

HYMN BY ĀDI ŚAṄKARA

Remembering the Self at Dawn



Ādi Śaṅkara composed a number of hymns, including one called 'Remembering the Self at Dawn'. This can be used at any time, but as the title indicates, it is most appropriate in the early morning.

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In the early morning I remember the pure essence of the Ātman shining in my heart, which is existence-consciousness-bliss, the Supreme Haṃsa (the pure white swan) that takes the mind to turīya which illumines the three states of dream, waking and deep sleep. I am that Brahman, which is without any division, and not this body which is merely a collection of five elements. (1)

प्रातः स्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वं

prātaḥ smarāmi hr̥di saṃsphurad-ātma-tattovaṃ

at dawn I remember in the heart the shining true nature/
pure essence of the Self

सच्चित्सुखं परमहंसगतिं तुरीयम् ।

sac-cit-sukhaṃ parama-ḥaṃsa-gatiṃ turīyam

existence-consciousness-bliss the goal/refuge of the Supreme Swan to the fourth, turīya

यत्स्वप्नजागरसुषुप्तमवैति नित्यं

yat svapna-jāgara-suṣuptam avaiti nityaṃ

which dream, waking and deep sleep perceives, always witnesses

तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमहं न च भूतसङ्घः ॥१॥

tad brahma niṣkalam ahaṃ na ca bhūta-saṅghaḥ

that Brahman indivisible I not and a collection of elements

prātar at dawn, in the early morning; √*smṛ* to remember, ponder; *hr̥d* heart; *saṃsphurat* shining, sparkling; *ātman* Self; *tattva* reality, essence; *sat* existence, being; *cit* consciousness; *sukha* happiness, bliss; *parama* supreme, best; *haṃsa* swan, symbol of the Self ; *gati* goal, origin, refuge; *turīya* fourth;

yat (yad) which; *svapna* dream state; *jāgara* waking state; *suṣupta* deep sleep state; *ava√i* to go, perceive, know, witness; *nityam* always; *tad* that; *brahma* Brahman; *niṣkala* without parts, indivisible; *aham* I; *na* not; *ca* and; *bhūta* element, being; *saṅgha* collection.



In the early morning I worship That Self, which is beyond mind and speech, but by whose grace all speech shines. Who is expressed in the scriptures by the statement 'Not this, Not this', since it cannot be adequately expressed by words. Who is called the God of gods, Unborn, Imperishable and Primordial. (2)

प्रातर्भजामि मनसा वचसामगम्यं

prātar bhajāmi manasā vacasām agamyam

at dawn I worship with the mind of/by words unattainable

वाचो विभान्ति निखिला यदनुग्रहेण ।

vāco vibhānti nikhilā yad anugraheṇa

of/by speech they shine all which by grace

यन्नेति नेति वचनैर्निगमा अवोचुः

yan neti neti vacanair nigamā avocuh

that not this not this by the words the scriptures declared

तं देवदेवमजमच्युतमाहुरग्रम् ॥ २ ॥

taṁ deva-devam ajam acyutam āhur agryam

him God of gods unborn imperishable they call primordial

prātar at dawn, in the early morning; *√bhaj* to worship; *manas* mind; *vacas* speech, words; *agamyā* unattainable; *vāc* speech; *vi√bhā* to shine; *nikhilā* all, entire; *yad* which; *anugraha* favour, grace, facilitating;

yad that; *na iti* not this; *na iti* not this; *vacana* word; *nigama* scripture; *√vac* to say, declare, describe; *taṁ (taḍ)* him; *deva* god; *deva* god; *aja* unborn; *acyuta* imperishable; *√ah* to say, call; *agrya* primordial, foremost.



In the early morning I salute That, which is the nature of supreme illumination beyond all darkness. Which is full, which is the everlasting abode and which is called the Supreme Puruṣa. In whom this endless world is settled endlessly. In whom this endless world appears like a snake on a rope. (3)

प्रातर्नमामि तमसः परमर्कवर्णं

prātar namāmi tamasaḥ param arka-varṇam

at dawn I bow, salute beyond-darkness to the supreme appearance of the sun

पूर्णं सनातनपदं पुरुषोत्तमाख्यम् ।

pūrṇam sanātana-padam puruṣa-uttama-ākhyam

full, infinite eternal abode called the Supreme Spirit

यस्मिन्निदं जगदशेषमशेषमूर्तौ

yasminn idam jagad aśeṣam aśeṣa-mūrtau

in which this world entire, in endless endless manifestation

रज्ज्वां भुजङ्गम इव प्रतिभासितं वै ॥३॥

rajjvāṃ bhujāṅgama iva prati-bhāsitam vai

on a rope snake like appearing to the mind just

prātar at dawn, in the early morning; *√nam* to bow down to, salute; *tamas* darkness; *para* supreme, highest; *arka* sun; *varṇa* appearance, lustre; *pūrṇa* full, complete, infinite; *sanātana* eternal, everlasting, ancient; *pada* abode; *puruṣa* spirit, soul; *uttama* greatest, supreme; *ākhyā* called;

yasmin (yad) in which; *idam* this; *jagat* world; *aśeṣa* entire, whole; *aśeṣa*; *mūrti* form, manifestation, embodiment; *rajju* rope; *bhujāṅgama* snake; *iva* like; *prati√bhās* to shine, appear in the mind, occur; *vai* verily, just.

These three verses are holy and ornaments of the three worlds. Whoever recites these in the early morning goes to the Supreme Abode of Brahman.

श्लोकत्रयमिदं पुण्यं लोकत्रयविभूषणम् ।

śloka-trayaṃ idaṃ puṇyaṃ loka-traya-vibhūṣaṇam

triad of verses this meritorious ornament of the three worlds

प्रातःकाले पठेद्यस्तु स गच्छेत्परमं पदम् ॥

prātaḥ-kāle paṭhed yas tu sa gacchet paramaṃ padam

in the early morning should (he) recite he but, he and would go to the supreme abode

śloka verse; *traya* triad; *idaṃ* this; *puṇya* meritorious, auspicious, holy, sacred; *loka* world; *traya* triad; *vibhūṣaṇa* ornament, splendour;



prātar at dawn, in the early morning; *kāla* time; *paṭh* to recite; *yad* he who; *tu* but, and; *sa* (tad) he; *gam* to go; *parama* supreme; *pada* abode.

PHOTO ABOVE : Statue of Śaṅkara in Omkareshwar COVER PHOTO: Waterperry at dawn

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