

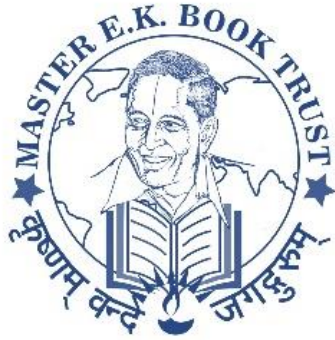
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ŚRĪ SŪKTAṀ



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Commentary:
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INTRODUCTION

THE fifteen Vedic Hymns which became famous as Śrī Sūktam, are among the most popular passages of the Vedas. The Śrī Sūktam forms part of the Rigveda appendix and is considered by the orthodox Indians to be most holy. Since thousands of years upto date we find people who recite Śrī Sūktam daily in their houses. It is considered most auspicious and wealth-giving to recite this Suktam daily in the houses, as well as in the temples. The daily puja of an orthodox Brahmin with the 16 Upacharas (services to the Lord) is done by many with a recital of the Śrī Sūktam Mantrams separately. Some do Puja with Puruṣa Sūktam while others do it with Śrī Sūktam.

The God is invoked as either masculine or feminine by the devotee according to his liking and the mode of worship. When the invocation is in the form of a female, it is called Śrī or Lakshmi. The term 'Śrī' means that which adheres to the masculine principle of the God in the form of shape, number, name, colour etc. Power and consciousness are the two aspects of the God as seen by man. Consciousness is understood as the Puruṣa, the male principle who is the steering intelligence of Power. Power is worshipped as female

principle, 'Śrī', since it depends upon the masculine principle, is to be steered. The whole creation is understood as the manifestation of the Lord and hence it is included in the Śrī aspect of Lord. Since the creation is nothing but the splendour of the Lord, Śrī is understood as splendour and wealth. This aspect is well-defined and described in stanzas of Śrī SūktaṀ. The male aspect of God is beyond attributes but it is Omnipresent in the female aspect which includes all the attributes like shape, name, number, colour, position, quality etc.

Śrī SūktaṀ occupies an important role in the Science of Temple Ritual which is called Agamasāstra. Also in the Tantric way of worship (which is in fact a true copy of the Vedic Ritual in its original), Śrī SūktaṀ plays a very important role. The Ritualistic Science of the Royal Path, which is known as Śrī Vidya, is but a scientific and practical way of glorifying the Goddess 'Śrī'. The Mantras of this Sūkta as well as those of Puruṣa Sūkta are highly significant in their scientific value. For example the Puruṣa SūktaṀ begins with 'Sahasra Śīrṣā', the first two syllables 'S' & 'H' form consonants that govern the respiration. Hence they include the Mantram SŌHAṀ which is the Mantram of our breath. Śrī SūktaṀ begins with 'Hiraṇyavarṇāṃ'. So it begins with the second syllable of Puruṣa SūktaṀ

which is the second of the pair of consonants 'S' & 'H'. As the Vedic students of Yoga know 'S' is the consonantal sound which governs inhalation while 'H' is the consonant which governs exhalation. Hence, the Goddess 'Śrī' governs the exhalation aspect of the Lord. That means she forms the splendour of the expression of the whole from the Lord as His own out-breathing.

Three Rishis named Ananda, Kardama and Chiklita are said to be the seers of the Goddess of Splendour. The first of these, Ananda, is described, as Anandanadha, the Lord of Bliss in Śrī Vidya. From this comes the tradition of naming the Sanyasis of a particular School of Śrī Vidya as Anandas, like Sradhananda, Pranavananda, Hamsananda etc. In many ways the science of 'Śrī' gained prominence in ancient India and expressed itself as the various schools of ritualistic philosophy. Even the school of Alchemists who claim that they transmute the baser metals into gold, take their scientific procedure from Śrī Vidya and Śrī Sūktam.

STANZA-1:

hiraṇyavarṇāṃ hariṇīṃ suvarṇarajatasrajām |
çandrām hiraṇmayīṃ lakṣmīṃ jātavēdō ma āvaha ||

Glossary:

- hiraṇyavarṇāṃ = Her, who is of the golden hue
hariṇīṃ = Her, who is of the yellowish hue
suvarṇarajatasrajām = who has the golden and silvery necklaces
çandrām = who is of the lunar nature
hiraṇmayīṃ = who is of the splendour of gold
lakṣmīṃ = who is the emblem (of the creation)
jātavēdaḥ = Oh! God of fire, from whom the Veda is born
ma = for me
āvaha = you make her possess

Meaning:

Oh! Lord of Fire! From you, the wisdom of the Vedas is born. You make the Goddess of creation possess me, the Goddess who is an expression of the golden yellow hue and who is Herself an embodiment of the splendour of gold. She, who is adorned with jewels of gold and silver and who is of the lunar nature, may possess me (as her own child).

STANZA-2:

tāṃ ma āvaha jātavēdō lakṣmīmanapagāminīm |
yasyāṃ hiraṇyaṃ vindēyaṃ gāmaśvaṃ puruṣānaḥam ||

Glossary:

jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, the birth place of Veda

anapagāminīm = Her, who does not desert

tāṃ = Her

lakṣmīm = the Goddess of Wealth

ma = to me

āvaha = bestow

yasyāṃ = by whom

hiraṇyaṃ = the splendour of gold

gām = the cow

aśvaṃ = the horse

puruṣān = the persons

aḥam = I

vindēyaṃ = can obtain

Meaning:

Oh! Lord of Fire! From you, the Wisdom of the Vedas is born. You bestow upon me the Goddess of Splendour, who will not desert me. By virtue of Her presence, I inherit Gold, Cattle, Horses and Attendants.

STANZA-3:

aśvapūrvāṃ rathamadhyāṃ hastinādaprabōdhinīm ।

śriyaṃ dēvimupahvayē śrīmādēvīrjuṣatām ॥

Glossary:

aśvapūrvāṃ = She, who is preceded by the horses

rathamadhyāṃ = having the chariots in the middle and She
who is sitting in the midst of the chariot

hastināda = by the roars of elephants

prabōdhinīm = being awakened

dēvim = the one with divine light

śriyaṃ = the Goddess who always supplements the
Lord

upahvayē = I approach and address

dēvī = The Goddess of divine light

śrīḥ = She who supplements the Lord

mā = Me

juṣatām = favour

Meaning:

I approach and address Her who is preceded by horses, seated in the midst of the chariot (our body) and who is being awakened by the roars of elephants. May the Goddess of the Lord's supplementation favour me.

STANZA-4:

kāṃ sōsmītāṃ hiraṇyaprākārāmārdrāṃ jvalantīṃ tṛptāṃ
tarpayantīm |

padmē sthitāṃ padmavarṇāṃ tāmihōpahvayē śriyam ||

Glossary:

Saḥ	=	He (God, the Veda Purusha)
kāṃ	=	of which Lady
asmitāṃ	=	As the Awareness of 'I AM'
hiraṇyaprākārām	=	who has golden layers around
ārdrāṃ	=	wet (moisture)
jvalantīṃ	=	shining
tṛptāṃ	=	accomplished
tarpayantīm	=	causing satisfaction
padmē sthitāṃ	=	Seated in the Lotus
padmavarṇāṃ	=	lotus-coloured
tām	=	Her
śriyam	=	The Lady of Splendour
iha	=	here
upahvayē	=	I invite near to.

Meaning:

I invite the Goddess of Splendour who manifests in layers of gold, liquid or molten gold, who shines forth as accomplishment and the accomplished one, who is seated in a lotus being herself lotus coloured and whom the Lord visualised as the awareness of "I AM" in all.

STANZA-5:

çandrāṃ prabhāsāṃ yaśasā jvalantīṃ śriyaṃ lōkē
dēvajūṣṭāmudārām ।

tāṃ padminīmīṃ śaraṇamaham prapadyēalakṣmīrmē naśyatāṃ
tvāṃ vṛṇē ॥

Glossary:

çandrāṃ	=	Her who is shining like moonlight
prabhāsāṃ	=	shining forth
śriyaṃ	=	Goddess of possession
lōkē	=	in the world
yaśasā	=	by Her fame (presence)
jvalantīṃ	=	who is shining
dēvajūṣṭām	=	who acquired the liking of the Gods
udārām	=	Whose Rays travel upwards
tāṃ	=	Her
īṃ	=	who is called this
padminīm	=	who is of Lotus nature
aham	=	I
śaraṇam	=	refuge
prapadyē	=	I fall (at Her feet)
tvāṃ vṛṇē	=	by your taking me up
mē alakṣmīḥ	=	my imperfection
naśyatāṃ	=	may be destroyed

Meaning:

I take my refuge in Her who is of the Lotus nature, who shines with upward beams of Moon-light which exist around Her, as Her splendour. If you take hold of me, Oh! Goddess of Splendour, may the imperfection in me go away from me.

STANZA-6:

ādityavarṇē tapasōadhijātō vanaspatistava vṛkṣōatha bilvaḥ |
tasya phalāni tapasā nudantu māyāntarāyāśça bāhyā
alakṣmīḥ ||

Glossary:

ādityavarṇē	=	Oh! The Goddess of colours and sounds of the Sun God
atha	=	And now
Tava Tapasaḥ	=	by virtue of the warmth of your devotion
adhijātō	=	born out of
vṛkṣaḥ	=	the tree
vanaspatiḥ	=	a classification of plants
bilvaḥ	=	the Bilwa tree
Tasya	=	its
phalāni	=	fruits
āntarāyāḥ	=	inward ones
çā	=	also
bāhyā	=	outward ones
māya	=	self-projections
alakṣmīḥ	=	undesirable things
tapasā	=	by the warmth of your affection
nudantu	=	may be expelled.

Meaning:

Oh! Goddess of the colours and sounds of the Sun God, who is the child of Aditi! Bilwa is the one plant which is born out of the warmth of your devotion. May its fruit dispel the undesirable self-projections, objective and subjective, by virtue of the same warmth of your devotion.

STANZA-7:

upaitu mām dēvasakhaḥ kīrtiśca maṇinā saha |
prādurbhūtōasmi rāṣṭrēasmin kīrtimṛddhiṃ dadātu mē ||

Glossary:

- dēvasakhaḥ = the friend of Gods
kīrtiḥ + ça = and also fame
maṇinā saha = along with brilliant gems
mām = me
upa + yetu = may he approach
asmin rāṣṭrē = in this province
prādurbhūtaḥ = born
asmi = Am I
mē = to me
kīrtiṃ = fame
ṛddhiṃ = prosperity
dadātu = may He bestow

Meaning:

May the friend of Gods, who is always with fame and the essence of all merit approach me. May He bestow prosperity upon me who is born in this province.

STANZA-8:

kṣutpipāsāmalāṃ jyēṣṭhāmalakṣmīm nāśayāmyaham ।
abhūtimasamṛddhiṃ ḥa sarvāṃ nirṇuda mē gṛhāt ॥

Glossary:

kṣut	=	hunger
pipāsā	=	thirst
malāṃ	=	filth
jyēṣṭhā	=	inauspiciousness
alakṣmī	=	non-splendorous
aham	=	I
nāśayāmi	=	destroy
abhūtim	=	non-prosperous state
asamṛddhiṃ	=	insufficiency
ḥa	=	also
sarvāṃ	=	all
mē gṛhāt	=	from my house
nirṇuda	=	drive out (banish)

Meaning:

I will destroy the goddess of ill-luck, whose signs are hunger, thirst and filthiness. You banish insufficiency and non-prosperous tendency away from my house.

STANZA-9:

gamdhadvārāṃ durādharṣāṃ nityapuṣṭāṃ karīṣiṇīm |
Īśvarīm sarvabhūtānāṃ tāmihōpahvayē śriyam ||

Glossary:

- gamdhadvārāṃ = She, who has fragrance as Her gateway
durādharṣāṃ = who is not easily accessible
nityapuṣṭāṃ = who is always fulfilled
karīṣiṇīm = accessible through rays as hands
sarvabhūtānāṃ = to all the beings
Īśvarīm = the Goddess of Mastery
tām = Her
śriyam = Goddess Śrī
iha = herewith
upahvayē = I invite to make an approach

Meaning:

I herewith invite to make an approach towards the Goddess of Mastery over all the beings. She opens Her own fragrance as the gateway to our approach. An approach to Her is not easy. One should approach Her through the rays of Her presence as his own hands of good deeds. Then She is ever present, fulfilled.

STANZA-10:

manasaḥ kāmamākūtiṃ vāḥaḥ satyamaśīmahi |
paśūnāṃ rūpamannasya mayi śrīḥ śrayatāṃ yaśaḥ ||

Glossary:

manasaḥ	=	of the mind
kāmam	=	desire
ākūtiṃ	=	interest
vāḥaḥ	=	of the word
satyam	=	truth
paśūnāṃ	=	of the cattle
annasya	=	of the food
rūpam	=	shape
aśīmahi	=	we enjoy
yaśaḥ	=	fame
śrīḥ	=	plenty
mayi	=	in me
śrayatāṃ	=	may they gather

Meaning:

Oh! Goddess of plenty! We shape our desires and interests of our mind. We shape our food, our cattle and their food. May the Goddess of splendour approach me in the form of name and fame.

STANZA-11:

kardamēna prajābhūtā mayi sambhava kardama |
śriyaṃ vāsaya mē kulē mātaraṃ padmamālinīm ||

Glossary:

kardamēna	=	by the Prajapati Kardama
prajābhūtā	=	She became mother of children
kardama	=	Oh! Sage Kardama
mayi	=	in me
sambhava	=	be born
padmamālinīm	=	Her, who has the garland of Lotuses
mātaraṃ	=	Her, who is the mother
śriyaṃ	=	Her, who is the Goddess of Splendour
mē kulē	=	among my clan
vāsaya	=	make Her live

Meaning:

The Goddess of Splendour, who is adorned with the garland of Lotuses, is made the mother of children by the Prajapati Kardama. Therefore, Oh! Kardama, you be born in me. Make Her live among my clan.

STANZA-12:

āpaḥ sṛjantu snigdḥāni çiklīta vasa mē gṛhē |
ni ça dēvīm mātaraṃ śriyaṃ vāsaya mē kulē ||

Glossary:

çiklīta	=	Sage Chikleeta
āpaḥ	=	the waters (of life)
snigdḥāni	=	the glittering ones
sṛjantu	=	may they create
mē gṛhē	=	in my house
vasa	=	to live
mātaraṃ	=	Her, who is the mother
śriyaṃ dēvīm	=	Her who is Goddess Sri
mē kulē	=	in my clan
ni vāsaya	=	make Her live

Meaning:

Oh! Sage Chikleeta! You see that waters of life create beings on earth that are glittering and radiant with life. To that effect you live in my house. You pray the Goddess of Splendour that She continues to exist in my clan.

STANZA-13:

ādrām puṣkariṇīm puṣṭim piṅgalām padmamālinīm |
çandrām hiraṇmayīm lakṣmīm jātavēdō ma āvaha ||

Glossary:

- jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, the birth-place of Wisdom
ādrām = red and moist
puṣkariṇīm = one who causes fullness
piṅgalām = of honey colour
padmamālinīm = bearing a wreath of lotuses
çandrām = the Goddess presiding the Moon
hiraṇmayīm = of golden colour
lakṣmīm = The Goddess of wealth
ma āvaha = may She possess me

Meaning:

Oh! God of Fire! The birth-place of Wisdom may the Goddess of wealth possess me. She is the Splendour of fullness in glowing red, who radiates honey colour. This Goddess of the Moon shines in golden beams and is found decorated with a garland of Lotuses. May the Goddess possess me.

STANZA-14:

ādrām yaḥ kariṇīm yaṣṭim suvarṇām hēmamālinīm |
sūryām hiraṇmayīm lakṣmīm jātavēdō ma āvaha ||

Glossary:

- ādrām = red with the rays of rising Sun
kariṇīm = the female elephant, or the ray of light
yaṣṭim = having its trunk as a beam
suvarṇām = of good coloured or gold coloured, also
having sonorous sounds
hēmamālinīm = garlanded by golden glow
sūryām = the Goddess who is the Splendour of the
Sun God
hiraṇmayīm = who is full of golden beams
lakṣmīm = having the creation as Her symbol
jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, who gives birth to the Wisdom
ma āvaha = let her possess me

Meaning:

Oh! Brilliant Fire! You bring the Light of Wisdom as my dawn with its red ray before me, to bring the splendour of the Goddess Lakshmi, with her lifted trunk of elephant and the golden yellow glow around Her. May the Goddess of Splendour possess me as the Dawn of my day.

STANZA-15:

tāṃ ma āvaha jātavēdō lakṣmīmanapagāminīm ।
yasyāṃ hiraṇyaṃ prabhūtaṃ gāvō dāsyōaśvānvindēyaṃ
puruṣānaḥ ॥

Glossary:

jātavēdaḥ	=	Oh! Agni, born of the Vedas and the birth-place of the Vedas
yasyāṃ	=	in whom
hiraṇyaṃ	=	gold
gāvḥ	=	cows (the rays)
dāsyḥ	=	Servants
aśvān	=	horses
puruṣān	=	men
aḥam	=	I
vindēyaṃ	=	may obtain
tāṃ	=	Her
anapagāminīm	=	who has the nature of not deserting any one
lakṣmīm	=	The Goddess of wealth
ma āvaha	=	make Her possess me

Meaning:

Oh! Brilliant Fire! I pray you to make the Goddess of wealth possess me. By that I will be able to obtain the cows, the servants, horses, attendant-men and the hold of everything. Her nature is not to desert anyone when she favours.