Ganesh Arthava Sheershopanishat

Introduction

Upanishads, also known as Vedanta are the crux of the Vedic literature that we have. These Upanishads are not meant only for the old people but are for anyone wishing to bring a transformation in their lives. They are also called as Vedanta because in Vedic literature, before Maharishi Ved Vyasa, we didn't have a structured format. People would teach various samhitas (segments) of Vedas and it was given in one part or from one guru to the disciple. Maharishi Ved Vyasa undertook a mammoth task and even today we celebrate Guru Purnima in his honor. He travelled across and compiled all the samhitas together, although this wasn't always welcomed into the environmen for changes he was bringing about. Shravana is an intense process of listening from guru, the disciples would learn it through their listening skills only. That's why it is called Shruti. Maharishi Ved Vyasa took it one step ahead and decided to compile it all for the next generations ahead.

Overview

Ganesh Arthava Sheershopanishat is found in the Atharva Veda. There is always a time discrepancy, but our scriptures are Apaurusheya - not authored by anyone. The knowledge is eternal, and hence can cause confusion for anyone who tries to put it in a timeline. Some claim that this Upanishad came about in the 18th or 19th century during the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra. One of the prominent Lord forms that was invoked was Lord Ganesha, hence came the worship and various Puranas around Lord Ganesha at that time. There are a lot of discrepancies; but put that aside and embrace the orthodox viewpoint that this knowledge is eternal; and the focal point is that these Upanishads teach us about the one Supreme reality.

If it is that single-pointed focus of Reality, why is it being specifically called as Ganesh Arthava Sheershopanishat? It is called Atharva because it is found in Atharva Veda. Why is it called Ganesha? In Vedic literature, the word Bhakti is not found in the Vedas. It is found in the later literature in Sanskrit. In those days Bhakti was recognized as Upasana which is an integral part of spiritual evolution. This Upanishad focuses on both aspects of Ganesha - the saguna (with attributes) saakara (with form) and second aspect nirguna (attributeless) nirakara (formless) reality.

Expression of Paramatma

In Sanatana Dharma, both are equally acceptable ideas of God. One supreme reality Paramatma expresses forth in different forms. One of the forms is of Lord Ganesha. In age old practices we've seen time and again the predominance of certain form of Bhakti or Upasana catching like a wild fire. As soon as one form of devotion gets popular, you find many people transformed not just into devotees but into fanatics. There were five such schools or sects and they were recognized by symbol on their forehead.
1. People who worshipped Lord Shiva had horizontal lines, and were known as Shaiva.
2. Lord Vishnu's devotees have a vertical (U-format and V-format) and were known as Vaishnavas.
3. Worshippers of Shakti were called Shaktas.
4. Worshippers of Lord Surya were called Saurya.
5. Worshippers of Lord Ganesha were called Ganapatas.

As each one was glorified in the Puranas or in literature, each sect claimed that their form of God is the ultimate reality has given scope to rest of deities to express.

For example, according to Vaishnava Sampradaya, That Paramatma (Supreme being) is called Narayana (not Vishnu). When that form of Narayana comes down taking care and sustaining the creation He is called Vishnu. Lord Vishnu takes various avatars (forms) and comes down to the earth to protect us. From that Narayana came forth Bramha, Vishnu, Maheshwar and other Shaktis.

Similarly, in the Shaiva Sampradaya, the same Paramatma we called in Vedanta is recognized as Sadashiva and is called Kameshwar & Kameshwar. When they merge and become one it is called Ardha Narishawara, and there is Adi Tandava, the more benign one (Pralaya tandava – one which is at the end – is more destructive.) In the beginning when Parvati devi as Kameshwar and Lord Shiva in form of Kameshwar came together, they merged to become Ardha Narishawar. From them emerged out Bramha, Vishnu and Rudra (the destructor).

When you go into Shaktta Sampradaya, they refer to Adi Parashakti as the one from whom came forth out Bramha, Vishnu and Maheshwar. Each one had Saraswati, Laxmi and Parvati – all of them are Aunsha (part) of Adi Para Shakti.

Likewise, the Ganapatas worship Lord Ganesha and the primordial form that we call as Paramatma is called Maha Ganapat. Usually Maha Ganapat is described with four arms - Pashankusha dhara, modaka hasta, etc. We will look into these definitions later. From that Maha Ganapat came Bramha, Vishnu, Maheshwar.

Saurya - worshippers of Surya, they worship that Paramatma in the form of Surya Narayana or Arka Narayana. From Him comes out these three trinities. What they are essentially referring is the same Supreme alone; they just have different nomenclature and different ways of identifying that Paramatma.

Panchyatana Puja
Maximum confusion arises when there is animosity between the different sects - that my form of Lord is greater than your form of Lord. They take it to the extreme view that all other worshippers have to be annihilated, removed and destroyed. We can find enough stories of these fanatics in our history. By the time Adi Shankaracharya came into the picture, he saw the extensive damage caused due to sectarian confusion. So he brought in a beautiful system called Panchyatana Puja. If you look at Adi Shankaracharya as a visionary he has written stotras (hymns) on every form of God we can think of – either Panchakam (five verses), Shastakam (six verses), Ashtakam (eight verses) or Dashakam (ten verses). His usual format of stuti (praise) is simple. For example, in Ganesha Pancharatnam, the first four shlokas (verses)
describe the greatness and great stories of Lord Ganesha. In the last shloka he identifies the saguna sakara as the very nirguna nirakara Parabramha Paramatma and he says everything is nothing but that Paramatma alone! He focuses on identifying all these different forms as an expression of that one supreme alone.

Bridging the Gap
In Panchayatana puja he implores us to stop quarreling about who is great and who is not. Greatness should not be equated with being greater than someone else. It is just a way of expressing implicit love towards that deity. You may have extensive devotion towards that form of God, but let us not have animosity that form alone is the truth. There are other forms of God, and that form can also be accepted. Hence on the altar he merged all these forms on five points of an altar. There are four corners, and one spot in the center. If you are worshipping Lord Shiva, place that form in the center. Other forms can be in the four corners. So when you perform puja, the pradhanayatah puja is focused on that form of god. Since other forms are also on the same altar, there is no animosity. So he tried building the bridge between these various sects.

Evolution of worshipping - From Sakama Puja to Nishkama Puja
To bring home the point that any form of expression of the Lord is nothing but that Paramatma in expression, there is an elaborate mention of various upasana (methods) in the Upasana kanda of Vedas. In the Karma kanda or Upasana kanda portion, they often do not conclude with the Vedantic thought. Their conclusion often ends with fulfillment of desire for which the karma or puja was performed. So most of these karma kandas end up being as sakaama puja. E.g. Putroakameshti puja when done meticulously yields the result of bearing children!

By the time we come to upasana evolving into nishkama, it merges into the Vedantic standpoint. Such finer points of upasana are also recognized as Upanishads. One such is the Ganesh Atharva Sheershopanishat. Since it falls in the category of Atharva Shakha (branch), we start this Upanishad with Shanti mantras which is part of Atharva Veda.

Shanti Mantra

Om bhadram karNebhi: shriNuyaama devaa: |
Bhadram pashyemaakshabhiryajatraa: |
SthirairangaistushTuvaam sastanoobhi: |
vyaShema devahitam yadaayu: |
svasti na indro vruddhashravaa: |
svasti na pooshaa vishvavedaa: |
svasti nestaarkshyo arishTanemi: |
svasti no bruhaspatirdadhaatu ||
om shaanti: shaanti: shaanti: ||

Om bhadram karNebhi: shriNuyaama devaa:
We enhance our learning experience when we are alert, available and open for listening attentively without judgmental blocks on the platform of learning. Multitasking or parallel processing e.g. trying to correlate the meaning offered in the book with the speaker’s thoughts,
is very detrimental because it impacts how we process the information. Suppose we stop processing even while listening – e.g. like how the cow gathers the fodder and chews that cud. Take this knowledge and go to your solitude. Start comparing it, analyzing it, reassessing it. At that manana (contemplation) point you can raise questions at the discrepancies because you have given it a chance to be processed. Sometimes we don’t even let people complete their thoughts and we start raising questions.

Process of listening has to be so attentive that it is not a mere function of the ears hearing what is said. It has to be without judgment and give it complete scope to sink in and let it be understood before you start comparing it with the rest of the data. Then when you have discrepancies you can raise questions. Sometimes we come with existing baggage and are not open to new content to get it. Ability to listen thoroughly without instant comparison and to completely understand what is being said and then start processing is mentioned as Shrunuyama Devaha. May Gods bless us that we have this aptitude of keen listening.

Bhadram pashyemaakshabhiryajatraa: |
– May I see all bhadram (auspiciousness) around us.
In the first stage I avoid anything that is not auspicious But we have no business to stop interacting or meeting with “inauspicious” groups. Who gave us the authority to decide who is qualified or not? We have just stepped into the spiritual realm to begin our journey. As we move forward in life through various experiences we come across, we do not have that type of luxury to avoid people, circumstances and things. Auspiciousness is not based on our likes and dislikes. That is one of the first mistake we do. We go to extreme extents because we doubt intentions behind simple actions like cooking! Stop it, it’s ridiculous. That is only half the understanding.

In the second stage we evolve to the next level of understanding - whatever I come across, may I take bhadra (auspiciousness) alone.. Whatever comes my way let me see auspiciousness alone.

Third stage of seeing is that I don’t need to filter. From a highest vedantic standpoint, there isn’t a single thing that is not auspicious. Everything that comes my way is from my lord alone and has come only to uplift me from this existing stage of spiritual evolution to the next. Hence therefore everything is auspicious.

Don’t get caught in this branding exercise. When we chant Guru Bramha – we invoke Guru as Bramha to create the seeker in me. Gurur Vishnu – Many of us have initial enthusiasm. But it is difficult to keep it sustained. May that Guru help me to sustain the seeker-hood in the form of Vishnu. In such sustenance, whatever hindrances come across, may they be destroyed by Guru in the form of Shiva, Maheshwara. That guru who is leading me is trying to evolve me to that state where I can see and perceive Paramatma Parabramha everywhere. That should be the ultimate goal. There is no place where we can say there are negative or positive vibrations. Paramatma is everywhere. Evolve to that stage.

How many ears do we have? Eyes? But here they use a plural – where is the third eye or ear? It refers to the intuitive eye or ear. Don’t listen to what I am saying, listen to what I mean. Through words that I know, I am trying to express whatever the Upanishads are trying to indicate and take your minds to what it is supposed to indicate. O Lord bless me that my eye and ear of intuition opens up such that I can understand what is beyond these words, but through the
indicators of these words. However good vocabulary or poetic expressions you may use to express this ultimate reality, each set of vocal and its expression has its limitations. It can take us only so far. When the eye of wisdom is opened up, we can transcend the words to reach That which the words are trying to point out.

**SthirairangastushTuvaam sastanoobhi:**
In order to reach to that goal, O Lord bless us with *Sthairai hi angai hi* – may my limbs be firm, agile, yet firm and not rigid. Exercises may help different parts of your body and build up muscles. But you also start becoming rigid. When this is compared to *yogasana* it touches every aspect making it agile AND firm. The rishi prays that for firm and agile limbs.

Many spiritual seekers get to a detrimental mode of operation. If there is some physical ailment, they won’t go to a doctor or take any medicines to relieve their existing pain – attributing it to *prarabdha* (fruits of prior actions). If getting diseased is a *prarabdha*, so is giving medicines! Another example is giving timely food. In name of spirituality we start abusing the Lord’s system given to us. Don’t get attached to the body, but don’t neglect it either. *Deho davalaya proktaha, Jivo Devas Santanaha*. This body is the temple for the *jiva*. That temple should be maintained nicely, not clumsy or dirty. When we go to the temple and worship that Lord to invoke His blessings, as much as problems come to our life, it’s solutions is also a part of *prarabdha*. Can’t neglect it. Maintain that temple in a very sanctified manner. *Suchihi* refers to cleanliness with spiritual attitude. Can’t neglect the body. Provide me with right fit agile body.

**StushTuvaam sastanoobhi:** May I enjoy or get to interact with whatever comes my way, may I find satisfaction going through those experiences because my attitude is to learn from every process. Don’t ask “why”, just drop the why and the answer is right there – this is happening to me. Learn from it and grow. No one can really answer why certain things happen! Understand that this is what life is presenting. How do I make use of this experience to grow to be a better person or be in a better place than where I currently am? Best blessing to ask from God is not to ask for a long life, but rather, whatever life I am destined to live, may I live a healthy life.

**Vyasheya devahitam yadaayu:**
May I live a completely healthy life for whatever this life is blessed for as the *prarabdha* of the body. Ask neither for an extension nor a quick relief. Whatever I am destined to live, may I live so positively and healthily that I make best of each experience that comes in my direction.

Then he seeks the blessings of all the gods – what we learn is from the *Yajur Vedi shakha*. It is a little different in the *Rig Vedi shaka*. Neither is wrong, it is just a different rendition.

**Svasti na indro vrudhashravaa:**
Of all the gods, their leader (*vrudha shavaha*) is Lord Indra – may He provide me *swasthi* (auspiciousness). May he bless me and protect me. Within our own system, the intellect is called the Indra. Intellect controls and manages mind and it’s contents along with organs of perception and their interaction; organs of action and their interaction; everything is controlled by intellect. Memory is also controlled by intellect. So all the *devas* here are controlled by the intellect and may this Lord Indra protect me and bring forward the auspiciousness by keeping my intellect alert and shining.
Alertness while learning is highly essential. Else if we are on auto-pilot we doze off! Dhiyo yon a prachodayat – may my intellect shine with this every single day through every single experience. Whatever I learn, may I apply it leading a conscious life.

**svasti na pooshaa vishvavedaa:**
Sun is the very embodiment of knowledge, all-knowing. In His illumination (pushan) everything is nourished and kept in balance. Without the sun in our solar system, there will be nothing. Sun’s providence nourishes and keeps everything in balance. May the all-knowing Sun provide enough so that I can embark this spiritual path effortlessly. Whatever we are getting is more than plenty. We get what we deserve, not what we desire. We use hardly any percentage of whatever we have – whether it is internal or external! We may use 15-20% of our brain power while 80% of it is unused. Whether it is computers (we don’t use it to it’s fullest potential) or houses that we build – we don’t use all of it.

**svasti nestaarkshyo arishTanemi:**
Garuda is the vehicle on which the Lord travels is also known to be carrying the Vedas. So when the knowledge comes to us, what is the Swasthi? Pray that I may be available when knowledge is coming in. If the system crashes just when the download is about to complete, all what was downloaded is gone. Not even saved! May that Garuda, the carrier of knowledge bless me by keeping me available and open when the knowledge arrives. The Lord sends us plenty of messages but we are either out busy doing nothing or sleeping in! Seldom do we get the opportunity to stay awake and receive that knowledge. Pray that I may I receive the knowledge in its entirety.

**svasti no bruhaspatirdadhaatu**
Brihaspati represents entire Guru parampara (lineage). Not sectarian like my guru, my shishya and getting caught in the rut again. Guru is not a form. It is a principle. May that principle guide and sustain and protect me from myself. May I invoke that swasthi from the entire Guru parampara.

**om shaanti: shaanti: shaanti:**
Without that peace, no effort will have stability. Can we focus on the higher spiritual path without having peace within? Without the mental peace on that firm platform, we can’t aim for higher spiritual growth. It is an impossible task. Here the prayer is for the three kinds of agitations

- Physical level, the taapa is the experience and reaction is papa (sin).
- Emotional level taapa is due to none of the emotions having a rudder or a direction to it. They create havoc internally.
- Intellectual level taapa is that itch to explore everything. A certain level of curiosity is good to an extent. Beyond which it becomes purposeless.

At these three levels, O Lord, provide Shanti (peace). Taapa is not directly a problem. The word Taapatraya tells you of three problems. But the word is taapa traya, they aren’t problems.

Another way to look at it – these three can be summed up as Adi Bhautika tapa. This refers to the physical personal level taapa which we effortlessly create for ourselves. Then there are those kinds of taapa which is not in our hands; it happens because of nature, environment,
climate, weather. These disturbances are the Adi Daivika taapa. Then there are Adhyatmic taapa – your health is good; you could make it to satsangs, but yet you weren’t available for the knowledge. You have kripa (blessings) from the Guru, shastra (scriptures), and daiva (gods). All that there is absent is atma kripa (self effort). May that agitation created by lethargy and inertia, let that be removed. Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.

om namaste gaNapataye |
tvameva pratyaksham tattvamasi |
tvameva kevalam kartaasi |
tvameva kevalam dhartaasi |
tvameva kevalam hartaasi |
tvameva sarvam khalvidam brahmaasi |
tvam saakshadaatmaasi nityam || 1 ||

om namaste gaNapataye |
Namaste - The rishi offers his salutations in the most ego-less manner. The word Namaste can be split into Namaha “Te” (You) which is a form of addressing someone respectfully. Reverse manah (mind) and it becomes namaha (salutations)! I offer my salutations without ego or any reservations; and not to you as the individual, but the Paramatma, or life principle or God in you. Aham Namaskaram Karomi. There is Aham and Karomi feeling that “I” am “doing” the namaskar. But here the doership is dissolved. So it indicates the highest state of humility. The humble devotee or rishi is offering salutations to the Lord. That Aham and verb adjoining it both are deleted thereby suggesting that namaskar has it’s meaning only when ego is put aside. With such an attitude I offer my salutations to Ganapati, Lord Ganesha.

Ganesha or GaNapataye or Ganapati
Pati has lots of meanings, but here it specifically means the Lord or the Boss or the Leader of the Ganas who serve Lord Shiva. Ganas are characterized by hand-picked by Bhagwan Shiv ji. If left alone in the society, they’d create such a havoc because most of them have a different way of creation. Some have one foot and just one trunk. Others have no head. So Bhagwan Shiva brings all these creatures and takes them under Him and disciplines them. As long as these ganas are with Lord Shiva, the rest of the world is safe from them. The moment He releases them, we saw what happened at Dakshapati’s yagnashala. It was like a few tornadoes hitting together. Various categories of people have been added under His list of ganas - Bhuta, Preta, Pichasha, Dakini, etc. all kinds of these ganas which would run havoc in the creation have been given shelter under Lord Shiva. They are under His discipline and guidance and He gives them refuge. Some of them are Nandi, Chandi, etc..These were constantly under Lord Shiva.

We all know the story of Lord Ganesha how He was created by mother Parvati devi by Her energy and strength. He was instructed by Parvati Devi to guard the house while she was taking a bath. When Lord Shiva tries to enter His own house, Ganapati did not allow Him to enter. The ganas attacked Ganesha and eventually Shiva cuts child’s head with the trishul (trident). Parvati Devi comes out and sees everything and the boy She created is lying there. In order to appease Her, Lord Shiva transplants an elephant’s head and did prana-dana. He also promises her that he will be the leader of all the ganas. He also assures Her that any function in all the three worlds the first one to be invoked will be Ganapati. Thus He was named as Ganapati - leader of Ganas.
A little more depth is offered from the Puranic stories. Ashta vasus as a group are also called as Ganas. These ashta vasus are in charge of the 8 directions and these eight directions are also known as Ashta dig palakas. Any effort that we put in these different directions - we have to have blessings and be authorized as though by the Lord of these directions. Nothing can happen in these directions without His blessings. Hence that Lord of Ganas is called Ganapati.

Another subtler meaning - Gana also means particles, or the nascent primordial form of the entire matter put together. It is Lord Ganapati who has mastered complete control over matter. One who has won over aspects of matter is also called Ganapati and he is the one who can control the matter. To such a Ganapati I offer my humble salutations to, Om Namaste Ganapataye.

tvameva pratyaksham tattvamasi |
Who is this Ganapati? The style of this Upanishad is to go from nirakara unlike in other where first physical attributes saguna sakaara are presented. Here the rishi starts from the nirguna nirakara tattva and he says Tvameva pratyakshas tattvam asi. The way it is addressed indicates that He is not talking of “some” Ganesh ji that he remembers. It is as though Ganesh ji is standing right in front of him. Tvamev pratyakshas tattvam asi. You are the very embodiment of the tattva (essence). Pratyaksham - there are diff kinds of experiences and how we come to conclusion of that expression or how we decipher the experience. One is Pratyaksha and second is Anumana and the third one is called Aparoksha jnana.

1. First is Pratyaksha, Prati aksha - meaning that which is right in front of the eyes. You can see as much as I can see you and you can see me. That is the first way of gaining knowledge - seeing with our own eyes.
2. There are some other experiences that we don't see with our own eyes, but we conclude with the effects. E.g. if we see some puddles on the road - either it must've rained and/or the sprinkler system may have been on. Depending on our earlier experiences, we conclude the effect. This is called Anumana jnana or Anumana Pramana.
3. Aparoksha - that which is not deciphered from conclusions or seeing some effects, or because it is visible to the organs of action and perception; but it is subjective and can't be expressed in words. For example only you know if your stomach is full and hunger is satiated! This is called Aparoksha Anubhuti. It can be suggested, but certain subjective experiences cannot be answered!

Now the rishi must've done his tapas (austerity), and Lord Ganesha must've been standing in front of him. The rishi must've composed His stuti (praise) - Tvameva Pratyaksha, and how is He? Tvam eva Tattvam asi. There are two thoughts here. According to firm believers of Sankhya Yoga (Kapila muni) there are twenty-five tattvas. These are Manah, buddhi, ahankar, Pancha tanmatras (5 nascent elements prior to grossification), pancha maha bhutas (after grossification), 5 organs of perception, 5 organs of action, and 1 avyakta (unmanifest). All these are considered 24 aspects of Prakirti (matter) and the 25th one is Purusha - in whose presence this Prakirti is enlivened. According to the siddhanta of Sankhya yoga school of thought which Ganaptya's believe in, it means that O Lord Ganapati, You are verily these 25 tattvas. Tvam eva Pratyaksham Tattvam asi. All these put together is your embodiment of expression. That which is created and That which is creating, both aspects are Your expression alone. Tattvam asi.
From the Uttara Vimamsa or Vedanta school of thought (Advaita Vedanta), Tattvam asi is one of the mahavakyas. Tat tvam asi. That (tat) which I had been meditating upon for these many lives, that (tvam) is right here (asi). Tat = That; idam = This. “Tat” denotes distance or a gap which also depends on point of reference. "That" chair and "this" stage have a lot of gap. "That" city and "this" street/hall are two different units. Similarly, Tat tvam asi. That which I had been meditating upon these many lives as a concept, as a visualization, that is right now right here in front of me.

Further taking it deeper, when the parameters of comparison of That which is indicated by the concept of God, and That which is indicated by the concept of I the individuality, are removed, what exists (asi) is verily Your form. Tat tvam asi. You are the very tattva (essence or substratum) of everything that exists. O Lord, you are the embodiment of all the tattvas and that which I had been meditating upon, That which is the substratum of the universe, you are That. What do you do?

tvameva kevalam kartaasi |

You are the doer, the creator. Not creator as in Lord Bramha. Nor as in Lord Ganesha ousting Lord Bramha! Earlier we saw how Paramatma was referred to in each sect. So when the Ganapatas are referring to Maha Ganapati, That Maha Ganesha form is from the Paramatmic standpoint. When the same Paramatma expresses forth, He becomes Bramha. That which is becoming Bramha is nothing but Paramatma alone. From that standpoint Tva eva kevalam kartasi - you are the doer. On one hand we worship Lord Ganesha, as Vighna vinashaka, remover of obstacles. On the other hand we also worship Him as Vighna raja - king of obstacles! While chanting 108 names, people hesitate to worship someone as the king of obstacles. But the right understanding should be that O Lord, you know it better. With my individualistic standpoint, I have a short vision. I may not understand the entire thing as it exists. So I invoke you both as a vighna vinashaka and vighna raja - whatever works. Protect me and help me evolve either by removing obstacles or providing obstacles so that I can overcome those obstacles. I should be prepared to face obstacles. Due to our zoomed in vision, we are terrified of obstacles. "I missed an opportunity" etc. But perhaps after few years when you look back at that incident, you'd realize how lucky you were for events to have unfolded the way they did. Obstacles are created or removed for our own upliftment. We cannot decide if they are worthy or not with our myopic vision. Lord, you know the best. I have given you the charge of my life, you decide whether to create obstacles or to remove them - whichever works. These are in my best interest so that I am protected and given right direction of growth. Whenever we go in front of the Lord, don't ask favors from Him to remove or provide things. Don't ask for extensions or reductions. Pray that whatever it is, may I have healthy limbs to face them successfully, completely, consciously. Similarly each one of is putting in effort to reach the core of our own being. Sometimes we need obstacles, sometimes we need them to be removed. O Lord, you know the best. When it is required to provide those obstacles, and kick me hard enough so I can jump over.

Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda also sings the bhajan - Bhagwan, boat of my life is in the waters. Meri naiiya us paar laga dena - make sure you take my boat across. Ab tak nibhaya hai (you've taken care of it so far) aqey bhi nibha lena (henceforth also take care of me as you've been doing so). Why? Sambhav hai zanjhaton mein (if it were left me to me to remember you,
I'm engrossed in so many things) tuzh ko mein bhoola dalu - I may forget you. Par naath, tum mujhe na bhoolana (But Lord, you don't forget me. Take me across). Dal ban ke sath maya (ganged on me with different forces and aspects of maya) they may sink me down. At that time he says, don't keep waiting for me to cry out your name so that you come and protect me; jhat aa ke chuda dena. Who knows whether I'll be in condition to remember you or not, but in such condition that I may not cry your name, here I cry your name in anticipation. You know the best what is required of me. O lord, protect me whether by providing or removing obstacles, you know the best. One is you are the creator of the universe, and the other aspect on the side is the one who is an expert in providing and removing the obstacles whichever is required. Provide, so I can grow towards Yourself.

**tvameva kevalam dhartaasi |**
Root word is dhr – or dharan shakti. Root word for dharma is also the same word dhr, to support. You are the support for everything to exist and express as they are expressing. First meaning is that you are the support and sustenance for the entire creation in whatever for. You are sustaining it. It is easier to create something than to sustain it. After creating it, the consistent maintenance task the most difficult job. Maintaining it to that excellence with which we had originally created it is even more difficult. For example with Pujya Gurudev and Pujya Guruji - their tasks were so different. While Pujya Gurudev was the creator of the concept and executioner of the concept of creating Chinmaya Mission and the various vibrant forces of Chinmaya Mission; Pujya Guruji had a daunting task lying ahead. Imagine coming after such a profound master and to be exactly opposite of what he was in every which way - height, speech (dramatic versus a simple choice of words and sentence construction), totally opposite personalities – Pujya Gurdev never sang, while Pujya Guruji cannot think of a satsang without a harmonium; Music is Pujya Gurujii's passion in a bhakti approach while Pujya Gurudev had a Vedantic approach. Yet, not just maintaining it at the excellent level at which it was given, but to take it beyond what it was handed like, that is called good sustaining ability. Creating is easy, but sustaining it beyond excellence is the most difficult part. So here the Rishi says Tvam eva kevalam dhartasi - You are the one who has created, You are the one who are sustaining it also.

From an absolute standpoint, do we really have to worry about anything in life other than focus on our responsibility and keep fulfilling it? We say we trust in God, but we always question Him! **Kevalam** emphasizes that You alone ARE. When Lord Krishna picked up the entire Govardhan mountain people didn't even realize how the mountain provided space for them until they saw Lord Krishna standing and lifting the mountain on His little pinkie. Then after everyone had settled inside they were ready to help Krishna! All the gopa balas went with their sticks and put the *lathis* below the mountain to relieve Lord Krishna, but little do we realize how much Lord does!

**tvameva kevalam hartaasi |**
Harta = to stop, block, remove, destroy. Famous word Hartal - the root word is here! Hr is the root word, Hr harati = to remove, stop, block or destroy. There are different meanings of the word. What does the Lord have to remove or destroy? From the highest standpoint, it is nothing to be destroyed in the world. It is MY ego and my ignorance. It has to be mercilessly destroyed. Small minor destructions will not help. When we fall or get hurt we get a little scratch. We put the bandaids to cover it, and the next day when we have to change the dressing, the pain of pulling it or ripping it open is far more than the pain of the fall itself. Doctors are smart - they
start talking to you and quickly pull apart the bandaid. Imagine if it were pulled little by little - it is far more painful than one jhatka! O Lord you alone can destroy the ego; you alone can annihilate the ignorance of my own true nature. I invoke you in my heart as the Supreme destructor destroying the ego and ignorance that is the root cause of my misery.

Even in this creation, whenever there has to be a change in the cosmos, that change is brought in and when we talk about destruction, the destruction is not complete annihilation, but rather a constructive re-growth or reform. That is why in the East, death does not cause that much of psychological derailment as it causes in the West. It is because of the belief system. West believes that you have one chance, one life. Make it or break it. The scariest part of life is prana bhiti- what will happen to me after death? Why worry about it? If you think it is only one time expression, you will be gone. In Chapter two of Bhagavad Gita, Bhagwan Shri Krishna puts it beautifully. Regardless of whether you think whether continuity exists or not, there is still nothing to worry about. You will continue from wherever you've left off.

Concept of death and destruction in Hindu philosophy is not indicative of complete annihilation, but it indicates constructive re-growth. A seed sown loses it's “seedness” to give birth to a sapling. The sapling grows into a plant or a bush with branches and leaves; buds in season and grows to become a flower. The “flowerness” dies to give birth to a seed or a fruit. That fruit further ripens to give more of it's kind. Each stage in it's own sense loses itself, but in providing a greater scope of reform. Similarly, given an opportunity, I may never willingly give up what I am holding onto. I am scared. Psychologically all I am holding on to is this one last strand. I am really afraid to give it up. The fear or deep sense of fear carries our last hope and we never give it up. In spite of my fears, if there is anyone who can destroy the last layer, only you can step in to destroy. My prayer is please come and destroy it.

One of the greatest mantras Mritinjaya mantra – Om Traiambakam yaja mahey sugandhi pushti vardhanam urva ruakamiva bandhanat - When you grow cantalopes, cucumbers, watermelons, etc. in your backyard, and when the fruit ripens, it effortlessly detaches itself from the connecting part. Prayer is that I know I am holding on to all the bondages because of the huge fear that if I let this go, I may not survive or exist. I recognize the fear and logically it makes sense that this holding onto or attachment is not good for me. But practically I am not able to let go. You are the only person who can help me let this go. You come by and cut that bondage. Harta. Harana - snatch it away from me. After it is snatched I may realize that it's not that bad after all. So please snatch these limitations away from me.

tvameva sarvam khalvidam brahmaasi |
There is an Upanishadic statement Tvameva Khalu idam Bramha. All that which exists, (un) known, (un)manifest, (un)conscious, (in)sentient, all of these, sarvam. This amazing truth is given as the first message to any student entering Balavihar. In Guru Stotram, first shloka says that it is one homogenous mass of exuberance bliss - akhanda mandalakaram. It (God-principle) is vyaptam (pervading) all over (un)manifest, (un)conscious, (in)sentient., (un)known. That Paramatma alone pervades all of these.

Even in this kind of expression, something else is pervading through That which is already there. So there is a difference of that which is being pervaded and That which is pervading. Paramatma expresses and expands Himself as every particle of creation. Khalu means firmly, indeed.
Undoubtedly, *sarvam* (leaving nothing) if there is anything other than the *Paramatma*, there is always a dichotomy or polarity.

There is a major difference between philosophical thought of Western religion and Eastern philosophy. The West believes that everything that is good and great is God; while all that which is not great is the expression of Satan. Not much of a difference in the Islamic religion too - they call it *shaitan*. They just can’t understand how can anything evil be related to god? Everything bad is associated with Satan. If I have bad thoughts and emotions, it is because at that moment I have been engulfed by Satanic thoughts. However, the individual defines good and bad and this is a subjective understanding. If bad or Satanic was common, it'd apply across the board to all human beings. But what is good for me may be bad for you and vice-versa. How can you brand everything bad as Satanic? So all goodness and badness comes with convenience of our likes and dislikes. Remove that layer, and what exists is nothing but divine alone.

Therefore when you serve anyone in this world irrespective of caste, creed, gender, nationality, you are serving the divine form in that expression. Service to humanity is the service of the Lord of Lords. Bramhan is subtler than the subtlest. In Vedantic philosophy we say all that we see is maya and Maya is unreal. It doesn't sink well with our understanding. If I see it and experience it, how can it be unreal? The unreal aspect of this creation that we are interacting with, is the limitations of likes and dislikes we smear on the world. Are we experiencing the world around us as the Supreme in expression? Or are we interacting with the limitations of names, forms, likes and dislikes? That impact of the product of our ignorance is called unreal. If we can see that the entire creation of (in)animate, (in)sentient, is the expression of That *Paramatma* alone, then the world is not unreal. When we look at the world as limitation deviod of, separated from, other than that *Paramatma*, that sense of the world is unreal. Hence, here he says *Tvam eva Khalvidam Bramhasi*. The net result is beautiful and we will see it next mantra.

**Tvam sakshadattaatmaani nityam || 1 ||**

Earlier we saw You are the creator, sustainer, remover. Everything is an expression and expansion of your divine alone. If it was just an *Upasana*, this statement would not have been seen. Rather it is seen as a confirmation of a direct experience. He says though I see you *Pratyaksha, my Aporaksha Anubhuti is Tvam Sakshatmasi nityam* - You are verily my own self.

As long as there is difference between the devoted and devotee - there is a distance and a gap. As long as the gap exists, the experience is incomplete in itself. Sant Namadev was so sincere that looking at his sincerity, Lord Vitthal used to come and play with him. One day his father was stuck in a job and had to go out of the city. He calls his youngest son Namadev and asks him to offer *naivedya* to the lord. He went opened the doors, and did the ritual behind the doors. Namadev was just 4-5 years old and insisted that Lord come and eat else he refused to leave! Looking at his sincerity, Bhagawan used to come and take it from his own hands and eat. Sometimes Namadev would even fed Him directly. This went on for years together. At the same time there was the *Bhakti* movement and we saw Gyandev, Sopan, Nivrutti nath, Mukta bai Eknath, Gora Kumbhar and they had all gathered around. Mukta bai took a stick and while everyone was doing the *bhajan or kirtan*, she kept on hitting everybody's head (all saints). She announces whether or not they were baked well in terms of whether or not they were matured. When she hits Namadev she can't believe what she hears! She told him “We know that the Lord plays with you, but your aren’t mature yet.” Gora Kumbhar explains that this is perhaps because
you don't have a guru to take you beyond what you are experiencing right now. You are still in a step lower than the ultimate. You play with the Lord, but the Lord is an object of your experience, it is not a complete experience of Self Realization.

So here the rishi says though I see you Pratyaksha, what is my Aporaksha Anubhuti or ultimate experience? You are the one who is my own self, there is no difference whatsoever. Tvam Sakshadatmasi Nityam - You truly are my own Self.

rutam vachmi | satyam vachmi || 2 ||

Then to give a convincing standpoint to Lord Ganesha with whom he was speaking to - the Rishi says that I am not making up this experience or faking it. Rutam Vachmi, Satyam Vachmi. Technically Rutam and Satyam seem to mean the same - Truth. But there is a slight difference. Truth validated by scriptures and their authority is called Rutam, and that which is validated by my own experience is called Satyam. Both these are time tested too.

Rutam = Yat Shastra Proktam, tat Rutam. Rutam is truth which is being given by the authority of scriptures, as instructed by the scriptures, and which is validated by scriptures. Fire burns - is this our experience, or validated by scriptures? It is both. That which is validated by the authority on fire as a subject, that still holds true. But it is also my own experience which validates it.

Satyam eva. What is Sat? Trikala abadhita vastu - that which is undeniably a subjective experience in all three phases of past present and future. It is a consistent experience, Satyam tested by own subjective experience. What I am experiencing is exactly what is told in the scriptures as well.

In this field of spiritual evolution, there isn't a single thought that has not been spoken of. We may often think we are proposing a new thought or have never heard of a line of thought before. But a couple of months later you may see the exact same thought presented or spoken or read. You feel that your experience or thought that you spoke about is now validated by an authority. So all that which can be spoken of on the platform of spirituality is already been spoken of. So it is Rutam but is it Satyam?

Let me tell you another experience. First time after getting Bramhachari diksha and being initiated, one of our stops on our tirtha yatra (pilgrimage) was in Brindavan. Swami Akhandanandaji’s senior shishya (student) Govindananda ji was very pleased to see 30 of us new initiates. During his evening satsang he said "Today my heart is so full seeing these new initiates, it is a rare occasion that so many get into it, so I will pick one of them to come and speak their experience." He asked me to talk to the crowd on my experience and understanding of Saadhana. This was the same topic I was asked to speak when I first spoke on a public platform, so this time I was determined not to fail myself. I gathered my thoughts, and was given 15 minutes to talk on it. I spoke about Saadhana as stated in Tattva Bodha, Adi Shankaracharya’s way of thought, Madhusudhana ji’s way of thought, then from Upanishads, Bramha Sutras, etc. I gave a complete picture of what all we had gone through at the Vedanta course. At the end, I concluded what is called Saadhana. Govindananda ji was pleased with this and said "Very good. What I asked you to speak was spoken as Rutam Eva. It is validated by the scriptures as the scriptures stated. But where is your self experience? How long will you keep repeating that this
scripture said so, that scripture said so, and when will you say that it is my experience, hence I am saying so?!!" This was a totally different perspective he brought in. Then his blessings were amazing. He said "Today I bless you that whatever you have spoken as Rutam, may they become as Satyam." This is the difference between Rutam and Satyam. That which is textbook oriented, validated by the texts, or the scriptures is the Rutam; and that when understood and put in practice when I subjectively experience it, it is called Satyam.

So here the Rishi says Rutam Vachmi. My experience is validated by scriptures and also validated by my own subjective experience. Then He continues in utmost humility and devotion in third mantra:

ava tvam maam |
ava vuktaaaram |
ava shrotaaaram |
avdaataaram |
avaanoochaanamava shishyam |
avapashchaaattaat |
avapurastaat |
avottaraattaat |
avadakshiNaattaat |
ava chordhaaattaat |
avaadharaattaat |
sarvato maam paahi paahi samantaat || 3 ||

ava tvam maam |
In utter devotion, the Rishi of that experience says Ava Tvam maam. Ava = to protect. Tvam Maam - O Lord, You protect me. Protect me from what? The problem is not with the world; protect me from the worldliness, from the things, people, etc. Nothing there out in the world is coming to bite us. In the highest spiritual sense I need to be protected from I, my own ego. Protect me from my own self. Intellectually I understand what is the right path, and do understand the process of evolving from my existing state to a better state. But as I try putting it in practice, I fail to achieve that which I am supposed to. We may try all our expertise in trying to blame why I am not able to do it - we may blame it on our responsibilities. We think it is the grihastashram that blocks our saadhana etc. but in reality, you don't even need to come for a satsang. Wherever you are, can you do these 3-4 steps? It starts with a pop of enthusiasm. We all feel that we must do something good from next day, but that over-enthusiasm doesn't lead us anywhere either. In Pujya Gurudev's book "Hasten Slowly" he reminds us not to rush. Whatever you do, do it meticulously, consistently and regularly. It is not the quantity but quality and consistency that is important.

Long time ago, once I met Pujya Guruji and he took me by surprise when he asked me whether I chanted my Gayatri Mantra. This was a question out of the blue, but luckily, just the day before, I had completed a sequence of Gayatri Mantra to a count of certain number. So I proudly told him that, and he replied "You can't relish ladoos (sweets) if you gobble them at one time in one sitting. You can enjoy it more if you eat them one a day." These were amazing simple instructions and the simplicity is so characteristic of Pujya Guruji. Don't try to gobble up
everything, try to show the sincerity and consistency in that process. If you overdo it, you will
burn yourself.

Then the greatest protection is from my own sense of self-righteousness. Someone who is
tamasic or rajasic can be changed, but someone who thinks he is already perfect cannot be
changed. You can seek attention from someone who is awake; you can wake up someone who
has fallen asleep; but someone who is pretending to sleep can never be woken. In the spiritual
evolution, the subtlest it gets, the harder it becomes to transcend it. It is also a restless feeling -
when the mechanic is in a car workshop, their clothes are so dirty and stained that it doesn't
matter where they sit or work. They don't need to clean the place. But for someone wearing
bright white clothes, if they use a leaky pen the ink spills all over the pockets. The oozing ink
stains the clothes and even one stain becomes so obvious that you cannot wear it until it is
cleaned. The stain is glaring in your face. Similarly when we have lots of these different patterns
of vasanas, it doesn't matter. But as the chitta becomes purer and purer while you grow subtler
and subtler, there are one or two traits still lingering and those disturb a lot. O Lord, protect me
from that self-righteousness and protect me from my own complacency. Let me not slack in my
effort to reach that perfection.

ava vaktaraam |
Protect the one teaching this knowledge. Why? The teacher is trying to reach out and each time
a question is asked, ... actually that is why in yagnas I neither ask questions nor encourage
questions. If I ask questions, the audience looks here and there or at each other - about
something just discussed last week! Even with our kids, we keep telling them to do certain
things in certain ways, and other things are non-negotiable. But what is the challenge here? The
children find umpteen loopholes on how they can break it, bend it or neglect it. When the same
instruction is repeated the n\textsuperscript{th} time, finally there comes a stage of utter frustrated situation. We
scream and yell "How many times do I have to tell you this?" Now imagine for the teacher to
give the same instruction again and again - the content may differ, but still there is only one
truth! Please protect the teacher from heartache.

ava shrotaaram |
Protect the listener. The Shrota aspect in the initial shanti mantra was covered extensively as to
what listening means, what are the things that obstruct us from listening attentively. We've
already covered it in-depth. Protect the listener such that may he not hear things and miss that
which is indicated by the words and get caught up with the words. The words are just pointers
where you reach something subtler. Words are very gross form of expression.

ava daataaram |
Protect the one who is giving. Throughout humanity we find that those who remember the
hardships in reaching where they have reached, when they make it, they want to give back and
reach out. This is how various things remain in certain balance. Those who've been on yatras to
Vaishno Devi, Amarnath etc., the paths are so steep. Those who have gone through that path
with devotion will always share it with others - we've gone through the treacherous path, lets
make it easier on the ones who are going to come here next. For 3-4 months of the yatra, there
is such a generous act of giving on that path - at every point of the journey there are 17-18
groups of people who try to feed all the yatris who are en route. The meals are provided 24
hours and are constantly cooking so much food. These people have made that trek and have realized how difficult it is. They just want to give back.

Probably it is the same reason why we tell our children too ... when we were studying, and were young, we did not have any of these amenities you enjoy today. We wanted to save and provide you all the things which we did not have so that you can achieve more than what we have achieved. We know what it means what to have things at that stage.

So how should the giver be protected? There are various standpoints.

1. First one, protect the giver from their own anxiety of anticipations. When parents give and provide for their children, the frustration reaches heights when what we are anticipating is not reflected in their actions or day to day lifestyle. Correcting them and pushing them through that edge is still our responsibility as parents, but we must do it without any anticipation. Constantly keep reeducating them again and again as long as it is your responsibility. When it is time for them to settle and form their own roots to stand on their own feet, that is when what you have been revisiting and reemphasizing takes shape. Until then, give constantly without allowing that frustration to catch us.

2. Another anticipation as seen on these cultural platforms when you get invited as a chief guest, the camera men always try to capture the moment when you are presenting a plaque or something. The giver wants recognition, the receiver also wants recognition! Protect me from that anxiety.

_ava dhaataaram_

_Dhata_ here means to sustain. Protect that spiritual zeal in me. Sustain that spiritual inquisitiveness. As Swami Vivekananda ji puts it from the Mundakopanishad - Awake, Arise, Stop not till the goal is reached. Until then, this inspiration has to be kept alive. It may be a slow process of evolution, but it has to be consistent. We can never relax, sit back and say "Slow and steady wins the race" like the story of the bunny and the tortoise. Especially in this kind of spiritual evolution, go slow but go firm. It is very very important to maintain that enthusiasm.

If the enthusiasm is born within our own self, then it is sustained for a long time. If it is borrowed from other sources it cannot be sustained. Hence I use these two technical words to highlight the difference. When we listen to something, see something really good, it motivates us. But if it is a borrowed source of enthusiasm it will last only for a relative period of time. For some it may perhaps last for some until they wear their sandals; for some as soon as get into their cars, or until next day morning or the entire week. But what keeps the enthusiasm and motivation going? That fire does not need to depend on any external source - the flame of inspiration is lit from within and is constantly maintained.

When we do anything it should be based out of conviction born out a certain amount of clarity - whether we do good things or bad things (matter of perspective), we should do it because we have the conviction to do so. Here _Ava Dhataaram_ - O Lord, please sustain that clarity which instills the conviction for sustained effort. Maintain and sustain that clarity in me for what I have started this path for. Often great movements and efforts start with great enthusiasm. But somewhere down the lane, the moment we forget our goals. As long as we are clear of the purpose and our goals, there is that inspiration. The moment we forget it, we slack in our efforts. That is why Vishnu Purana clearly mentions the reason for our _dukha - Vishno ho vismriti._
hi sarva dukhasya karanam. Translated - forgetting Vishnu is the root cause of all our sorrows. If we understand the word Vishnu as the goal and purpose of our life, forgetfulness of that goal and purpose of our life leads us to miserable and tormenting situations. This clarity has to be constantly maintained. Protect that clarity of the purpose, of the vision, of my life and the direction that I am taking, O Lord protect me and maintain that clarity in me.

avaanoochaanamava shishyam |
Anuchanam means teacher. O Lord, protect both the teacher and the student. Let there be no grudges between the teacher and the taught. It is a very subtle concept when it comes to a personal subjective level. It is very difficult to understand that concept. When there is an efficient doctor, depending on the intensity of illness or pain that the patient is suffering, the doctor caters their time, resources and effort towards the patient. They make that judgment as to who needs that amount of time and resources invested. If someone is in dire conditions - broken bones out of an accident, there is a lot of time required to be given to the patient. Someone else who may have had a minor cut receives only a band aid fix. If this patient compares himself with other patients and blames the doctors of partiality for love, care and concern as opposed to the limited attention he receives, it is an unfair comparison! So when the shishyas come, this is the most difficult task.

That is why we say there are two categories of people around a guru - those who are bhaktas (devotees) and those who are shishyas (disciples). What is the difference? Bhakta tries to possess the master. For them, it is a feather in their hat - how many masters they have met thus far. They want their master to be as the devotees choose the masters to be! But the shishya (disciple) on the other hand - the one who has given up that will, is ready to be trained and disciplined according to the taste and direction of the master. We go to the master to perfect ourselves. If the focus gets derailed other than that everything else becomes important, then we’ve become a devotee. On the other hand if we maintain the focus, we remain shishya. That is why in all our satsangs we constantly chant the mantra "Om sahana vavatu ..." the effort is on both sides. Both the teacher, and the taught have to put an effort to come to that sublime understanding. But what stops is the trivial thought that the guru has partiality etc.. If this purposefulness and direction is given, the shishya has to protect themselves from unnecessary comparisons. We feel everyone else has been given the important tasks while we are sidelined.

There once was an ashram, and the master requested that he needed someone to work in the kitchen, not as a cook, but as someone who maintains stock and inventory of items, and address the maintenance part of it. It is understood that someone in the kitchen duty cannot attend the satsangs and other programs in the ashram. This person assigned the maintenance duty never had time to attend bhajans or satsangs, or other programs. It was as though he was an insignificant person in the ashram. When that mahatma was in his last stages of life, he declares that the next in line would be the Swami who was in charge of the kitchen. The reason being - he had never come back complaining that I had come here with great aspirations and everybody is getting bigger and better roles while I was assigned the kitchen maintenance duty. He performed the task given to him with single-minded focus and understood that maintaining the role is not important. Annihilate the ego, the one which is trying to maintain the role, and he has successfully done it.

ava pashchaattaat |
ava purastaat |
avottaraatattat |
ava dakshiNaattaat |
ava chordhvaattaat |
avaadharaattaat |
sarvato maam paahi paahi samantaat || 3 ||

Lord Ganapati is the lord of all directions. This we saw in the very first definition of Ganapati. Here he says protect me from all directions because you are the lord of all directions. Sarvato mam pahi pahi samantat - technically there are 8 directions, add two more to them - up and down, so here he says protect me from all possible directions, known and unknown. Please protect me so that I grow in this spiritual path.

Then the Rishi starts dwelling into further aspects of nirguantva of Lord Ganesha.

tvam vaangmayastvam chinmaya: |
tvamaanandamayastvam brahmamaya: |
tvam sachchidaanandaadviteeyo~si |
tvam prayaksham brahmaasi |
tvam gnaanamayo vignanamayo~si || 4 ||

tvam vaangmayastvam chinmaya: |
Vang mayaha, as much as it is attributed to Saraswati Devi, speech is also attributed to Lord Ganesha. Tvam Vangmayaha has two meanings. First, you are wordy. You are expressing in as every sound that can be made. Every sound that is expressed is your own expression. Even in Bhagavad Gita, Lord says that of all the Vedas, you are Pranava. Lord Ganesha is called Pranava swaroop. He is the essence of the entire words which is Omkar. He is also the expression of every syllable and every word. Again, remember that goodness and badness of words change - in certain language a word may have a good meaning (e.g. chor in Malyalam means cooked rice) but in Hindi it means a thief! Or Ashanti in Hindu reference means lack of peace. But in Swahili (African dialect) an emperor is called Ashanti. Many such examples indicate that the meaning we've given unto certain expressions is conditional. But that which is expressing through every vibration, every sound, the essence of everything that is vibrating and throbbing, O Lord it is nothing but your expression. Tvam Vangmayaha. This particular mantra #4 is often given as diksha (initiation) for people who seek higher capacities of learning.

Tvam Vangmayaha - the way we meditate on the Lord is that if you are expressing thru every syllable that I utter, That very act of consciously speaking and saying without regretting for anything spoken - that is a HUGE tapas. Vang maya tapaha - This is also in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 16. Our speech should be such that there is no need for feeling sorry or for an apology for what we have said. That kind of alertness because O Lord You are expressing thru every syllable that I utter.

Tvam Chinmaya: - You are the embodiment of knowledge (Chit). Often Lord Ganesha is referred to as siddhi buddhi sameta. Many artists interpret that as Siddhi and Buddhi as His two wives. Whenever we talk of capacities and potentials of an individual, these are recognized as the individual’s shaktis. Some have a capacity to sing while others can paint, cook, or eat whatever
comes to plate without complaining! That is also a skill to relish everything regardless of its
taste. It is a great skill to have the ability to not complain about whatever we go through in life,
to stay in that equanimity no matter what comes your way. It is not an easy task to avoid
passing comments!

Each one of us has a different set of skills. We have multiple skills (not just one set), and many
more that are unexplored - each one these Gods, when they perfect and express their shakti,
often it is recognized as that deity’s divine consort. It is essentially His shakti - Siddhi and Buddi.
Karya siddhi, whatever job He takes, He accomplishes them. How does this come into picture?
Chinmaya - He is the embodiment of knowledge. A conscious entity, conscious being that in-n-
through every action being performed, it is consciously being performed.

Tvam Vangmaya: - Vak shuddi refers to the one who has the integrity of thought, word and
deed and speaks in a very balanced manner. Vak siddhi is whatever they start saying,
surprisingly it starts happening. Whoever has this vak-shuddhi, achieves vak-siddhi, this is their
vangamaya tapas. Chinmaya: is conscious existence. Vangamaya:- You are that conscious
expression in and through all my interactions and activities. You are that Chinmaya. Tvam Vangamayastvam Chinmayaha.

tvamaanandamayastvam brahmamaya: |
Tvam Ananda maya: - you are the very embodiment of Ananda. In the first stage I think “I am
your devotee and constantly meditate on You, and do your upasana. Wherever I am and
whatever are my interactions, I should not be the source of any confusion, restlessness, or
irritation. Before we can give Ananda (happiness), we should stop giving misery to others. That
is the greatest step 1.

Then dwell deeper into the core of your being and express that happiness out. Life will be
challenging, but be like Lord Shiva. He consumed the entire halahal (poison) and kept it right in
his throat. That's why he is called Neelakantha. He did not allow the poison to enter His heart,
nor did He allow it to spill it out. Each one of us has our own stories to share, stranger than
fiction! We all have our own Bhagavatams to share :)) In spite of all these experiences, our
expression should be pure uncontaminated love and affection towards the world. Why?
Because I am your devotee and I represent You in this world. As representatives or
ambassadors, we have to be extra cautious in what we do. May every expression be born out of
That ananda - provided we have that peace and ananda within. We can give only that which we
are abundantly seated in. Pause and think - what is it that we have in abundance today? That is
exactly what we give out to the world in abundance. If people are frustrated and irritated in our
presence, more likely so that it is likely to be our contribution than their contribution. We are
the active ingredients in each interaction. In spite of that if there is someone irritated or
agitated, our presence of that ananda should be uncontaminated in nature that the other
person forgets their misery for a moment and goes out with joy on their face. Why is That Lord
Anandamaya?

tvam sachchidaanandaadviteeyo~si |
Tvam Anandamayah. When you look at any form of God for that matter, have you ever seen a
grumpy looking God? Even the Bhadrakali roopa which is supposed to be a terrible form, in
Dakshineshwar (Calcutta) where Shri Rama Krishna Paramahamsa used to worship. Her eyes are
turned upwards, and red tongue is out. Even in that form, there is no crookedness or terrifying aspect. Even in that form there is a joyous expression. All forms of God are ananda swroopa. When we worship Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, we complain about our lives. But the Gods are standing there as a proof of how to face challenges in life! For example, Lord Krishna was born in a prison, separated from parents at birth; right from 3 months of old (from Putana) to killing Kamsa at 8-years of age, He had to constantly battle some form of disturbance and havoc. Imagine a child's life constantly under duress by demons! After that there were so many internal groups within the Yadu vamshis, He had to gather them all and straighten them. Just as He was aligning them, there was Jarasandha who attacked Him 17 times. Then Lord Krishna moved to Gujarat and had to constantly commute to Hastinapur. He could never rest in peace even for a single moment in life in His life span of 125 years! In spite of all of this, He never had any frustrations. He still had a smile in spite of 16,000 wives!

Happiness is not a dependent variable based on experiences we go through, but is in spite of the experiences. We have been conditioned to think that unhappiness is because of our experiences. But experiences are external while Happiness is internal and these two don't have a connecting link. That state which depends on the external circumstances, leads to anxieties and frustrations. Happiness is independent of everything. Tvam Anadamayaha - constantly exuberating only joy, the one who has plenty of abundant joy, can alone provide joy to others. Think of what do we have n plenty in our lives? Consciously or unconsciously, whatever we have in abundance, that is what we are contributing to society. Tvam Ananda - You are the expression of Ananda (happiness). That is the nature of Bramhan, Shuddha Bramha tattva, whose nature is Satchitananda dvitiyosi.

Tvam A-dvitiyaha asi - One without a second. Agitations are born due to fear and anxieties of future. We are fearful and that fear starts from that sense of separation. The moment we sense separation, there is fear. We tend to compare, and this comparison leads to competition. It's not that you'll earn a medal, but there is a psychological urge to compete and be better than the rest of us. This is an unhealthy pattern of growth. If comparisons have to be made, do it with your own past and beat our own best. But we end up comparing - even while raising children, we use comparison as a tool to get the best amongst siblings. The moment there is a competitive and an urge to prove that I am better than ... then all the shad-vikaras (kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsara, asmita, raga, dvesha, abhinivesha, etc.) This is a domino effect and they start clouding us from within one after the other.

The Upanishad makes such a beautiful statement Dvyaat Bhavam Bhavati, Bhava Evam Mrityu: Many people irrespective of age are scared to live alone. You yourself confess that you are scared to stay alone. If staying alone creates fear, stop looking into the mirror. For creating the fear, the fear has to be created by someone other than you. If you are alone, in that loneliness there is still a fear of something else other than me! The moment we understand that I am that pure consciousness and everything in this world is my own extension, will there be fear? Although I may favor one hand over the other, I don't compare my right hand with left hand. I am one expressing in both. When we find that oneness among the entire creation of multitude, then there is nothing to fear. That one without a second is the Advitiyaha asi. It creates fearlessnesses. There is nothing to lose or gain. When such a person expresses out in the world there are no hidden agendas. I do certain things for certain people for certain occasions so that at a later period they will do certain things for certain occasions for me when I ask for.
That's how it works - friend in need is a friend indeed! We take those assurances. Even in close relations, we want those assurances. For such a person, there are no insecurities, no hidden agendas. When they function in any interaction in this world, they bring that ananada in this world. What is that which connects them with the unity across the multitude that they see in this world or interact with? You are Sat Chit Ananda. You are the Conscious Existence throbbing in bliss. Gurgling out with bliss. Sat is the existential reality. Chit is Conscious reality. Ananda is Blissful expression. Question is if our true nature is Sat Chit Ananda, why is the entire humanity in search of happiness only? We should be in search of Sat Chit and Ananda. Why do we seek Ananda only?

In major percentage, we already experience the first two. The one which we aren't experiencing is the last one. Sat, do you all exist? Yes, we do. We don't need proof of existence! We may carry government issued proof of ID. But what is the proof that I am me? To exist as myself, I don't need any authority to validate my existence. I exist my existence doesn't require any validation. Even for my own sense. As soon as we wake up, we don't need mirrors, ID or RFID to prove our existence. I know I exist! Even during sleep I am assured that I will exist tomorrow when I awake, hence I have that assured freedom to sleep. Imagine if we had no assurance - we'd be zombies walking around. We don't cease to exist when we wake up! I don't need a validation for my existence.

Second question, do I know I exist? So first two - Sat and Chit are already taken care of. I exist (Sat) and I know (Chit) that I exist. That knowing aspect is called Chit-swaroop. But what I end up existing as causes misery or restlessness in life. We tend to exist as something that I am not. ID theft is heard of today, but Rishis have had that core set of analysis to find out our identity. We've always been in identity crisis. We are never happy with what we are or what we have, so Swamiji what should I do? Maybe my misery will end if I put an end to my life. But even this atma-hatya is done as khud-khushi, in anticipation of happiness. Khud ke khushi ke liye. We live and attempt to end life in anticipation of that happiness.

Seldom do we look into our pattern of lifestyle wherein we are trying to become something that I am not. That act of becoming is called bhava. Hence there are so many different patterns that I try to express which I am not, hence therefore the samsaar is called bhava sagar. But if I know how to exist as existence, as awareness, then all I can express is as That happiness alone. Joys are temporary. Human mind is amazingly accommodative. We've tried all our life to find something permanent as happiness. But failure to find that, we try to accommodate all those things which give us little little joys and when I pool all the summative collection of happiness at end of day, we find it satisfying. That permanency in joy or happiness, which I am searching, is not available, hence therefore I fill my day with little things that give me joy, hence therefore I think I am satisfied. If any one of those things that give us happiness gets shaken up - because none of them are permanent, it begins instability. Why does this always happen to me? Why me only? The fault does not lie in the samsara, but it is due to our mistaken identity. We may think we've not consciously harmed anyone or anything, but the point is that we try to become That which we are not, and we try to sustain that becoming, we are left restless or miserable. IF that can be changed with a constant meditation on my true nature - self centered mode, once you reach the core of your nature (happiness) the rest of the interactions after that are not for Happiness, but with Happiness.
So how does this (I am not working for Happiness, but with Happiness) translate in our daily life? I have nothing to lose because I have a constant stream of Happiness. Whoever wants it, take it. Beautiful bhajan - Ram nam ke hirey moti, loot sako to loot (don't take, but grab as much as you want because I have nothing to lose. This stte of H is permanant. Tvam SCA dvitiyosi. Such a paramatm when constantly meditated upon so that I can focus and grow beyond my own internal limitations. Yt bhavam, tat bhavati. As you think, so you become. You think of that Lord asn this SCA, what would our experience be like? He continues in next line -

tvam pratyaksham brahmaasi |
My personal experience (pratyaksham) is that you are limitless. Bramhan is bigger than the biggest and cannot be limited by anything. Anything that is made by the five elements, that element itself becomes it's limitation. That which illumines the five elements, cannot be destroyed by or be bound by the five elements. It cannot be burned, or drowned, or suffocated, or become non-existent because none of the five elements can touch you. The first four elements cannot touch or change the fifth element. Space always remains pure. The air, water, earth can be impure, but space is always pure. It cannot be contaminated. That which illumines the space or is aware of the space is called Bramhan. Hence therefore, always pure and unlimited unbound by any of the elements. This is my personal experience (pratyaksham). Where is this experience reflected?

tvam gnaanamayo vignaanamayo~si || 4 ||
Jnana is just an intellectual appreciation or understanding. Vijnana is direct experience of it. A firm understanding in my intellect is a factual understanding. Faith is required until it becomes a factual experience. The day you have factual experience, the intellectual understanding, the scriptures as they are saying they have a logical appreciation of it, it reflects in my jnana maya as wisdom. Clear understanding with clarity, and You are the one who illumines as wisdom in action, vijnana maya, as factual experiences in action. In our day to day life, we know certain patterns that will take us down. We know it by experience, but yet the wisdom does not kick in. When the wisdom reflects and we are alert while executing our lifestyle, that is when it is vijnana maya.

He then takes it a little subtler, Tvm Prataksham Bramhasi - I realize you are the absolute truth, Bramhan. I understand it intellectually and I know it vijnana maya, as a factual immediate experience. 

Another explanation - Whenever I have intellectual clarity and understanding, it is Your expression. When it translates into day to day awareful living, that also is Your expression.

sarvam jagadidam tvatto jaayate |
sarvam jagadidam tvattastishThati |
sarvam jagadidam tvayi layameshyati |
sarvam jagadidam tvayi pratyeti |
tvam bhoomiraapo~nalo~nilo nabha: |
tvam chatvaari vaakpadaani || 5 ||
sarvam jagadidam tvatto jaayate |
Tat tvaha - from you; Jayate is born. From that conscious reality, everything expresses forth. This theme is common to every Upanishad, every scripture we've studies. This one aspect is constantly hammered. Entire creation is nothing but Paramatma alone - the known creation, the unknown creation, the conscious aspect o creation, the unconscious aspect of creation - every particle is Paramatma alone. From its essential standpoint, it is the Paramatma in different moulds of expression.

Creation requires couple of things to come together. One is a material cause. But world can't be created from raw material alone! The raw material requires someone intelligent to know how to use the raw material to create, and produce efficiently to that perfection. The material has to have intelligence behind to use the material intelligently. Some people then use "Instrumental cause" - even though the material is there, the know-how or intelligence is there, you still need some instrument or infra structure to use the material intelligently. When all these three come in the right proportion you can create something profound. In order to create the creation which is constantly seemingly expanding, the fear in scientific world is that one day everything will exhaust. But scriptures give one example of counting waves in the ocean. Infinite waves are created, but their number or shape (ripple or a huge tsunami wave) does not impact the ocean. It is just the ocean expressing in that format and is the inseparable aspect of the ocean itself. Similarly, the entire creation is an expression of that Paramatma, is the material, is the intelligence and is also the instrument required to put the material in proper expression. That Paramatma is expressing Himself in various aspects of multitude. It is as though the existence is exploring in newer dimensions. Every aspect of creation is an expression and expansion of Your divine nature alone. Even in Vishnu Sahasranama the first word is not Vishnu, but Vishvam. Then comes Vishnu. We may not realize Vishnu, but Vishvam is a constant experience, it is a known reality. It is easier to get to the unknown aspect of reality through the known reality, than starting from unknown to reach the known.

So this entire creation (in)sentient, (un)expressed, (un)manifest, all of them are nothing but Paramatma in expression. We may not realize that Paramatma as of now, but even mere understanding that Paramatma is expressing in different formats; we may not end up loving everything in the world as a Paramatma but at least we can stop hating different expression of Paramatma? Hating in name of gender, skin color, religion, customs and practices, etc. is unacceptable. Before even evolving to the concept of universal brotherhood, STOP hating anything in this universe! We may not like that aspect of Paramatma, but it does not give us the right to hate that expression of Paramatma. We may not evolve into loving everyone and everything, but atleast don't hate anything!

sarvam jagadidam tvattastishThati |
The entire cosmos, entire creation is sustained, maintained, managed by you. What does this understanding reflect in our daily life? We are not the General Managers of the universe. So identify your responsibilities (Swadharma) and fulfill that Swadharma. Else we create such unnecessary patterns of agitations about things which are beyond our control. We can't impact those, but are unnecessarily worried about it. Fulfill your Swadharma and rest of the creation, Paramatma is there to maintain balance. He is taking care of it, you just do your bit. Even if a tiny screw is missing in a huge machine, it can't operate properly. Learn to flower where you are potted. Rather than wishing for some other situation or condition and then flowering,
understand your roles and responsibilities, fulfill your immediate responsibility and grow. We think about big big things without understanding our immediate responsibility. That is called ABMM – a bail, muzhe maar. We invite troubles for no reason.

Fulfill your roles and responsibilities and you will automatically evolve to the next stage. This is true whether it is in family or personal or professional life. Story from Bhagwatam - Kaliya in Yamuna river was poisoning the waters due to which cattle and some people died. Lord Krishna invited friends to play cricket and the ball goes in the river. Lord Krishna goes to retrieve it and the story goes to show how Lord Krishna danced on the snake head to control the snake. Then Lord Krishna orders the snake Kaliya to go out of the oceans and can't live in any river. But the snake replies "Lord, who has created me? You. Who has created me with poison? You. Who has created the sequence of the poison spewing out of glands? You. I am now assured that wherever we are, wherever we are, if we fulfill our Swadharma, those feet of Yours which are often meditated upon by yogis, or the touch of your feet has automatically come to my head just by fulfilling my Swadharma. Hence he says, Swadharme Shreya Nidhaya - no better treasure than fulfilling Swadharma. Fulfill it and dedicate it, and the Lord takes care of the rest of the creation. Do your job thoroughly and clearly without slacking. Who is the sustainer of the world? God. That God who has created such a beautiful universe in such a balance, does not require reminders to fulfill His job. Entire universe is maintained, sustained and managed by you O Lord.

sarvam jagadidam tvayi layameshyati |
Entire universe merges back to be one with you at the end of creation. We also create web of our own world when we wake up - my and not-my environments: people, things, environment, territory, field, etc. The entire world is compartmentalized into mine and not-mine. When we sleep what happens to "that" world we created? It goes back into laya and nascent form along with us. The child may be there, but the son you see in the child also goes to sleep in laya. The house may be there, but my-house (our creation of My world) merges into that laya. When it happens at our individual level, it is called laya; when it happens in the cosmic level, it is pralaya. Everything is withdrawn into its unmanifest stage. Then again when the creative urge arises, it manifests from where it had stopped. The final resting place of this entire creation is in your abode alone. Anyatha sharanam nasthi – there is no other refuge in this world. Tvam eva sharanam mamah. (explained from both bhakti and jnana bhaav). Tasmat karena bhavana - O Lord, I have nowhere else to go because nothing else is worth the refuge. I have taken refuge in relationships, money, positions, fame, name, but nothing gives that permanancy. Hence therefore I finally understand that You alone are the final abode and that I should merge in You alone. It is not just for me, but for entire universe, this is the abode we are searching for. Our true nature, our final abode

A wave rising from ocean starts as a ripple, grows and then pickes up momentum. It becomes a huge beautiful wave, gurgling, rolling, and spinning. It reaches a certain height. But before it can even turn its head back, it is done. Where does it go back? It goes back to the source alone. We give a lot of undue attention to our thoughts, themes of those thoughts, emotions, contents of those emotions, to whom it is directed. Our focus and attention is on that. But instead if we gather the capacity to observe where the thought does arise from? Where does this idea or emotion arise from? And where does that thought arise from or merge into? It merges back into the consciousness alone. We get lost when we identify with the theme and the thoughts,
emotions and ideas. But as long as we perceive the rise and merger of thought - in me alone - do the waves have any impact on me? I will be tossed by the waves as long as I am on surface.,. But as we go deeper and watch the waves arise and fall, they can't toss us any further.

Having thoughts, emotions, feelings, ideas etc. is not a problem. We unduly blame our mind having so many thoughts. But that is a sign of being alive! Even those emotions which we brand as negative emotions are not negative. Any emotion for that matter which we are unduly attached to is negative. Anger per se is not good or bad. It depends on how it is used. Is knife good or bad? Grow out of "It depends" thought. It is neither good nor bad; it is merely a thing. The manner in which it is used and who uses it makes it good or bad. If a mother is cutting veggies - it is a good thing. If you try to mess up with an irritated wife cutting vegetables it is bad! Just like instrument is not good or bad, the kama, krodha, matsar, - as long as we are in grip of emotions, it is bad. Consciously withdraw from them and observe them. Know when to use and when not to use them. Use anger, but don't get angry. Rather than using emotion, we become that emotion. It is in that consciousness that everything rises is sustained and merges back. I am not that which is arising, I am that from which it is arising.

Jagat (world) exists as long as thought exists. Where is jagat when there are no thoughts? Does the world exist when you go to sleep or have no thought? So one way he is talking of entire creation, and he is also indicating that this entirety exists as long as there is thought. Moment you withdraw from thought and observe it, all that there is is consciousness expressing and it is not plurality. Once you learn this art, you are not afraid of this creation.

sarvam jagadidam tvayi pratyeti |
Once you have mastered it, you can express fearlessly and joyously. Tvayi Prati yeti. It emerges back from you. There is nothing else to sustain. It is that conscious platform alone which gives rise to a thought and the thought has nowhere else to go other than merge back into Consciousness alone. So do I see it as that consciousness? Or I the consciousness in which it merges? That is the spiritual evolution. As long as we are identified with thoughts, we say it mergest into that consciousness. Moment I shift focus to Consciousness, I see all these thoughts arising and merging in me. I can control them, they can't control me. IT is this Consciousness which expresees as Prapancha which we will shortly.

The entire universe comes forth from you alone. How does it come? Entire Purusha Suktam can be quoted here. Ishwar comes down from the cosmic primordial cause. From Ishwar, as He plans to create, the planning - when it sort of comes to completion and is about to open up in creation, that is called Hirnaya garbha. When I speak, you hear only the spoken word. But before the word is spoken out, I have to form the entire sequence of logic, choose choicest words to be used. It is quite a complicated process - as I am opening up and speaking, on the inside there is a process of forming the next few sentences. My hiranya garbha, the Golden Womb is the sum of those entire formative unspoken, ready to be spoken sentences - these are at three different subtle stages. From the unmanifest comes the first manifest viraat. This Viraat is the blueprint of everything that has to be created. It has been expressed and is called the totality. From that totality came the nascent five elements - Pancha Tanmatras. They go through a scientific process of solidification or grossification. That grossified S tanmatras are called Pancha Maha Bhootas. With various comb and perm these Pancha Maha Bhootas come together and as express the multitude of matter, as if. That is why jagat is known as prapancha.
Prakarshena Prakatita Pancha Maha Bhootas: Prakarshena - not created from frustration or a mistake. It is planned thoroughly. That is the difference between Ishwara and Jiva. A sequential disorder is called jivatma and a sequential perfection is called Ishwar. Both have three shaktis - Icha, Jnana, and Kriya Shaktis. When Ishwara has the first thought of creation, He meditated in the form of Bramha for lots of years. As a result of the tapas, He acquired the know-how of creating and building this universe expanding the universe. The blueprint is generated. There is a lot of process of jnana occurring. The know-how. After ascertaining the know-how, the next step is to jump into action. So sequential perfection of the order of these shaktis is Ishwara, and sequential disorder of shaktis is jiva. What happens to us? Galti se mistake! We have ichha shakti and we have an itch to immediate jump into action and then realize or gain the knowledge after the action has been performed. If the sequential disorder was only in trail #1, it is excused. But we repeat the same pattern of mistakes over and over again without making any corrections. Then we justify that we at least feel regretful. But what good is that regretful life which does not bring in a dent of change in our sequence of this expression?

This system is not a chaos, it is a cosmos. It has a systematic way of expressing and that expression we recognize as God. Everything is in a systematic order. Prakatita - expressed as permutations of five Maha Bhootas. When all five elements come together in different proportions then all this seemingly finitude is created. All the Pancha Maha Bhootas are nothing but That Paramatma expressing in the most tangible format. I see Paramatma expressing in earth, water, fire, air and in space. If everything is nothing but Paramatma, that is why people think we have a primitive form of worship although we talk of very subtle concepts. People think - Why do we worship the natural forces out of fear and we worship stones, trees, mountains? It is not out of primitivity that we worship these PMBs or the various expressions of the Pancha Maha Bhootas. But it is of the aspect that every expression is nothing but Paramatma alone. Lord SK spends entire Chap. 10 of Bhagavad Gita on this aspect - Vibhooti Yoga. Vivida roopena bhavati shaknoti iti. He is the one who has capacity to express in multitude, hence, as many Hindus as we have, those many paths are customized for each one’s individual spiritual evolution. For a Westnerner, this may be all confusing because they follow one book, one day, one god! Every Sunday, 9-9:45 AM the service begins, and the bhakti begins! When they come with that mindset to see what our God-system we have, they get confused whether we are polythesitic, monotheistic, etc. But they are mind blown by number of dieties, Gods and even forms of worship we have! We have various paths, but each one has own carved out path towards perfection. This is not confusion in our minds because this multitude is given to us by our seers as an act of compassion and as an act of sophistication.

tvam booomiraapo~nalo~nilo nabha: |
Even in grocery stores we have so many variety options. Just take the bread section and we find Whole grain, wheat grain, 7-grain, 9-grain, etc. Varieties of breads are sold. Imagine if there was no variety - it’d be so boring. The variety caters to the varied mindsets, varied tastebuds, different conditions, and different utilities. Similarly, Government - can be invoked in various shapes and types based on which jurisdiction it comes in. Though housed in Washington DC, it permeates everywhere and can be invoked in various forms and capacitites. Similarly, He expresses as a creator, sustainer, and a remodeling agent. Same Paramatma in most tangible format is the basic five elements.
Tvam Bhumi: (earth), Apaha (water), Analaha (fire), Anilo (air) nabha: (space). He expresses in these. Hence when great masters interact with the five elements everthing is worship worthy. Nothing is a waste or useless. Rishis made it a point - trees, animals - is worship worthy. Of them, there are certain that are most sacred amongst trees, and animals. Every animal too can be traced back to how it is an expression of one mahatma or ther other. Dog is associated with Dattatraya; Snake is associated with Shesh Nag; Eagle with Garuda. Same pattern can be observed with birds and plants. Each expression is worship worthy as are mountains, the moon, stars, sun, rivers. Everything is worship worthy because tvam eva, You are the one expressing as Bhumi: (earth), Apaha (water), Analaha (fire), Anilo (air) nabha: (space).

tvam chatvaari vaakpadaani || 5 ||

This is glorified in and through all vedic mantras. Most shlokas are written in the Anushtup chanda (meter) and they are in four quarters – Chatvari Vaak Padani. So Vedas are also known as Chatvari Vaak Padani. Or the various scriptures – from the Vedas to the most recent Prakarna Granthas – all these are nothing but stuti of this very fact alone.

If you have gone through Lalitha Sahasranama, there, She is expressed as Vag, Vaikhari.

Vak - The most gross form of expression is a hymn or praise of Almighty chanted out loud. That
Vaikhari is when you keep it as a whisper, constantly mumbling about. This impact of an OMG is greater than when you scream out loud OMG.

Pashyanti – is a seamless automated continous rememberance glory of the Lord. It is constant, conscious repetition in your waking state. Para is that stuti wherein there is no more effort to put it. Every particle is shouting out loud and throbbing out loud with stuti of Lord alone. There have been masters who - that you can hear the mantra if you touch any limb of theirs. One is Sadashiva Bramhendra Saraswati. He was so immersed in God that his hand was cut he did not stop, he just went along. He did not salute the king, so the nizam asked his hand be cut off. King was surprised that Sadashiva Bramhendra Saraswati did not even flinch for a second, and he simply continued walking. When they picked up the hand, the entire body experienced the nama as though the hand was chanting the nama. They ran up to him and returned him the hand, and Sadashiva Bramhendra Saraswati simply continued walking. He put the limb back, connected it to his body and he went off. Once it was recorded that he was sleeping in the middle of a path on the head of a river. A passer-by who was a great scholar and had the ahankara of being a scholar asked him to move. Sadashiva Bramhendra Saraswati replied that he was simply resting, had not had food for a while and was just resting. If you don’t mind, can you just move my leg? The stranger refused to even touch his feet so Sadashiva Bramhendra Saraswati requested that perhaps jyust move my head. When the stranger tried to do it, his entire body suddenly started experiences the nama! Next day he came to just meet him again at the place where he was sleeping and not finding him, he just sits there. The stranger’s body automatically started chanting – just with the vibrations of the mahatma that he left back at that place.

Para is effortlessly happening. O Lord, I may not be at the stage of Para to do your stuti, let me start with Vak. Let me start singing your glories. Like Purandaradas says, earlier I
was ashamed to sing your glories. Now it is Lajjey bittu—abandoning all shame and shyness. I don’t mind dancing and singing glories of your name again and again.

Even in and through all these different ways of expression of that mantra, that mantra also is nothing but the avatara of the Lord on our tongue. When we chant the name “Om Gam GaNapataye Namah” or “Om Namah Shivaya” or “Shri Ram”, the lord is taking avatara on our jivha, our tongue and some masters call it as jivha-avatar. Everytime we chant, it is the expression of the Lord alone. You are constantly praised in and through our entire scriptures, from the Vedas to Prakarna Granthas. You are the expression of mantra in 4 different levels of utterance. Regardless of which format it is uttered in, it is your name, your glory, your expression in that form. That is why our rishis have made it a point that when the nama-karna is done, it is done aptly with the name of God. Nowadays we have peculiar names and fancy names which don’t mean anything. One surprising name – Timir (meaning darkness, ignorance, or denseness) but at that time we thought it’d be a popular name! We changed his name to Tejasvi. Names are shortened, e.g. Samyukta becomes Sammy. Narayana becomes Nick. Krishna is Kri – even within the family! Gayatri turns to Gags. These names have been given in such a way that inadvertently effortlessly when you constantly keep taking their name, you are always rolling the name of the Lord on your tongue! Don’t go for sophistication. Sometimes we don’t even understand what name we are choosing! We break them into sub-parts and break them at inappropriate parts. Purpose is to chant and repeat these names. He makes it even easier on us by giving us children who never listen to us. So you are constantly repeating their names as you interact with them throughout the day. That is the jivha avatara of the lord in the most subtle form.

tvam guNatrayaateeta: |
tvam dehatrayaateeta: |
tvam moolatrayaateeta: |
tvam mooladhaarasthitose nityam |
tvam shaktitrayaatmaka: |
tvaam yogino dhyaayanti nityam |
tvam brahmaa tvam vishNustvam rudrastvam indrastvam 
agnistvam vaayustvamsooryastvam chandramaastvam
brahma bhoorbhuva: svarom || 6 ||

tvam guNatrayaateeta: |
O Lord, You are beyond three gunas and that is the happiness. There are 3 gunas, Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. When they are not in balance or in control, the sequence of priority is that tamas is the grossest, subtler than that is rajas and the subtlest is sattva. We gain mastery over the three gunas when we are able to express theguna required for fulfilling that particular situation’s responsibility. Sometimes there is inevitable that you have to go through someone’s nagging – invoke tamas – and sleep! That may be the best at the time. Learn the art of sleeping through with eyes open and a smile on your face. If the situation requires you to pump the sattvic guna, you should be able to do it. At that moment when we need tamasic guna, whenever we have to withdraw, especially in sleep – on weekend afternoons after a heavy brunch, the quick catnap turns into an extensive sleep and you wake up groggy.
Transcending the three gunas does not mean abandoning the three gunas but mastering them such that I apply whatever guna required in fulfilling that responsibility which meets that situation. That is called going beyond the influence of gunas. Sattvic guna is required whenever we are planning or thinking ideals, direction, goals, vision, or when we have to grasp everything. Once the planning and grasping is done, and you now have to put things in action, you should have rajasic nature. Even while executing it, we should know when to withdraw when our responsibility is done. Actually the entire environment will be screaming at us – enough for now! Go now! But we don’t know when to withdraw. This is like ASAS – Ambassador syndrome (car never starts) and Abhimanu Syndrome. So you’d request passer-byers to push the car, give it a jump start and then kick it into action. Many of us, if we know art of sleeping and wake up right – just before unnecessary period of drifting into dreams that drains our energy – we wake up fresh. Else we need a jump start. We can’t start day without beverages – tea, coffee, Red Bull – these energy drinks can give you a boost, but drain energy immediately when the effect wears off. Abhimanu syndrome – once we jump into action, we don’t know when to withdraw how to withdraw. Invoke the tamasic guna and withdraw completely. But we leave all loose ends and keep files open, constantly processing the past. You are on the bed tossing and turning unable to invoke the tamasic nature. As important as the tamasic nature is, withdrawing from tamasic nature is also difficult. None of the gunas are placed right and we dance to their tunes. It reflects in us “I don’t feel like it today”. It is not a question of how we feel; If it is something that needs to be fulfilled, buckle up and get up do it. Moods are not important.

Whenever we feel irresponsible due to moods, we really should have someone whack our brains straight. Art is to know which guna to apply when.

The world of matter is in three gunas. Transcend the matter – it is all divine. Those who are still embedded in the matter of three gunas we have the dichotomy of good/bad; positive/negative. Paramatma is neither good nor bad. He is eternally divine and is constantly above the impact of three gunas.

tvam awasthatrayaateeta:
You are That consciousness because of which there is waking, dream and deep sleep. But you are neither waking, nor dream nor deep sleep. A beautiful classic example is of Knig Janaka. His entire court of ministers was comprised of realized masters. Imagine the kingdom that is run by all realized masters – from the King to the youngest one is a realized master! One night the king suddenly woke up in the middle of the night and summoned all ministers. He asked the ministers “I was famished for almost 3-4 days and was a beggar begging for food for those 3-4 days. Hungry and famished, I lost balance and fell down (from my bed) and I woke up. Question is – Am I the king who dreamt of the beggar and his pain and hunger, or am I the dream of the beggar asking you this question. Which one is real? The hungry beggar who woke up the king or the king who is asking this question?” While everyone went into deep thought, his youngest minister Ashtavakra spoke thus (ref Ashtavak Gita). “O King, neither the king is real, or the beggar is real. One is waking state and one is dream state. You are neither a king nor a beggar. You are that which is illumining the mind’s becoming a beggar or a king! Such a deep thought.

If you ask Gaudapadacharya those are functional states of mind, he’d have said you are neither a king nor a beggar. You are the one Illuminating mind’s becoming a beggar or a king. There are three states of Consciousness. Gaudapadacharya – refuses to say 3 states of consciousness. He
says only 2 avasthas (states) – active mind and absent mind (not absentmindedness.) Absent mind is that phase where mind is not actively functioning. He clubs both the dream and waking state into one and says there are just these two states. There isn’t much difference. One is internal confusion, one is external confusion. Waking world is called external confusion and dream is internal confusion. Mind is active in both states. Mind is not however active in deep sleep. Our Consciousness illumines the waking, dream and the deep sleep states. When we sleep soundly and wake up, how do we know we slept? During sleep we are unaware of our sleep. Even though someone may be shouting loudly, you can continue to sleep. So how do we know we just slept? It is because when I wake up, my entire experience of deep sleep is illumined as a memory. When we wake up, we recollect the goodness of the sleep because it is a part of the memory. Something has to illumine that part of the memory where the mind was not actively involved. At that time, the mind was completely withdrawn. That state when the mind reaches its nascent form completely withdrawn – some masters use the word reaching the subconscious levels, the mind is not doing anything. Then it comes back to weave it’s own field internally (dream) and then it opens it’s web into the world of plurality. That is waking state. The conscious principle which is illumining both – or rather three – waking, dream and deep sleep state, that consciousness you are. That principle of life, which illumines all these, is your Existence. Tvam Avasthatrayateetaha.

tvam dehatrayateeta: |
We have 3 bodies, the gross, subtle, and the causal body. Entire Vivek Chudamani is put in one mantra – tvam dehatrayateeta: We can eliminate all false identities via the process of neti-neti (na-iti = not this) We don’t know the texture of experience of the Consciousness. That which is already known is being negated. So we understand the gross body.

Sthul sharira (gross body) is something born, sustained by food and becomes a healthy package of food for something else. Whether we bury or burn, either ways, we come good package of manure! That is why ancient people merged ashes into live perinniel rivers that constantly feed into the farms. Enriched by the carbon it is the best fertilizing agent. We have already become a part of the food cycle. Born of food, sustained by food, we become food for something else to survive. It goes through six stages of modification. Asti (conceived), Jayatey (born), Vardhatey (exponential growth), Viparinamate (change), Apakshiyate (decay), and finally Vinasyati (death). This body requires certain maintenance – food, oil and grease for a while to keep it moving. However, don’t get attached to it and pamper it.

Sukshma sharira. Field of emotions and ideas all are nothing but thoughts. But we have the vague knack and as soon as there is an emotion we feel justified to identify with it. Whatever thought content, we become that content. Good, bad, glad, sad thoughts make us that. Why give so much importance to thoughts? Express the thought only after validation. If necessary, use them or let them simply pass by. Terrible thoughts are nothing but kachara (rubbish). Why make it visible?!!! Just because it is flowing, why jump into it? Do you find it proper that if someone jumps into a drainage each time they come across one? IT is okay for children to jump into a puddle. For them them there is no distinction between pure and impure water. They will even play in their own
urine. But even after growing up, adults can't let go their internal *kachara* thoughts. Why pursue them? Whatever be the thought and it's content, express it only if it is necessary and required. Otherwise let it flow. Have you seen the first round of your laundry when it is in the washing machine? Just because the water is dirty, do you stop washing clothes? That is the way to clean, let it be. The dirty black layer has to go, let it go. By identifying with it, we become that content. Don’t identify. Stand back and watch.

*Karana sharira* is the causal state. That causal state is the classic answer for a Self unfoldment study group – *karma* and *vasana*. The first creation, first *jiva*, was it *karma* or *vasana*? Which prompted what? Both of them are however effects of ignorance. This ignorance is the root cause for everything. It is the subllest one and is called *Karana sharira*.

tvam *dehatrayaateeta*: You are beyond these three *dehas* (bodies) that have various modifications and you can recognize the modifications in presence of the life force illumination of the life force.

tvam *kaalatrayaateeta*: |
You are beyond past, present, future which are mere points in a timeline. In fact, there is no past, present or future. E.g. from a tall building I can see the end of the road and can see either side. If you are in traffic, whatever is the traffic on the road, for you it is the present moment. For me, at that level whatever I can see is the present moment. Whatever you can see is either in past or future. So these are simply points of reference. If time is a point of reference, so is space. Time is calculated in terms of space travelled; space is calculated in terms of time taken! They are interchangeable, two sides of the same coin.

Time is a mere frame of reference for past, present and future. A "moment" is just a "spot" and it is being in the presence - devoid of past, present and future. The moment is just-is. You are beyond the impact of past, present and future and you are the very essence.

Then what are you? A very practical abhyasa of upasana is discussed and studied extensively, so don’t miss it.

tvam *moolaadhaarasthito~si nityam* |
In our phy body we have various *chakras*. These *chakras* are recognized as meeting point of various resources of energy. It lies on our spinal cord. Our entire body has 72001 nerves. The 72001st nerve is a subtle nerve, not a physical *nadi* (nerve). Each one of the other 72000 nerves has a name; just this subtle one is called *shushumna nadi* - represents the subllest of the *nadi*s. Around the *shushumna nadi* there are these 7 *chakras*, starting from *Muladhara* to *Sahasrarahara*. There are some auxilliary *chakras* where the nerves join, but on this particular path we focus on the 7 that around the *shushumna nadi*.

We have two holes in nostrils. *Ida* and *Pingala*. The balance between these two enables us to balance the temperature and pressure. We unconsciously put the body through a huge trauma
daily ranging from cold ACs to extreme Texan heat. There is almost a difference of 10-20 degrees of temperature variation in the various conditions. How does the body have the ability to maintain the body temp at 37 celcius? The body maintains the temperature equilibrium, through balance between the Ida and Pingala. It auto generates heat or produces cooling effect so pressure remains constant.

Ida and Pingala also introduce the regulation of breathing pattern known as Pranayama. There are 4 stages for the regulation between nostrils. Regulation comes in picture when there is Kumbhakha, holding the breath for a few moments. The two types of Kumbhaka are included in the steps below:

1. Puraka - fills up your lungs (inhalation).
2. Rechaka = exhalition.
3. Antar Kumbhakha (internal holding breath) and
4. Bahir Kumbhakha (externally holding it off).

With different permutations of the 4 steps, combination of Ida and Pingala, there is a specific science behind it, which Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras indicates; these are also indicated through Hatha Yoga Pratidika by Swami Atmarama who has further given nuances on Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras. These are the two most authentic texts on Patanjali Yoga’s Pranayama, and the use of Pranayama on this particular technique wherein the Pranayama helps to raise the Kundalini. Word of caution - on Chinmaya Mission platform, you usually don't see us talking on Pranayama. We aren't experts on it. The Pranayama is very powerful method and just because you can read on the Pranayama and "snake energy" (Kundalini shakti or Serpent shakti), don't start putting it in practice. It needs a qualified person to guide you step by step in this. The inspiration through mere reading about the Kundalini Shakti that rises through from muladhara, is not enough. If one is not guided properly on the regulation of breathing pattern and various other practices for regulating breathing, this energy can shoot through any one of the 72000 nerve points. Excessive energy is shot through the different nadi. Medically you may be declared fit, but physically it is very painful to sustain the energy there. Then there is reverse engineering to be done to redirect that energy into the muladhara and then direct it. If guided well, it goes very well. The Kundalini Shakti has to raise all the way to Sahasrara.

The other aspect of Kundalini Shakti is that it can also be raised through upasana method which is being highlighted here. Each chakra has a adhisthana daiva (presiding diety). The presiding diety on Muladhara is Ganesh ji.

The rest of the mantras provide an entire description of Lord Ganesha. All the seven chakras are represented through a lotus. At each level they have a different color and an ascertained number of petals. Sahasradhara is the lotus with 1000 petals and is located right on top of head. From there it opens up the 1000 petals. When all the energy goes up systematically in there, it opens up one layer after the other and fully opens up the 1000 petals. Fully blossomed. Muladhara has 4 petals and is of red color and is right at the tip of the spinal cord where it seemingly turns a little outwardly. The form of Lord Ganesha is to be meditated at up at the muladhara. Tvam muladhara ... you are ever present at that muladhara. The rishi describes the upasana further in the mantras, - how do we meditate upon Lord Ganesha will be seen later on.
Mula has a second meaning - the Source, the root cause for everything in this cosmos. Everything branches out itself from you, the Paramatma. This source is nityam, eternal. So there is no Kshaya dosha - nothing reduces or is consumed. Being eternal, always supporting the different forms that come out, everything remains a constant. Matter and energy can neither be destroyed nor created. It is only remodulated in different formats. They remain constant because the source Paramatma is constant. You are not only the source mula, but mula-adhara (the support) and you remain sthithatha: - aasi nityam, eternal.

tvam shaktitrayaatmaka: |
How do you manage this entire creation? tvam shaktitrayaatmaka:- First the rishi says you are Gunatrayateeta:, beyond the effect of gunas. Then he says tvam shaktitrayaatmaka: Here many people get confused if you describe the Shakti as Maya expressing as Sattva, Rajas or Tamas. Here the Shakti can be otherwise defined as ichha, jnana and kriya shakti - the desire, know-how and the skill. All three of them - we are supposed to be ishvara of this body. We have 12 components to keep them in balance. Even with just these 12 components we get so confused and overwhelmed - 5 organs of action, 5 organs of perception, mind and intellect. We create such havoc. Knowing each one, what it can be applied into, gaining mastery and control and then expressing skillfully.

Ishwara has complete control over his shakti. At jiva level we completely lose control and is called avidya. At ishvara level, they are completely under control and hence therefore one who is directing the energy. At totality level it is under control and called Maya. At individual level it is uncontrollable and called avidya. Ichha, Jnana and Kriya have to be in that sequence. Else it is trouble all over. We have lots of icha but no either gnana or kriya - it is frustrating. Lots of craving but no way of fulfilling or reaching there. Presence of even just two of these shaktis is frustrating.

In young age we have icha and kriya. As soon as there is a desire, without even thinking we jump into action and then repent. We make mistakes - sometimes repeatedly!

In old age we have icha and jnana, no more kriya shakti is left! If you execute them in order - ichha or desire supported by jnana or knowledge, executed masterfully out.

Tvam shaktitrayaatmakaha:- in ichha shakti you express as the Bramha, Vishnu, and Maheshwar - the moment there is ichha shakti or the urge to create, the other two aspects of sustinance and remodifying also have been given a scope to express. There is a phase of Taposya wherin there is a lot of time spent in acquiring the knowledge, and then expressing out in creation in the order of Ichha, Jnana and Kriya. You are the embodiment of the three shaktis. Tvam Shaktitrayatmakaha .

tvaam yogino dhyaayanti nityam |
From Gunatrayateetaha to Tvam Shaktitrayatmakaha the rishi says Tvam Yogino Dhyayati Nityam. Yoginaha (all the yogis) He is not referring to the ones who go to the Yoga studio! In the Vedanta Siddhanta there are 4 yogas - Jnana, Karma, Bhakti and Dhyana Yoga . In the Yoga Siddhanta there is Hatha Yoga or Ashtanga Yoga. The fourth step of Ashtanga Yoga is recognized as Yoga asanas and is abbreviated as Yoga. So here, Yoginaha are the Prayatna sheela: - those who are constantly putting effort towards realization or moksha. Whichever path
they have chosen. Such Yoginaha, Tvam - You, Dhyananti Nityam - they meditate upon you constantly.

tvam brahmaa tvam vishNustvam rudrastvam indrastvam agnistvam vaayustvamsooryastvam chandramaastvam brahma bhoorhruva: svarom || 6 ||

How do they meditate? They meditate on You as Gunatrayateetaha, Awashtatrayateetaha, Dehatrayateetha, Kalatrayateetha, Muladhara, Shaktitrayatma. Hence their experience is also Tvam Bramha, Vishnustvam, Rudrastvam, Indrastvam, Agnistvam, Vayustvam, Suryastvam, Chandramastavm. Bramha - they meditate upon you as the Bramha, Vishnu and Maheshwara, the creator, sustainer and recycler. Tvam eva - you are the very expression. Even a guru is worshipped from that standpoint, guru bramha ... guru itself is the Pramatma, Parabramha. Here they invoke Lord Ganesha as the trinity - the creative surge, maintainance and recycler, Bramhastavam, Vishnustvam, Rudrastvam. The deities are at work not just during Creation, but in Maintenance also there are various other natural forces. The one who is in charge of all of them - these are the next layers of dieties or demi-Gods. Indra, Agni, Vayu, - they represent the various natural forces that maintain the universe in balance. Indra is king of Gods. You are verily the Indra, Agni, Vayu - earlier we saw how You are verily the 5 nascent elements Bhumi, .... You are Surya and Chandrama.

Everything in cosmos is Your expression alone. Hence in our Chinmaya Mission pledge we say “...service to humanity is service to Lord of Lords.” Here the rishi is not referring to serving the have-nots, but serving the Lord in that form of human, hence therefore it is my opportunity and privilege to serve the rest of them. The entire cosmos and universe is verily your form alone. Bramha Bhur Bhuva Swaroam. Bhuva - this world. Bhuvaha - Higher world. Suvaha - lower world. All these 3 worlds (actually 14 worlds are indicated), entire cosmos and string of various universes put together are verily Your expression alone. Part of our arti also mentions deva devasya, akhilanda koti nayakya. Our milky way is the galaxy, like this there are koti (infinitite possibilities) of bramhandas (expanse of creation). All of it is Your expression.

What do they meditate upon specifically? The mantra portion is taken which also has two parts. One is seeksha of mantra (phonetics and various ingredients of mantra are explained and then the mantra upasana) is also given. What is upasana, and how is it technically to be done? Upasana means Upa asana (sitting closest to). This does not indicate sitting in the physical sense, but that which takes you to the closest you get to the core of your own being, center of your consciousness. Any method that takes us there is called upasana.

Among various techniques the most user-friendly is the one that has an associated with names and forms. That is how our mind processes. Our experiences of the forms have been captured in our memory and we tag it. Memory is kept afresh. So when we tag that with words, mind recognizes it when it processes the experience. Parabramha Paramatma - is not experienced, and no form is associated with it. It can’t function from unknown to known realm, so here in this upasana, it helps the mind to associate the known and go into the realm of unknown. Through an idol we are aiming for the ideal behind that idol. It is a reminder for us - the representative or indicative of that which reminds you of the ideal. Rishis have developed this beautiful method - we have form of Lord and various upacharas done and meditated upon. One of the key elem of upasana method is chanting a mantra.
gaNaadim poorvamucchaarya varNaadim stadanantaram |
anusvaara: paratara: |
ardhendulasitam |
taareNa ruddham |
etattava manusvaroopam |
gakaara: poorvaroopam |
akaaro madhyamaroopam |
anusvaarashchaantyaroopam |
binduruttararoopam |
naad: sandhaanam |
samhitaa sandhi: |
saishaa gaNeshvidyaa |
gaNaka rishi: |
nichrudgaaatree chanda: |
shree mahaagNaapatirdevataa |
om gam gaNapataye nama: || 7 ||

What is the Ganesha mantra?

*Om Gam Ganapataye Namaha.* A mantra is *mananaat trayatey iti mantra:* When we focus upon the principle which removes us from all limitations - *trayatey iti mantra.* It is a formula. Here they have described the formula so that nothing is ruined. If we observe our language over a period of time, the language is beaten up. For example, simple phrases such as “How are you doing?” or “What is happening?” have changed over a period of time. Greetings changed to “How do you do?” or “What's happening?” Now it's morphed into “What's Up” and then “Wassup?” or “Sup?” and now sometimes it is just a nod!

So rishis have spent entire 7th mantra describing Ganesha mantra. Indicative mantra is *Om Gam GaNapatye Namaha.* How do they describe it? *gaNaadim poorvamucchaarya varNaadim stadanantaram.* It starts with the word *Gana,* followed by *aadim* - etc.. But the first one is *Gandadim Poorva mucchaarya,* followed are different syllables (Varana) tadanantaram. *anusvaara: paratara:* | *Varna Gam,* is followed by *anuwsara* (the dot) which is pronounced only half (Ardha). *ardhendulasitam |taareNa ruddham |- it is often put as a dot on the top of the syllable. *etattava manusvaroopam* | This is what has to be chanted as the *mantra* in the mind, this mantra has to be chanted regularly. *om gam gaNapataye nama:*

gakaara: poorvaroopam |
The first part talked about *GaNapataye Namaha.* That mantra is enriched and empowered by the *beejakshara* (seed syllable). Every word uttered is energy or vibration expressed. Sound is a vibration, it is energy expressed. Every word has certain energy to it. We may or may not understand its meaning, but the word's power is such that whoever listens to it has a certain effect of listening to the word. For example, on an early crisp morning when the birds’ chirping falls on your ears, you feel a certain amount of calming nature to it. Or listening to the sounds of roaring waves has a calming effect on the mind. The sound definitely has energy and it impacts whoever listens to that sound. *Beejaksahara* is supposed to be the most potent in terms of energy and the impact of creating a balance on whoever utters it, repeats it or hears it. There are many such Beejaksaharas. The Ganesha *Mantra* is empowered by the word *Gam*
Ganesha Atharva Sheershapanishat

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Swami Sarveshananda Saraswati

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akaaro madhyamaroopam |
Gakaraha purva rupam. There is Ga-kaara. Akaro madhyam rupam. Akara is added to it then it becomes Ga. All syllables in Sanskrit varnamala are half. They have to be joined by the vowel to make it complete. anusvaarashchaantyaroopam | Anusvaa ... there is half-Ma. It has to go as the dot - binduruttaroopam |. Then it becomes Gam. This is in Sanskrit Varnamala. naada: sandhaanam | There are two meanings to naada: sandhaanam. (1) It has to be joined - always go together with the mantra. Instead of saying Ganapaty Namaha you have to say Gam Ganapaty Nama: (2) The Gam Ganapaty Namaha is anyway given. Add Nada to it. Nada upasana is adding Om. So it becomes om gam gaNapaty nama: . samhitaas sandhi: | Then it becomes samhita (comprehensive). The sandhi of Om + Gam + Ganapatye Namaha makes it samhita comprehensive mantra. saishaa gaNeshavidyaa | This is called Ganesha vidya or Ganesha Mantra. gaNaka rishi: | Ganak Rishi rendered this in Gayatri meter. nichrudgaayatree cchanda: | Nischrud, the most sacred Gayatri chanandha - it is similar to Anupshtu chandra which has 4 quarters; whereas Gayatri Chanda has only 3 parts to it. Each part has 8 syllables, so total of 24 syllables in Gayatri Chanda. Because it is written in that meter, all these mantras are called Gayatri mantras. e.g. Om bhurbhuvu suvaha is also called Gayatri Mantra because it is in this meter. It is not the name of the mantra but the kind of the mantra. So here the entire mantra is in Gayatri Chanda. Who is being worshipped? shree mahaagaNapatirdevataa | The ideal behind the idol is Ganapatir Devata. Lord Ganesha is the ideal invoked. om gam gaNapaty nama: | | 7 | | The mantra is Om gam GaNapaty Namaha.

ekadantaaya vidmahe vakratuNDaaya dheemahi |
tanno danti: prachodayaat | | 8 | |
What is the Gayatri of this mantra? vidmahe - may we know or realize Lord Ganesha who is also known as ek danta (one-tusked). vakratuNDaaya dheemahi -meditate upon the Vakratunda – Lord Ganesha is also recognized as the one who has a trunk that is turned indicating the readiness or preparedness. Dheemahi - meditated upon. Tanno danti prachodayaat - may He always inspire us and enthuse us by constantly remaining as that which we have meditated earlier (knowledge, wisdom, etc.) May He reflect in our life with that wisdom shining through that intellect so that our daily actions are performed meticulously.

Entire mantra would thus be undersood as follows. When you are doing the upasana, this entire mantra has to be memorized and constantly repeated upon. Mantra is the expression of the jivha avatara of the Lord. May we constantly meditate and focus on Ganesha through this mantra. What type of Ganesha are they giving through this mantra? Today was upasana part. The meditation and phalashruti is seen next.

ekadantam chaturhastam paashamankushadharaaNam |
radam cha varadam hastairbibhraaNam mooshakadhvajam |
raktam lambodaram shoorpakarNakam raktavaasasam |
raktagandhaanuliptaangam raktapushpai: supoojitam |
bhaktaanukampinam devam jagatkaaraNamachyutam |
aavirbhootam cha srushTyaadau prakrute: purushatparam |
evam dhyaaayati yo nityam sa yogee yoginaa vara: | | 9 | |
This has to be imagined at the muladhara. Imagine the form of Lord Ganesha in red color - rakta lambordaram. Think of the most fragrant 4-petaled red lotus shining right in the middle. Lord Ganesha’s color is deep red, like that of the burning amber color. So visualize this when you sit down and calm your breath. It is not an idol or a murti. Don't be miserly in your imagination. Enliven that live form of Ganesha in that golden burning amber color. Imagine Him with these attributes.

**Raktagandhaanuliptaangam**

His entire body is smeared (liptam) with rakta gandham - chandam (sandalwood) mixed with kumkum. Smear artistically, just like how you’d decorate yourself in front of the mirror! When you offer it to Lord, why make it vikara? Make it presentable. If upasana itself is that Lord is in front, we won't do anything displeasing to Him. Apply nice tilak. With chandana background a light kumkum on it stands out very well. It should be beautiful and pleasing to look at. On the body, from the wrist upwards there is chandan going. On chest there is beautiful alankar of chandan. So chandan is beautifully smeared all over the body. Rakta gandhaanuliptam

**raktapushpai: supoojitam**

He loves red color flowers. You can build contrast - He likes red, but you can bring various shades of red to make a nice pushpamala (garland). Even namavali offered can be su-pujitam. Various bhaav are denoted even with just hand gestures. When we are worshipping the Lord, we don't throw. The upper hand movement is used for someone younger than us whom we are blessing. So the akshata (rice grains) are taken and then blessed wishing them well - if younger than us. For the Lord, it has to be offered differently. Don't throw offerings at him. You yourself wouldn't want it to be thrown at you! You are beautifully arranging flowers - sometimes symmetric, sometimes assymetric, to bring out the beauty. Mind should not seek anything else to focus on during the flower arrangement. Right there I can focus directly on the Lord. Don't rush when offering the astottara. Arrange the flowers beautifully while doing the Ashtotarra namavali. Not just putting a heap - like drowning the Lord sometimes He is not even seen! When the abhishek is performed, use warm water for the shower just like how you do it for yourself. We pour cold milk from refrigerator while doing the abhirishk. Be careful what you pour, how you pour. supujitam- with the bhaav that the Lord is present there. Do it with that bhaav shudhi.

**bhaktaanukampinam devam jagatkaaraNamachyutam |**

How is that Lord is so forgiving in spite of our inadvertent mistakes? I know I am not perfect, I am simply trying to reach perfection. O Lord, don't look at my actions, look at my intentions behind the actions and please forgive me. So bhaktaanukampinam devam - Endowed with kampa (compassion). Bhakta anu kampinam, the Lord is ever thinking about His devotees. There is a story of Narada from Kathakars. He was a little jealous that Hanuman ji was getting an extra from God. So he goes to God and asks "Bhagwan, I am sure there are a list of people who are ardently devoted to you. Do you have a list of top 20?" Bhagwan shows him the list and sees that first name as Narada and Hanuman ji is not even in the list! So Narada takes it to Hanuman ji and shows off the list. "Good for you" says Hanuman ji. "But there is a second secret list with Lord" he continued. Narada immediately goes back to Bhagwan and insists on knowing the second list. God clarifies that the first list provided was per Narad ji’s instructions - Top 20
people who love God. And the other list was of top 10 people whom I (God) love! We all love God, but how many does God love? God is ever ready to shower His compassion on us. Poor God in Kaliyuga He is constantly in nidra awastha (sleeping mode). Vishnu's dhyan shloka is bhujaga shayanam. Constantly sleeping because no one calls out to Him so He has no work! bhaktaanukampinam devam - he is the Lord who is ever ready to shower His blessings on the devotees.

jagatkaaraNamachyutam
He is the cause (karan) of the entire jagat (creation)- the impermanent world. A constant modification is the nature of jagat. Constantly changing it appears to be shining. That whose nature is chuta – changing, is the jagat. The Lord who is the support is a-chutah, the one who is unchangeable, unmodifiable; He is cosntantly upholding because He is the permanant substratum.

aavirbhootam cha srushTyaadau prakrute: purushaatparam
From such permanent substratum, the entire shrsti (shrsti adi) expresses (avir bhutam) manifests forth. With regards to this prakirti, there is a Creator (Purusha) and He is Supreme - beyond that Creator because the Creator is also supported by the Para Bramha Pramatma. (Purushaat Param)

evat dhyaaayati yo nityam sa yogee yoginaam vara: 
Eva - like this, when we close our eyes and meditate on that live form of Lord Ganesha wherein He is bigger than the biggest, and I am a tiny speck in front of Him. He is ekadantam chaturhastam pada ... Thus dhyaaayati yo nityam - those who meditate upon Him on this kind of Ganesha rooted in the muladhara, such a yogi is the most blessed one. Sa Yogi yoginaam Vara: For such yogis, the channels clear up and the energy surges forth directly to the sahasra.

namo vraatapataye namo gaNapataye nama:
pramathapataye namastestu lambodaraaya ekadantaaya 
vighnavinaashine shivasutaaya shreevaradamoortaye nama: || 10 ||

namo vraatapataye
Meditative forms of Lord Ganesha are given in here. Namo Vraata pataye. There is no aham namaskar karomi. Salutations offered with humility unto Vraatapati. The vraata pati - any endeavor undertaken to accomplish a righteous goal can be called as a vrata. So Vraatapati is the one who blesses for the accomplishments of the goal-oriented endeavors. The one who strenghtens me to accomplish is refered to as Vraatapati, Lord Ganesha. He is the Lord of all endeavors. Our offerings should be such that all actions lead to that Paramatma alone. Develop an attitude that may I be able to offer every single action that I perform as an act of devotion, worship to my Paramatma. Then you can't do anything - thought, word, or deed - unrighteous. Such one invoked is called Vraatapati.

namo gaNapataye nama:
Namo Ganapaty - Salutations to Ganapati (we already saw three meanings earlier).

namo pramathapataye
Namo Pramatha pataye - Pramatha the one who constantly destroys the ego. As long as you are crying and bound up in limitations, the ego will feel hurt. Pramatha pati mercilessly destroys that ego. Be careful of invoking Ganesh ji. His main purpose is to destroy the "invoker". Are you ready? Do you have the courage? If you don't have that courage, seek that courage from Him! Admit that we are starting this, not sure if we have the strength. You give me the strength to withstand this.

namastestu lambodaraaya ekadantaaya
Whatever test you give, because you are Lamba udara, you know how to take it. Give me that kind of strength to go through life without that wavering or shaking my devotion unto You. Let me have that capacity to accept and may I never waver - eka danta - stay focused. See how beautifully they are arranged, and we do such mechanical chanting!

vighnavinashine shivasutaaya shreevaradamoortaye nama:
Vighna vinashine - the one who destroys all obstacles. The entity called ego - my own ego - is destroyed. Not just external obstacles but this internal obstacle has to be destroyed. Shiva sutaaya - son of the auspicious one, Lord Shiva. Shree Varada moortaye - varada = one who is ready to bestow and give the ultimate, nothing less than the Highest truth. O lord bless us with that highest knowledge and give me the strength to go through all these obstacles in life. Let me not shy away from my life.

Thus everyday, before the day can begin, sit down. After the physical puja, sit down and visualize this form of Lord Ganesha. Any form of the Lord which is your istha daiva is fine. You are the insignificant speck in front of the majestic Lord. Such meditator and upsaaka gets bestowed with the final ultimate knowledge.

phalashruti

Most will stop here at the phalashruti. The neo-intelligents (newly intelligent) usually stop here and claim that there is no need to read the phala shruti. Same is seen in Lalitha Sahasranam, Vishnu Sahasranama, etc. There is a tradition. You know this Knowledge now, and you may benefit to know what is the knowledge for! It is like going through entire medical college without knowing what medicine to give when! Mantra is like a formula. When and how it can be applied - you may not use it for sakama, but you can guide others who may need it. If one generation skips the phalashruti, do you think next generation will even know what that phalashruti is? The phalashruti is also to be learned. Whether you use it for sakama or nishkama is your choice. It is like the GPS we chant, just because we know it and say lets' do only first 3 shlokas because everyone knows it. If we take that route, the next year no one will remember the GPS. This is an offering to teh entire guru parampara, so there s/b no short cuts. Similarly for phalashruti. It is a siddha mantra that can be used in various places.

etad atharvasheersham yo~dheete |
sa brahmbhooyaaya kalpate |
sa saravighnairna baadhyate |
sa sarvata: sukhamedhate |
sa pancha mahaapaapaat pramuchyate |
saayamadheeyaano divisakrutam paapam naashayati |
praataradheeyaano raatrikrutam paapam naashayati |
saayam praata: prayunjaana: paapo apaapo bhavati |
dharna artha kaama moksham cha vindati |
idam atharvasheershamashishyaaya na deyam |
yo yadi mohaad daasyati |
sa papeeyaan bhavati |
sahastraavartanaadyam yam kaamamadheete |
tam tamanena saadhayet || 11 ||
etad atharvasheersham yo~dheete |
Ye tat (this) Atharvasheersham yaha (those) adheete - those who study and understand what Atharvasheersham means, it is a direct path to reach sa brahmabhooyaaya kalpate - the Parabramha paramatma. If you meditate on this and use the upasana technique, it will directly lead the upasaka towards the Parabramha paramatma.

sa saravighnairna baadhyate |
sa sarvata: sukhamedhate |
Saha - the one who has reached this highest state Sarvataha - in all times and places - meaning in all experiences, Sukham edatey - experiences unlimited bliss. sa saravighnairna baadhyate / - for such a person, nothing becomes an obstacle. It doesn't mean that obstcales disappear! It indicates that the obstacles can't weight htem down or pull them down.

sa pancha mahaapaapaat pramuchyate |
These saadhaks get liberated from five major sins. There are various definitions of those five sins and most of us are guilty of them!
   1. Not following dharma including swadhyaya, puja, upasana, dana, dharma, swadharma as desb by varna, asharma, vyawastha, paristhit - understanding and apply it deligently
   2. Never kill
   3. Never steal
   4. Never lie
   5. Never kill a cow. We Hindus worship the cow. Don't make your stomach a graveyard for dead bodies. Every aspect of a cow is gone in serving the humanity. Even the cowdung and cow urine has medicinal quality. What to talk of the rest of the cow? Gohaty dosha.

If by mistake you have already done all 5 of them, Lord Ganesha will protect this bhakta who does the Ganesha upasana wherein the bhakta has taken the sankalpa of never committing or repeating these five mistakes.

saayamadheeyaano divasakrutam paapam naashayati |
praataradheeyaano raatrikrutam paapam naashayati |

saayam praata: prayunjaana: paapo apaapo bhavati |
Meditate on this entire mantra of Ganesha Atharva Sheersha - mediate on it saayam adheena: - it will ensure that you don't commit sins during any part of the day. Meditate on it at night so that you are constantly focused and relieved of all sins. Meditate on it so that we remain focused on our dharma and we do not commit sins during the day or night. It is not for washing away sins! This meditation will help us lead a blissful unregretful life. Those who meditate on it in the morning (it gives enough energy to go through the day), or in the evening (opportunity to
thank Him for providing that day), or both morning and evening - *papaha apaapao bhavati* - there would never be a situation wherein you'd commit something that'd become a sin. We are assured of it. It is not a mere chanting, it is to be mediated upon and consciously be aware of it. *Sarvatra adheeyano* - Such a person - whenever they get an opportunity, not just morning or evening, those who mediate on the *tattva* indicated by this Upanishad during any pockets of moments, *Sarvatra adheeyano apa vighna: bhavati* - there is nothing that can stop them. No obstscale can pull them down.

**dharma artha kaama moksham cha vindati |**

Such a person would definitely fulfill the *chatur purusharthas* - *Dharma, artha, kama moksha cha vindati*. Some people claim that they don't like rituals but they like just the philosophical par. This is because the philosophy talks about *moksha* while the rituals talk about *dharma, artha, kama!* How does the *artha* and *kama* be *dharma* oriented, we don't like. So we claim we don't believe in rituals. However, all four have to be fulfilled. If you can't think of your fellow beings, how can you get *moksha* if you can't empathise but only sympathize? Grow and strengthen yourself so that you can participate and be of help to someone. All four *purusharthas* are fulfilled *vindati*.

**idam atharvasheershashamishyaaya na deyam |**

The teachers are specifically instructed not to give this *Atharva Sheershopanishat* to *ashishya* (unqualified student). *yo yadi mohaad daasyati |* If the teacher gives this Upanishad unwittly (*mohat* - deluded) *sa paaapeyaan bhavati |* that teacher acquires the sin of all the students who have heard it and not applied it properly.

**sahastraavartanaadyam yam kaamamadhheete |**

Do you desire for something great or righteous thing to be accomplished through you? If so, whatever is that *sankalpa*, state it, and tell the Lord in one sitting with the desire of fulfilling that *sankalpa*. *Sahasraa vartanam* - repeating *avartanam* - this *mantra* - *sahasra* 1000 times, you will be able to accomplish it. *Tam tamanena saadhayet*. IT takes at least 9.5 minutes if you've memorized it! If not for anything, just for *lok kalyan*, everybody's *ksHEMA*, do it atleast once in a lifetime. Wake up early and take a chaturthi day, try to accomplish this at least once. Don't get up for anything, and chant it for 1000 times. It is so satisfying.

**anena gaNapatimabhishinchati |**
**sa vaagmee bhavati |**
**chaturthyamanashnan japati |**
**sa vidyaavaan bhavati |**
**iti atharvaNa vaakyam |**

*brahmaadaaYaachaaraNam vidyaanlaa bibheti kadaachaneti || 12 ||*  
Those who consistently meditate on this aspect of Upanishad they become *Vagpati* (eloquent speakers). *chaturthyamanashnan japati* - if you can do the *japa* 108 times each *Chaturthi* (twice a month) without consuming food (*anashan*) or water (*nirjala* Not even a sip of water.)  

*sa vidyaavaan bhavati* – s/he becomes a great erudite scholar *Sa yasha van bhavati* - and is respected world wide. It's not just me, the Ganak rishi says that the even the Atharva rishi who is disciple of lord surya has vouched for this. Bramha ... those who practice this *breamha vidya* are transported and removed from fear na kadachaneti - they never have to fear anything in their life. Yo durvamkurai - the durva grass, top edge of the tender grass - those who worship
with the tender grass, the Lord of wealth *Vaishnava kuram* - Kubera, you become similar to kubera in this lifetime on this earth!

*yo doorvaankurairajyat* | *sa vaishravaNopamo bhavat* | *yo laajairyajat* | *sa yashovaan bhavat* | *yo medhaavan bhavat* | *yo modaka sahasreNa yajat* | *sa vaancchita phalam aavaapnoti* | *ya: saajya samidbhirajat* | *sa sarvam labhate sa sarvam labhate* || 13 ||

*Laja* is not puffed rice, but the popcorn version of rice when it is still in the paddy and it puffs when put in the oven. *yo laajairyajat* - those who worship Lord Ganesha with that lajai form of rice, *sa yashovaan bhavat* - they become very very respected. *sa medhaavan bhavat* - why are they respected? Because of their *medha shakti*, amazing capacity to remember everything and reproduce it when required. *yo modaka sahasreNa yajat* - if you offer 1000 modakas (*steamed or fried*). Coconut and jaggery filled with cooked rice covering *sa vaancchita phalam aavaapnoti* their desires are fulfilled. It is not market bought and offered! Desire fulfillment applies if you cook it yourself *ya: saajya samidbhirajat* | Those who offer the entire Ganesh Atharva Sheershopanishat *mantra* with ghee and the sacred sticks in the *havan* - *yagna karma*, with , *sa sarvam labhate sa sarvam labhate* - when they speak something it happens! In fact they seldom speak, so when they speak it happens.

*ashTau braahmaNaan samyag graahayitvaa* | *sooryavarchasvee bhavat* | *sooryagrahe mahaanadyaam pratimaa sannidhau vaa japtva* | *siddhamantro bhavat* | *mahaavignhaat pramuchyate* | *mahaadoshaat pramuchyate* | *mahaapaapat pramuchyate* | *sa sarvavid bhavat sa sarvavid bhavat* | *ya evam veda* | *iti upanishat* || 14 ||

You become famous or attain fame when you write it down with your own hands and give it to eight Brahmins. They also become famous. *sooryavarchasvee bhavat* During the solar eclipse, *sooryagrahe* you take a shower and sit down and chant this; *mahaanadyaam* Sit on the bansk of some perennial rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Kaveri, Tungabhadra - these perennial rivers - sit down in the river neck deep and chant this; or chant it in some great *theerta kshetra* or temples; *pratimaa sannidhau* - in front of the sacred idols of these *theerta kshetras*, when you chant *vaa japtva* it in the *garbha griha* the sanctum sanctorum, then this mantra becomes *siddha mantra siddhamantro bhavat* - you will accomplish that which you are supposed to accomplish during this life time as a human being, i.e. you will be Realized. If you perform this during the solar eclipse (*Surya grahana*) on the banks of a perennial river, or it in the sanctum santorium of the temple, it is said *Koti phala* - the benefits are multiplied crore times (10 million times).
In the end he says **mahaavighnaat pramuchyate** - all the great obstacles that the ego can bring in, are removed; **mahaadoshaat pramuchyate** - the dosha of that ego when it was existing - all the wrong deeds that it has done, that effect also (cause - the ego - is also removed), is removed or reduced. **mahaapaapaat pramuchyate** - protects from further sinning. **Pratyavaya dosha** is the sin of omissions, NOT doing what we had to do, and doing what we are NOT supposed to do! Both these kinds of **doshas** sins are also removed. **sa sarvavid bhavati sa sarvavid bhavati | ya evam veda** This is the Veda, **iti upanishat** this is the Upanishad. *Om Shanti Shanti Shanti* hi.

This is a great Upanishad with the *Advaita siddhanta, mantra* and the *upasana* in one package. Not all **upanishads** come with this package. This one gives the method and the goal to be reached. Hope pray and wish that Lord Ganesha blesses each one of us to realize that **tattva**, that essence in this lifetime itself. May He bless us to let us not delay anymore.

*Om pUrNamadah pUrNamidaM pUrNAt pUrNamudacyate*  
*PUrNasya pUrNamAdAya pUrNamEvAvashiSyate*  
*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti:*

Hari Om Shree Gurubhyo Namah

Hari Om