

Nirvana Shatakam

Nirv äv æ& æÖ¶ Ð

Six luminous verses on the Self beyond body, mind, and caste - a cornerstone of Advaita contemplation attributed to Adi Shankaracharya.

Nirvana Shatakam - •i&“ò 6•) “ >‘©>“ M’ò 8”r ” !“É> “i?”Yd 6 “iM”)K’S Devanagari, IAST, English meaning, Hindi meaning (“

Verse 1

‘é(“1,” &”Ù”Ù/“™ ”Ù “é0‘©?’IM’I>’%? ’%>“™
‘, “iM“ K’IM“ “ù9”Ù5”r (‘¢ ”Ù0“é#”%G’IM“ G –@
‘, “YM’ùK’â -).“ù0”Ù(‘IG’ÉK ‘, 5“é/”
‘©?’i>’%(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“™.”Ò e–ye

manobuddhyaha Ek acitt æ’ á ha C
na ca ·&÷G ajihve na ca ghr äv æWG&R À
na ca vyoma bh ¶Ö— na tejo na v —QâP
cid æ æF !kpa % ¶—`o’ham ¶—`o’ham ||1||
‘éH•’ .’Â , &”Ù”òÂ “™ ‘Y>“ Â “ù\$”Ù\$ ’%9” “™B• ° ‘, 6”Ù0“Y#, ‘É?”™M“Y>, ‘%M“ >’2Â (“y\$”Ù0; ‘, ‘Y>“bÂ *”9%”Ù5” Â \$”y , “Y>’ùA–B “ù

The opening verse begins the Advaita method of negation: the Self is not the inner instruments (mind, intellect, ego, memory) nor the sense organs nor the material elements. What remains after this clearing is not emptiness but *cid æ æF ¢ Ò awareness that is inherently joyful. ‘ ¶—`a’ here names that pure consciousness, not a sectarian deity alone.

Verse 2

‘, ‘©M“ >’98•) ”Ù ”2 (“YH ‘© ”Ù “Y>’ùA•0
‘, 5“â 8’©M’I“é\$” 0”Ù(“Y> ‘© ”Ù ‘YK“i –@
‘, 5“é ”Ù“é#“ù*“é&•” (‘©K’©8”Ù%’©>’ùA
‘©?’i>’%(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“™.”Ò e–%oe

na ca pr äv 6 ä6¯ ò æ `ai pañcav —QâP
na v 6 F F• turna v 6 °o ¶ âR Â
na v · Gip F ä2 æ 6÷ 7F† yu
cid æ æF !kpa % ¶—`o’ham ¶—`o’ham ||2||
‘éH•” *”Ù0“é#”% ‘ÉM’é>, ‘© ”Ù “Y>’ùA, “%*”Ù\$’y>’IA, ‘© ”Ù ‘YK“b (“™@•#° ‘, 5“é ”ÒÂ **é#“òÂ **é&, ‘, ‘©8”Ù% ‘IO ‘©>’ùA–B “ù&“é(•)& “%M“Y0”

Verse 2 turns from subtle mind to the living body: breath, tissues, ko ¶ 0, and organs of action. Advaita does not despise the body; it refuses to mistake the body for the knower. Liberation begins when identification with the five sheaths loosens and awareness recognizes itself as prior to them.

Verse 3

‘, .”r &”Ù5”y7“ >’yL ‘, .”r 2”1–‘éK“™L
‘é&”2 (“%5 ‘éG ’%H“R .“é\$”Ù8“ M’ù–“é5•2 d
‘, “ M’éK ‘, “é0”Ù%”2 (‘Y>‘éK ‘, .”1 ”Ù7•0
‘©?’i>’%(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“™.”Ò e–™e

na me dve car v R æ ÖR Æö&† Öö† P
mado naiva me naiva m G6 yabh `a % |
na dharmo na c tho na k Öö æ Öö±æ6 âP
cid æ æF !kpa % ¶—`o’ham ¶—`o’ham ||3||
‘éA’Ù.”y ‘iM“YG“rÙ0“é , “)K’ÒÙ.”19, ‘é&, ‘é>’IM“%0”Ù/ ’%9” ; ‘, “ M’âÂ “ M’RÂ “é., ‘éK’YM“r .”y0”r 8”Ù5“ B’¢ 9”% –B “ù&“é(•)& “%M“Y0”

Here the hymn negates emotional bondage and even the classical goals of life as ultimate identity. Dharma, wealth, desire, and liberation are valued in worldly and spiritual practice, yet the absolute Self is not *defined* by seeking them. This verse points past both passion and purpose to the one who witnesses them.

Verse 4

‘, *” #”Ù/•” (‘©>‘© ‘, 8”É ”Ù/•” (‘iA•9 •
‘, .’%M’IM“ K ‘, \$” 0”Ù%•” (“YG’i> ‘, /‘ÉM’é>•2 d
•Y9•” -”1 ’% ’%H“R -”1 ”Ù/•” (‘ÙK’YM’I>
‘©?’i>’%(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“™.”Ò e–©e

na pu Gya C na p ä2 æ 6 V¶Ëya C na du %kha C
na mantra na t · tha C na ved æ •ajñ âR Â
aha C bhojana C naiva bhojya C na bhokt
cid æ æF !kpa % ¶—`o’ham ¶—`o’ham ||4||
‘, *” #”Ù/ , ‘, *é*, ‘, 8” , ‘, &” ‘c° , .•) \$”Ù0, ‘I@“ M’RÂ 5”y&, ‘ù ”Ù –B .”% ’ÙK’É(, ‘ÙK’ÉM’òÂ -”1 ”Ù\$“â (“™@•)d ‘©?’i>’% ‘b 8”Ù5“ B’¢ 6“ù5 ‘é

Religious means - mantra, t · tha, Veda, yajña - are honored as paths, yet they too are objects in awareness. Even the triad

of experienter, experience, and experienced dissolves in non-dual recognition. The verse does not abolish practice; it reveals the Self that practice cannot manufacture.

Verse 5

‘, .”9\$”Ù/” 0”Ù(“i” Ù “â (‘éG ‘É>’I?’ÙG’i
‘©?’I> ‘%H“R .”r (“%5 ‘é>’I> ‘, ‘%M’ é –@
‘, , %M’yA“ M’, .“ù\$”Ù0•” ” 0” 0”Ù(“%5 “i?”yM’ù
‘©?’i>’%o(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“TM.” Ò e–1e

na m [tyurna ॥ äV± na me j F–†VF âP
pit æ —`a me naiva m A na janma % |
na bandhurna mitra C gururnaiva ॥æ7•a %
cid æ æF !kpa % ॥—`o’ham ॥—`o’ham ||5||

‘, .”9\$”Ù/” Â (“i” Ù “âÂ (‘É>’I?’ÙG’c° ‘, * “ù\$”âÂ .“é\$”âÂ ‘%M’â° ‘, ,•)” Â .“ù\$”Ù0, ‘yA“ A, “i?”yM’ùd ‘©?’i>’%o ‘b 8”Ù5“ B’¢ 6“ù5 ‘éH•” 9”) , “i?”

Social and familial identities - including the sacred roles of guru and disciple - are relative truths. Absolute Self-knowledge is birthless and deathless; therefore fear of death and pride of caste have no foothold. Compassion for relationships remains; ownership of them as ‘me’ falls away.

Verse 6

•Y9•” (“ù0”Ù5“ù “)M’©K ‘%o?” >‘Y>“ 0”) *”°
“Y?’ÙA’IM“Y>‘©M’¢ 8“ M“Y\$”Ù0 “%0”Ù5”y(“Ù&”Ù0“ù/“é#“é.” Ò d
‘, “é8‘TM M’y\$•” (“%5 ‘éA‘YM’I?” M’, .”y/•0
‘©?’i>’%o(“Ù&“ B’© “i?”YK“Ù9•” 6“ù5”1=“TM.” Ò e–Ée

aha C nirvikalpo nir ± rar · ð
vibhutv 66 6 vatra sarvendriy āq m |
na c 6 äVv F ä2 æ —`a muktirna meya %
cid æ æF !kpa % ॥—`o’ham ॥—`o’ham ||6||

‘éH•” 8“é ”Ù7” Â ‘Y0”Ù\$”âÂ ‘ÙK‘YM’I>, “iA’iM’rÂ 8”Ù%“ù0, “%0”Ù5“YM’ù>’©@, •Y ‘9M’ Â 6“é(“Ù\$, ‘%o?” >‘Y>“ Â ‘iM“Y?’I@’òÂ 6“ù5 “TM B

The closing verse affirms the positive truth after all negation: the Self is formless, free of conceptual division, and all-pervasive as the awareness behind every sense. Even ‘liberation’ as a future achievement is relativized - what you seek, you already are. The refrain seals the recognition: * ॥—`o’ham ॥—`o’ham*.