

Śrī Rudram

नमो भुवन्तये वारिवस्कृतायौषधीनां पतये नमः ॥ ११ ॥

namo bhuvantaye vārivaskṛtāyauṣadhīnām pataye namaḥ || 11 ||

namaḥ - salutation; bhuvantaye - to the one who causes the growth of the earth; vārivaskṛtāya - who abides in the devotees (and blesses them); auṣadhīnām - of all herbs; pataye - to the Lord; namaḥ - salutation

Salutation to the one who causes the growth of the earth, who abides in the devotees (and blesses them) and who is the Lord of all herbs.

Bhuvanti¹ means one who sustains, blesses and makes things happen. Now, the Lord makes things happen including events such as earthquake. Earthquakes create lands. Because of weak surface pressure, there is earthquake. If the surface is strong, then volcano erupts and the lava comes up. The core of the earth is nothing but lava. It is all fire. You find some of these chocolates hard outside and soft on the inside - this is how the earth is. We are sitting on volcano no matter where you sit. These volcanic activities are a blessing. Volcanoes also create lands. And the earthquake is also a blessing from the earth's standpoint as it is all a readjustment.

Vārivaskṛta² is one who abides in the devotees. Variva means paricaryā, service. Vārivaskṛta is one who does service, one who is ready to serve. He is a kiṅkara³. He is one who does service to the Lord. It is interesting to note that the prayer meeting on Sundays is called Sunday service. It is not like car service. But, it is bhagavat-sevā, service to Lord. In Kerala, Bhagavati sevā, service to Goddess, is common. Those who do pūjā are varivaskṛtas or bhāgavatās. Those who do pūjā are Vārivaskṛtas or bhāgavatās. Lord is varivaskṛta, one who abides in them.

¹ bhuvanti tanoti bhvantīḥ - One who protects the world is called bhvantīḥ.

² The derivation of the word 'vārivaskṛta varivaḥ paricaryā asya kartāraḥ varivaskṛtāḥ bhaktāḥ teṣu tiṣṭati iti vbārivaskṛtaḥ variva - Variva means service. Those who do service are varivaskṛtas, devotees. One who abides in them is called vārivaskṛta.

³ kiṁ kiṁ na karoti iti kiṅkara - What does he not do? One who does everything is called ki'karaḥ, a servant.



Oṣadīnām pataye namaḥ - Salutation to him who is the Lord of all oṣadīs, herbs. Oṣadī⁴ is that which gives us food. Oṣadī is also called medicine. Food is medicine because it removes the disease called discomfort of hunger. The medicine for hunger is flood, auṣadam. Not only is he the Lord of Oṣadīs, he sustains them.

When the tree breathes, you are blessed since it gives you oxygen. It is a blessing that what it breathes out you breathe in. Your breathing out is also a blessing to the oṣadīs and it comes back to you as oxygen. Every breath is a blessing. To sustain all these you require rains which come from clouds! Clouds are Bhagavān. If oṣadīs are a blessing, then that which blesses the oṣadīs is also a blessing, the same Lord.

नम॑ उच्चैर्दृ॑षायाक्रन्द॑यते पत्तीनां॑ पतये॑ नमः॑ ॥ १२ ॥
namaḥ॑ uccairghoṣāyākṛandayāte॑ pattīnāṃ॑ pataye॑ namaḥ॑ ॥ 12 ॥

namaḥ॑ - salutation; uccair ghōṣāyā - to the one who makes loud noise (in war etc); ākrandayate - who makes the enemies weep; pattīnām - of the soldiers; pataye - to the Lord; namaḥ - salutation

Salutation to the one who makes loud noise (in war, etc), who makes the enemies weep and who is the Lord of the soldiers.

That which the whole division of army can hear is a blessing of Bhagavan. It is because of his grace, one is able to shout, 'pāhi mām trāhi mām, protect me, help me cross'. This kind of loud prayer is also for Bhagavan's grace. The Lord is the altar of all and it is for his grace alone that they make uccairghoṣā. Lord is the altar of all uccairghoṣāḥ. He is also the Lord of thunder.

Ākrandayate namaḥ - Salutation unto the destroyer of enemies. Not only is he a blessing to the bhaktas, he is also the destroyer of enemies. He blesses his devotees by removing all the obstacles in their way.

Pattīnām pataye namaḥ - Salutation unto the Lord of armies. Patti means a foot soldier. Kings in the olden days had ratha, chariot, gaja, elephant, turaga, horse and padātin, foot soldier, in their armies. He is the Lord of all armies. There is always a local commander, senāpati, who is a devatā

⁴ Taittirīyopaniṣad (2.1) says, 'oṣadībhyaḥ annam - from herbs came food'.

of sorts. Kārtikeya is senāpati, the Lord of armies. Because of the Lord, all these devatās enjoy power.

नमः कृत्स्नवीताय धावते सत्त्वनां पतये नमः ॥ १३ ॥

namaḥ kṛtsnāvītāya dhāvate sattvanām pataye namaḥ ॥ 13 ॥

namaḥ - salutation kṛtsnavītāya - to the one who pervades everything; dhāvate - who is on the run (to protect his devotees); sattvanām - of all good people; pataye - to the Lord; namaḥ - salutation

Salutation to the one who pervades the entire jagat, who is on the run (to protect his devotees) and who is the Lord of blessing to all good people.

Namaḥ kṛtsnavītāya - Salutation to the one by whom the entire world is pervaded. Even though he is all pervasive, he seems to move from place to place, to make himself available for his devotees. Unto him, dhāvate - who keeps running, my salutation. Here, the contradiction is clear. He is everywhere and he runs to bring redress to devotees.. How is this possible?

He is kṛtsnavītā, available everywhere in a potential form. Both avyakta and vyakta is īśvara. The potential tree in the seed is mithyā and the tree is also mithyā. And wherever mithyā exists, there exists satya. He is available as avyakta for the bhakta to tap.

Sattvanām (satvikānām, vivekavatām) pataye namaḥ - Salutation unto the Lord who is the protector of people given to dharma, the people of discriminative thinking.

All the mantras in this anuvaka can also mean that the devotee is saluting the Lord as one because of whose grace the various things mentioned here remain what they are. A tree is a tree because of the grace of the Lord. This is so with everything in the creation.

To be continued...