and three bodies. The trefoil *bilva* leaf, in any form even powdered, if offered to Lord Shiva, then He is very pleased. If a four leaved *bilva*

leaf is offered, it is even better; offering five leaved or six leaved one multiplies the effect much more. One is able to get the fulfilment of one's desires by offering this leaf on Lord Shiva.

Rudraksh, the holy bead is the form of the Lord Shiva Himself. *Rudraksha* is a combination of *Rudra* and *Aksha*. *Rudra* means Lord Shiva. *Aksha* means, eyes. It so happened that once Lord Shiva was sitting in meditation. Suddenly when he opened His eyes, teardrops fell from His eyes. Trees cropped up from the places where these teardrops had fallen. Lord Shankara then transplanted them to different places. The *Rudrakshas* are of varied types from one faced to many faceted ones. The person who wears the *Rudraksha* assumes the personality of Lord Shiva.

The spirits run away at the sight of the *Rudraksha*. Poverty is also banished and the person is free from diseases.

Lord Shiva travels on His bull called Nandi. Nandi represents *Dharma*. He is celibacy personified. His horns are symbols of forgiveness. His ears represent equanimity. Belief in God is represented in his eyes. Faith is his mind and intellect.

Mother Parvati rides on the Lion. Lion represents power. Mother Parvati Herself is supremely powerful and therefore, has chosen the lion as her mode of travel.

Lord Ganapati's vehicle is the mouse.

The vehicle of Lord Kartikeya is the peacock.

In the *darbar* of Lord Shiva, many opposing forces are there but in full unity. The lion and bull are opposite of each other. The snake and the mouse are opposites. The snake and the peacock are also opposites. Yet there is no cause for friction. Hence Lord Shiva is telling us that there may be different types of individual constituting a family even then, they should all live together with love. They should not oppose one another. Lord Krishna has also said in the Gita "*Sarvabhoota hitey rathah*".

The Jiva is liberated upon reciting and realising Shiva.

Worship of Lord Shiva is particularly beneficial during the month of *Shravan*, just after *Guru Purnima*. A person who worships Lord Shiva for one month continuously from the 3rd day of *Chaitre* month, then he will realise his desire. An unmarried girl wishing for a suitable husband can do this *puja* and it is very effective. The same *puja* was done by Goddess Parvati as directed by Narad Muni. One has to offer *jal* (water), milk and *bilva* leaf for the whole month. Food should be taken only once during the whole day.

Lord Shankar is called Bhole Nath, that is a very simple Lord. He is very easily satisfied with the *shraddha* offered by the devotee. Those who are dedicated to Lord Krishna can also worship Lord Shankara because Lord Krishna has said that among the *Rudras*, I am Shankara

– "*Rudranam Shankaras cha asmi.*"