

## Śrī Rudram

### Anuvāka 4

R̥ṣi – Durvāsa; Chandas - Mahāvīrāt; Devata - Śambhuḥ  
Dhyāna śloka

भस्मोद्धूलितसर्वाङ्गं जटामण्डलमण्डितम् ।

ध्यायेद्देवं वृषारूढं गणेश्वरयुतं हरम् ॥

bhasmoddhūlitasarvāṅgaṃ jaṭāmaṇḍalamaṇḍitam ।

dhyāyeddevaṃ vṛṣārūḍhṃ gaṇeśvarayutaṃ haram ॥

May one meditate upon Lord Śiva who is covered with ashes all over the body, whose hair is shining, who is seated on a bull, who is with Gaṇeśa and who removes all papās (the cause of duḥkha).

May one always meditate upon Lord Śiva whose whole body is covered with ashes. Ash indicates absence of any difference and the Lord's true nature is nirviśeṣa, free of attributes.

Result (for chanting this anuvāka): The mantras of this anuvāka are chanted to remove dreaded diseases.

नम आ॒व्याधि॑नी॒भ्यो वि॒वीध्य॑न्ती॒भ्यश्च॑ वो नमः॑ ॥ १ ॥

nama āvyādhinībhyo vivīdhyantībhyascha vo namaḥ ॥ 1 ॥

namaḥ – salutation; āvyādhinībhyaḥ – to those who are in the form of female power that strikes all around; vivīdhyantībhyaḥ – to those who are in the form of female power that strikes in various forms; ca – and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation. Salutation to you in the form of female power that strikes all around and in various forms.

In āvyādhinībhyaḥ,<sup>1</sup> 'ā' is a prefix meaning āsamantāt, referring to a certain totality. Vivīdhyantībhyaḥ<sup>2</sup> refers to the feminine force that can destroy in different ways, such as with looks, words and deeds. The Lord is the one who is in the form of these kinds of women who are frightening. These are Kāli, Durgā and so on, who are all bhagavat śaktis. When we see Kāli in Kolkata, her tongue is out and she has a big spear in her hand. We worship that form of Kāli. If we try to get away from ugra śakti, the frightening power, we cannot be the whole. It is interesting to note that in the U.S.A. any volcano or cyclone was given a woman's name. Now the name alternates; the female name is followed by a male name. You see the glory of Īśvara in it. Unto the one who is in the form of māya śakti, an expression of himself, my salutation.

नम उगणाभ्यस्तुहतीभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ २ ॥  
 namaḥ ugaṇābhyastrīḥatībhyāśca vo namaḥ || 2 |

namaḥ – salutation; ugaṇābhyaḥ – to those who are in the form of the group of seven female deities; trīḥatībhyāḥ – to those who are in the form of powerful deities that harm; ca and; vaḥ to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you who are in the form of the group of seven pleasing female deities who bless as much as the powerful deities that harm.

Namaḥ ugaṇābhyaḥ – Salutation to saptamātrkāś, mothers of blessing, who are Brahāmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Cāmuṇḍā. They are called ugaṇās, utkrṣṭa gaṇās, great powers of blessing. Protection, blessing and destruction are all śaktis. If you are selective in your outlook you are not dealing with your problems including fears. Vedanta does not work for such a person. You have to face and resolve every frightening form. To say, 'I am Brahman' is not easy. It includes everything and excludes everything. The Lord is the one who is in those forms who can chastise and who can bring global upheavals, one of them causing disappearance of dinosaurs and the separation of Australia from Asia. Also, he is the one who can truly bless. Unto him my salutation.

<sup>1</sup> The derivation of the word āvyādhinībhyaḥ: āsamantād veditum śaktaḥ sthriyaḥavyādhiniyaḥ tasca jagati yavantyaḥ santi tāvadrūpebhyaḥ—the feminine force in the world that can destroy in all respects is āvyādhinībhyaḥ, unto the one in those forms.

<sup>2</sup> The derivation of the word vivīdhyantībhyaḥ: veddhum śaktaḥ striyaḥ vividhyantyaḥ tasca jagati yāvantyaḥ santi tāvadrūpebhyaḥ—the feminine force in the world that can destroy in different ways is vividhyantyaḥ—unto the one in those forms.

नमो॑ गृत्से॑भ्यो॑ गृत्सप॑तिभ्यश्च॑ वो॒ नमः॑ ॥ ३ ॥

namo॑ gr̥tsebhyo॑ gr̥tsapatibhyaśca॑ vo॒ namaḥ॑ ॥ 3 ॥

namḥ salutation; gr̥tsebhyaḥ – to those who are in the form of the greedy ones; gr̥tsapatibhyaḥ – to those who are the lords of greedy ones; ca – and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of greedy ones and also their Lord.

The greedy ones never say enough. Here it refers to fire, the devouring agni. The Lord is that fire. He is also Rudra, the Lord of the fire itself. So both fire and the deity of fire are Parameśvara. Unto him my salutation. The plural 'patibhyaḥ' is for respect.

नमो॑ व्रा॑तेभ्यो॑ व्रा॑तपतिभ्यश्च॑ वा॒ नमः॑ ॥ ४ ॥

namo॑ vrātebhyo॑ vrātapatibhyaśca॑ vo॒ namaḥ॑ ॥ 4 ॥

namaḥ – salutation; vrātebhyaḥ – to those who are born out of different varṇās, vrātapatibhyaḥ – to those who are the Lords of all these vratas; ca – and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of people belonging to different varṇās and the Lord of all of them.

Namaḥ vrātebhyaḥ – Salutation to the one in the form of people born of different varṇās. Vratas<sup>3</sup> are people having different professions. Family members may have different types of vṛtti, livelihood; for instance, the father may have one livelihood and the son may have another. They are all bhagavat rūpa, the Lord's form alone. The ideas such as 'I am born of such and such gotra and so on', are all complexes that cannot co-exist with Vedanta. In the beginning they protect you, but they have to disappear when you deal with the infinite. In the beginning orthodoxy is a protection; later it becomes a hindrance. Everything has its place at a given time, but at the same time, one needs to grow out of things in the course of time. Unto Rudra, who is the Lord of all the vratās, my salutation.

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<sup>1</sup> aniyatām vṛttim āsritaḥ—those who do not have settled profession.