

Mrtyuñjaya Mantraḥ

ॐ त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।
उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात्॥

om tryambakam yajāmahe sugandhim puṣṭivardhanam
urvārukamiva bandanānmṛtyormukṣīya mā'mṛtāt

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

tryambakam - three-eyed (Śiva); *yajāmahe* - we offer our worship; *sugandhim* - fragrant; *puṣṭivardhanam* - one who enhances prosperity; *urvārukam* - the water melon; *iva* - like; *bandanāt* - from the bondage; *mṛtyoḥ* - of death; *mukṣīya* - liberate; *mā* - not; *amṛtāt* - from immortality

Translation

We offer our worship to the fragrant, three-eyed Lord Śiva who enhances prosperity. May he liberate us from the bondage of death like the water melon (which effortlessly separates from the vine); may he not (let us turn away) from immortality.

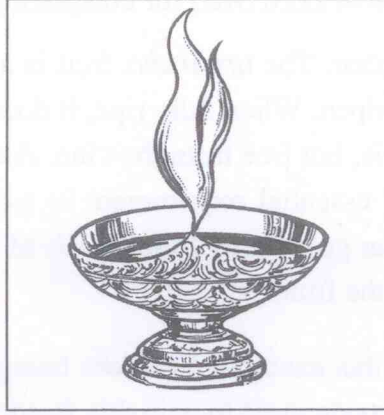
Brief Explanation

This *mantra* is taken from *Rudram*, which is a hymn on Lord *Śiva*. It is also called *mṛtyuñjaya-mantra*, meaning, it invokes the grace of Lord *Śiva* for conquering death.

This verse contains a beautiful metaphor. The *urvāruka* fruit is a melon which grows on the ground attached to a vine. It takes its time to ripen. When fully ripe, it does not have to be plucked. It detaches itself effortlessly, remaining where it is, but free from the vine. *Amṛta* is total freedom from the sense of all inadequacy and limitation. An essential requirement in gaining *amṛta* is emotional maturity, which is gained by the process of inner growth, by living a life of values and prayer. This maturing of the mind is likened to the ripening of the fruit.

There is another important aspect of this example. Freedom being the essential nature of the self, the mature mind does not have to seek outside itself to gain this freedom. When a mature mind is exposed to the teaching, it effortlessly comes to recognise that freedom. This is the gain of that which already has been gained. Thus, this is a prayer of a *mumukṣu*, a person who desires that total freedom and who makes it his main pursuit in life. It is also a *mantra* which is traditionally chanted by family and friends for a person who is ill or approaching death. (This prayer should be learned and recited using the three *svaras*, tones that are used in Vedic chanting.)

Dīpa Darśanam



शुभं करोति कल्याणम् आरोग्यं धनसम्पदः
शत्रुबुद्धिविनाशाय दीपज्योतिर्नमोऽस्तुते ।

śubham karoti kalyāṇam ārogyam dhanasampadaḥ
śatrubuddhivināśāya dīpajyotirnamo'stu te

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

śubham - auspiciousness; *karoti* - which brings; *kalyāṇam* - prosperity; *ārogyam* - good health; *dhana-sampadaḥ* - abundance of wealth; *śatru-buddhi-vināśāya* - for the destruction of the intellect's enemy (ignorance); *dīpa-jyotiḥ* - that lamplight; *namah* - salutation; *astu* - let it be; *te* - to you

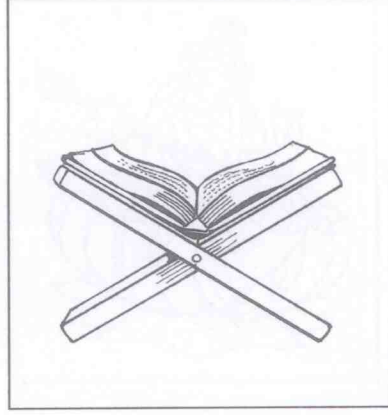
Translation

The lamplight brings auspiciousness, prosperity, good health and abundance of wealth. Let (my) salutations be to you for the destruction of the ignorance which is the intellect's enemy.

Brief Explanation

This prayer is chanted before lighting the lamp. Light is considered a symbol of auspiciousness, prosperity and abundance in many cultures. Light brings with it brightness, but how does it destroy the intellect's enemy? The intellect's enemy is considered to be ignorance; its archenemy is self-ignorance. Ignorance is likened to darkness; knowledge is likened to light. A room may be full of objects and one's sight may be sharp, but if the room is in darkness, the objects cannot be perceived. Light removes the darkness and makes it possible to see the objects. In the same manner, the self (subject) is ever present in one's experiences, but due to ignorance, its essential nature is not known. As light removes darkness, knowledge of the self removes ignorance and allows one to discover happiness as the essential nature of the self.

Adhyayanāt Prāk



सरस्वति नमस्तुभ्यं वरदे काम रूपिणि।
विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा॥

sarasvati namastubhyam varade kāmārūpiṇi
vidyārambham kariṣyāmi siddhirbhavatu me sadā

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

sarasvati - O Goddess of Knowledge, *sarasvatī*; *namah* - salutations; *tubhyam* - to you; *varade* - one who gives boons; *kāmārūpiṇi* - one who has a beautiful form; *vidyārambham* - the beginning of studies; *kariṣyāmi* - I do; *siddhiḥ* - success; *bhavatu* - may there be; *me* - for me; *sadā* - always

Translation

Salutations to you, O Goddess *Sarasvatī*, who is the giver of boons, and who has a beautiful form! I begin my studies. Let there be success for me always.

Brief Explanation

This prayer is chanted before studies. It is addressed to Goddess Sarasvatī who symbolises all forms of knowledge, including knowledge of the fine and performing arts. Knowledge is a fundamental pursuit of human life, and a life of study and learning provides nourishment and discipline to the human intellect. In the Vedic culture, study is considered one's duty. A Vedic mandate says, "svādhyāyo'dhyetavyah" - may one study one's recension of *Veda*. Goddess *Sarasvatī*, is addressed as one who grants boons and fulfills desires. This prayer is chanted before beginning a class or at the beginning of one's study so that all learning may resolve in knowledge alone.

Śrī Sarasvatī



या देवी स्तूयते नित्यं विबुधैर्वेदपारगैः।
सा मे वसतु जिह्वाग्रे ब्रह्मरूपा सरस्वती ॥

yā devī stūyate nityam vibudhairvedapāragaiḥ
sā me vasatu jihvāgre brahmarūpā sarasvatī

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

yā - who; *devī* - the Goddess; *stūyate* - is praised; *nityam* - ever; *vibudhair* - by the wise; *veda-pāragaiḥ* - those who have mastered the *Vedas*; *sā* - she; *me* - my; *vasatu* - may live; *jihvāgre* - on the tip of the tongue; *brahmarūpā* - the embodiment of the *Vedas* (or the consort of Lord *Brahmā*); *sarasvatī* - the Goddess of Knowledge

Translation

May *Sarasvatī*, the Goddess of Knowledge, who is ever praised by the wise who have mastered the scriptures, who is the embodiment of the *Vedas* (or the consort of Lord *Brahmā*), live on the tip of my tongue.

Brief Explanation

Goddess *Sarasvatī* is the consort of Lord *Brahmā*, the creator, and is the giver of all knowledge and wisdom. She is worshipped by students and seekers so that they may be blessed with brilliance, talent and knowledge.

Śrī Viṣṇuḥ



नमस्मस्तभूतानाम् आदिभूताय भूभृते ।
अनेकरूपरूपाय विष्णवे प्रभविष्णवे ॥

namassamastabhūtānām ādibhūtāya bhūbhṛte
anekarūparūpāya viṣṇave prabhaviṣṇave

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

namaḥ - salutation; *samasta-bhūtānām* - of all the beings; *ādi-bhūtāya* - to the creator; *bhūbhṛte* - the sustainer of the creation; *aneka-rūpa-rūpāya* - the one whose form is all forms; *viṣṇave* - who is all pervasive; *prabha-viṣṇave* - the self-effulgent one

Translation

Salutation to Lord *Viṣṇu*, who is the creator of all beings, the sustainer of the creation, whose form is all forms, who is all pervasive, and who is self-effulgent.

Brief Explanation

Lord *Viṣṇu* is the presiding deity for all that sustains the creation. He is worshipped for prosperity and health.

Śrī Lakṣmīh



नमस्तेऽस्तु महामाये श्रीपीठे सुरपूजिते।
शङ्खचक्रगदाहस्ते महालक्ष्मी नमोऽस्तु ते॥

namaste'stu mahāmāye śrīpīṭhe surapūjite
śaṅkhacakra-gadāhaste mahālakṣmī namo'stu te

Sanskrit to English Word Meaning

namaḥ - salutation; *te* - unto you; *astu* - let it be; *mahāmāye* - who is all powers; *śrīpīṭhe* - who is the seat of wealth; *sura-pūjite* - who is worshipped by the gods; *śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-haste* - the one who wields a shell, a disc and a mace in her hands; *mahālakṣmī* - O Goddess of prosperity; *namaḥ* - salutation; *astu* - let it be; *te* - to you

Translation

Salutation to you, O *Mahālakṣmī*, who is all power, who is the seat of wealth, who is worshipped by the gods and who has a shell, a disc and a mace in her hands.

Brief Explanation

Goddess *Lakṣmī* is the consort of Lord *Viṣṇu*. Sustenance of anything requires wealth and resources. *Śrī Lakṣmī* blesses the creation with wealth, thereby supporting and sustaining the world.