

SrI vishNu sahasra nAmam

Volume I



Annotated Commentary by
Sri narasimhan kRshNamAcAri

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* Sow R. Chitrlekha of Sundarasimham-ahobilavalli team

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॥ श्रीः ॥

॥ श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते निगमान्तमहादेशिकाय नमः ॥

श्रीमते श्री रङ्गरामानुज महादेशिकाय नमः

॥ श्रीविष्णुसहस्रनामस्तोत्रम् ॥

SrI vishNu sahasra nAmam (Vol. 1)



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dasAvatAram
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SrI vishNu sahasra nAmam (Vol. 1)

Introduction

It is interesting to contemplate on the circumstances under which Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram came into existence. Yudhishtira, the eldest of the five Pandavas, was mentally depleted because of the war with the Kauravas and the misery of death and suffering that was created by the war in which he had been a major player. Bhishma, his dear grandfather, was lying on his deathbed. With his passing away, his irreplaceable wisdom, based on the experiences of his long life of virtue, righteousness and devotion, was about to be lost to the world. Sage Vyasa and Sri Krishna advised Yudhishtira, who himself was an epitome of righteousness and virtue, to seek the advice of Bhishma on any and all aspects of life on which he had any doubts. Yudhishtira did as advised, and a series of dialogs ensued between the two, witnessed by Lord Krishna Himself, and by other great sages including Vedavyasa.

In one of these sessions, Yudhishtira sought Bhishma's advice on the easiest and best means by which mankind can attain lasting happiness, peace of mind, and relief from all bondage and sorrows. This was the setting in which Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram was imparted, with the welfare of future generations also in mind, by Bhishma to Yudhishtira, as part of the advice given by Bhishma in response to the above question.

The Composition

The following sloka in the prolog to Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram identifies





some important aspects pertaining to the composition of the stotram:

vishnor nama sahasrasya vedavyaso mahamunih |

chandonustup tatha devo bhagavan devaki sutah ||

Sri Vedavyasa is the rishi of Sri Vishnu's one thousand names, i.e., the sage who strung together the thousand names as they were revealed by Bhishma to Yudhishtira.

Anushtup (eight syllables per quarter) is its meter. Lord Krishna, the son of Devaki, is the Lord being worshiped.

There are over forty commentaries on Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram. Sri Adi Sankara's commentary is the earliest of them. Sri Parasara Bhatta, a disciple of a disciple of Sri Ramanuja, has written a detailed commentary. Sri Satyasandha Yatiswara from the Dvaita school is another prominent commentator. Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram, along with the Bhagavad Gita, is an integral part of the epic Mahabharata composed by Sage Vedavyasa (Vyasa is also the one who organized the vedas into the classifications as we know them today).

Of all the commentaries written by Sri Sankara for our religious scriptures (the Bhagavad Gita, the Brahma Sutras, etc.), that on Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram was the very first one. Sri Sankara emphasizes the importance of reciting the Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram in his Bhaja Govindam ([geyam gita nama sahasram...](#)). Six reasons are generally identified for the greatness of the Stotram. These are:

1. It is the essence of the Mahabharata.
2. Sages such as Narada, the Alvars, and composers including Saint Tyagaraja have made repeated references to the "Thousand Names of Vishnu" in their devotional works.
3. The person who strung together the thousand names as part of the Mahabharata and preserved it for the world was none other than Sage Vedavyasa, the foremost knower of the vedas, and considered an





incarnation of Vishnu (vyasaya vishnu rupaya vyasa rupaya vishnave namo...).

4. It is the considered opinion of Bhishma that it is the best and easiest of all dharmas, or the means to attain relief from all bondage.
5. It is widely accepted that the chanting of this Stotram gives relief from all sorrows and leads to happiness and peace of mind.
6. It is in conformity with the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, Narayaneeya, etc.

The above reasons given to illustrate the importance of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram become all the more obvious when we recount the personalities involved in the events that resulted in the stotram. It was no ordinary person's advice that was sought. No ordinary person was seeking the advice, and at no ordinary person's urging was the advice being sought. Bhishma was the son of the Mother Ganga and a person sanctified by his unswerving devotion to Lord Krishna, and one who had controlled and conquered all his senses. Yudhishtira was the son of Dharma, and himself a practitioner of justice, righteousness, truth, honesty and integrity. Vyasa was the knower of all vedas. Lord Krishna was a witness to the whole event involving the advice and revelation of the easiest and best means to achieve happiness and peace of mind, given by Bhishma to Yudhishtira. As we know, the advice is in the form of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram. No other justification is needed to recognize the greatness of the education that is imparted to the human race through the medium of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram by Vyasa and Bhishma.

The Organization

Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram as printed for chanting purposes consists of three sections:

1. A prolog, which gives the background on why the Stotram was imparted to the great and just Yudhishtira by Bhishma.





2. The thousand names of Vishnu, organized in a poetic format in 107 stanzas, in the anushtup chandas, (a meter with eight syllables in a quarter), with two quarters per line, and two lines per stanza.
3. The phala sruti, or a recounting of the benefits that can accrue by chanting the Stotram.

The above is the typical organization of many stotrams, for example, the Lakshmi Ashtottara Satanama Stotram with which many of us are familiar.

The Prolog

In the introductory part of the Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram, Yudhishtira asks Bhishma six questions, related to how mankind can attain happiness. These are contained in two stanzas starting with "kim ekam daivatam loke" in the Stotram. These questions are:

1. Who is the One (Supreme) Deity?
2. What is the highest goal of life?
3. By praising which Deity's auspicious qualities will human beings attain prosperity in this world as well as bliss in the next?
4. By meditating on which Deity will human beings attain prosperity in this world as well as bliss in the next?
5. By reciting which mantra will man be released from the bondage of the cycle of birth and death?
6. Of the three means referred to above (i.e., recitation, praise or archana, and meditation), which is the best means for attaining the grace of the Supreme Deity based on your vast experience and knowledge?

Bhishma's response to the above questions follows in the next ten stanzas. In his considered opinion, a person tides over all the sorrows in this world by reciting with undiluted devotion the Thousand Names of the Eternal Person, worshipping Him always with devotion, meditating upon Him, glorifying Him,





saluting Him by prostrating before Him, and adoring Him (**dhyayan, stuvan, namasyamsca, yajamanas tameva ca**).

Bhishma adds that of all the dharmas, the dharma or practice involving service done to the Lotus-eyed Lord Krishna, without any desire for benefit, through worship (archana) and hymnal praise (stava), is the best dharma. Note that praising is easy, involving only speech, and does not involve any material sacrifice or bodily exertion. It is open to all, and does not need help from, or dependence on, others. Other kinds of worship might require money or other resources to perform the worship, or the need to impose on other people for their involvement (e.g., a priest to give instructions on the method of worship etc.). For the purpose of chanting the name of God, there is also no constraint on the asrama (i.e., brahmacharya, grihasta, etc.) to which a person belongs, unlike, for example, the constraints that the vedas place in performing the ceremonial rites with sacrificial fire. There is also no requirement regarding time, place, status of purity, etc., for the chanting of the stotram. The key element of the act of chanting as a means to attain the Lord's grace is the sincerity and purity of mind, and there is no other constraint or consideration.

In summary, Yudhishtira asks Bhishma: "Given my despair and sorrowful state of mind, I want to expend the least effort and get the most benefit out of it, viz. relief from my despair. Please tell me the means for this." And Bhishma's response is "Chant the thousand names of Lord Krishna WITH DEVOTION. This does not require any effort other than the willingness to chant. This is the best way to get relief from all miseries, sorrows, and sins".

The Thousand Names

The word sahasra in the title of the Stotram means "one thousand". The main body of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram consists of 107 stanzas which contain the thousand names of Sri Maha Vishnu. Every one of the Thousand Names in Vishnu Sahasranamam is full of significance in that it refers to one particular quality, guna, characteristic or attribute of Paramatma. (**yani namani gaunani**, where the emphasis is that each name is indicative of a guna of



Vishnu).

One could legitimately ask the question: Why were these 1000 names chosen? Does the Parama Purusha get absolutely defined by these thousand names? The obvious answer is that God is Infinite and Indescribable, and can only be experienced, but cannot be translated into words and communicated from one to another. The vedas conclude that God is neither accessible to words nor to mind (*yato vacho nivartante aprapya manasa saha* - Taittiriya Upanishad). In Isavasya Upanishad, it is said that you cannot reach (understand) the Paramatma with the human mind (reasoning) alone even if you spend all your life. This holds true even though mind can travel (think) faster than anything known to us, including the speed of light (*anejadekam manaso javiyo....*). Given this Infinite nature of the Paramatma who is not governed or constrained by any of the physical laws as we know them, the choice of a thousand names of Vishnu by Bhishma should be recognized as a representation of some of the better-known qualities of Sriman Narayana that are repeatedly described in our great epics, vedas, puranas, etc., and sung by the devout sages repeatedly.

As was indicated earlier, the thousand names are strung together in a poetic form by Sri Vedavyasa. While identifying the thousand names of Narayana from this poetic composition describing the qualities of the Infinite Paramatma, the different revered acharyas have come up with slightly differing sets of thousand names. This is partly because of the ability of these great acharyas to be able to enjoy the indescribable Parama Purusha in their own ways, based on the unique philosophies which they have propounded.

Of the thousand names, some are repeated: For example, in Sri Parasara Bhattar's choice of the thousand names, two names occur four times, 12 names occur three times, and 82 names occur twice. When a name occurs more than once, the revered commentators have interpreted the meaning of the name differently in each instance depending on the context in which the name occurs. They have also quoted extensive evidence from ancient scriptures in support of their interpretation. The commentators have emphasized that the recurrence is not the result of a dosha (deficiency of being repetitive) in the



composition

The Benefits

As was pointed out earlier, traditionally our prayers end with a phala sruti - a section on the benefits of reciting the prayer. The Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram is no exception.

The necessity of cleansing our body regularly to maintain our physical hygiene and good health is recognized by every one. But perhaps because we do not "see" our mind the same way as we see our body (i.e., as an externally visible entity), the necessity of keeping our minds clean is not as clearly recognized. However, those who do not "cleanse" their mind on a regular basis become "mentally" sick over a period of time, just as they become physically sick if they do not cleanse their body on a regular basis. Prayers are a means to mental cleansing when they are chanted with sincerity and devotion. This aspect of the usefulness of prayers in everyone's life is common to all prayers.

The importance of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram is that the deity being worshipped is none other than Vasudeva (sri maha vishnuh paramatma sriman narayano devata; saktir devaki nandanah; itidam kirtaniyasya kesavasya mahatmanah namnam sahasram divyanam aseshena prakirtitam; sahasram vasudevasya namnam etat prakirtayet, etc.). Sri Vyasa points out that it is by the power and command of Vasudeva that the sun, the moon, the stars, the world, and the oceans are controlled (sa chandrarka nakshatra kham diso bhur mahodadhih vasudevasya viryena vidhrtani mahatmanah). The whole universe of the Gods, Asuras, Gandharvas, etc., is under the sway of Lord Krishna (sasurasura gandharvam). In Bhishma's expert judgment, chanting Vasudeva's name with devotion and sincerity will ensure relief from sorrows and bondage. This in a nutshell is the phala sruti or the benefit of chanting Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam.

Some have held the view that the phala sruti need not be, or even should not be chanted, because they somehow feel that it smacks of selfish desires. This is not consistent with the age-old practices of our ancestors. It is true that



the phala sruti says that anything that is desired can be obtained if the prayer is sincere and offered with devotion. However, it is up to those who seek benefits through prayers that they should seek things that elevate them in life rather than lower them. An example of the latter type is the case of the evil king Ravana, who had prayed and obtained enormous powers through his prayers to Lord Siva. In the end, he lost all he had including himself by the misuse of his powers.

The phala sruti in Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram was not just an add-on by someone trying to popularize the Stotram, but is an integral part of the Mahabharata text. Both Sri Sankara and Sri Parasara Bhatta have written commentaries to the phala sruti slokas. Thus, what is stated in the phala sruti has its authority from those who are worthy of great respect from us, and who have found it fit to comment and elaborate on the advice and information given to us through the phala sruti.

Perhaps the most important of the benefits attained by one who chants the Stotram with devotion and sincerity is the cleansing of one's mind from all evil thoughts, and this is a very important and desirable benefit since this is the first step towards achieving pure happiness and absolute bliss. Firmness of mind, good memory, happiness of the self (inner happiness), and freedom from anger, jealousy, and greed, are some of the benefits that accrue to one who recites the stotram with devotion and eagerness. The key is the sincerity of purpose and devotion.

The person who chants or recites is not the only one who benefits. Those who for whatever reason are unable to chant, benefit by just hearing the chanting (*ya idam srunuyan nityam*).

Importance of Chanting

Some might say that they do not understand the meaning of the Sanskrit words in the stotram and therefore do not feel comfortable chanting it. Sri Chandrasekhara Saraswathi Swami has given us his guidance on this issue in



one of his discourses. He advises us that learning the chanting of prayers even without knowing the meaning is a worthwhile act, and can be compared to finding a box of treasure without the key. As long as we have the box, we can open it whenever we get the key of knowledge later, but the treasure will be already there.

Some could feel that they do not know the correct pronunciation, and so do not want to chant incorrectly. H. J. Achar, in his book "Sri Vishnu Sahasranama - A Study", H.J. Achar, Sharada Press, Mangalore, 1972, has given the analogy of a mother to whom a child goes and asks for an orange. The child does not know how to pronounce the word "orange", and so asks for "ange". The mother does not turn away the child and does not refuse to give the child the orange just because the child does not know how to pronounce the word. It is the spirit or bhava that matters, and so as long as one chants the name of God with sincerity, considerations such as not knowing the meaning, not knowing the pronunciation, etc., do not matter, and God who is the Mother of all of us will confer His blessings on us.

The Final Word: Sage Vedavyasa concludes the Stotram with the assertion - twice stated - that there is no way a devotee of Vishnu can meet with any dishonor or disgrace of any kind (**na te yanti parabhavam - ne te yanti parabhavam om nama iti**). If this is not worth striving for, with as little investment as the mere chanting of the thousand names of Vishnu with sincerity, then nothing else is worth striving for.

Those interested in more information may refer to the following works:

1. "Sri Vishnu Sahasranama with the Bhashya of Sri Parasara Bhattar, with Translation in English", A. Srinivasa Raghavan, Sri Visishtadvaita Pracharini Sabha, Madras, 1983.
2. "Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram", Keelathur Srinivasachariar, The Little Flower Co., Madras, Reprinted 1981.
3. "Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram", C. V. Radhakrishna Sastri, C. Venkatarama Sastri Trust, 1986.





In the previous write-up, I had presented the view that it is beneficial to chant Sri Vishnu Sahasra NAMA Stotram even if we do not know the meaning, even if we do not know the correct pronunciation, etc. In the current and subsequent articles, I am going to attempt to present the meanings of the Names occurring in Sri Vishnu Sahasra NAMam. One can legitimately ask the question: Why spend our time to learn the meanings, when the benefit of chanting is obtained anyway even without knowing the meanings? In fact, one of our devotees had sent me mail privately earlier, referring to the sloka that occurs in the phala sruti portion:

sri rAma rAma rAmeti rame rAme manorame

sahasra nAma tat tulyam rAma nAma varAnane

(As stated by Lord Siva to PARvati - if you just chant the name "rAma", it is equivalent to chanting the 1000 names of Sri MahA Vishnu").

Sri Bhattar very nicely gives the explanation on why it is desirable to delve into an analysis of the meanings behind the Names: "Names pronounced merely and without knowledge of their meanings is beneficial (**upakAriNAMapi**), but revelation through etymological interpretation quickly affords DELIGHT TO MIND AND PURITY TO HEART (**mana: prAsanatvam pAvanatvam ca**).

Sri Bhattar also refers to the chapters in MahAbhArata relating to the significance in knowing the meanings of the Names in addition to just chanting without knowing the meanings:

nAma karmArtavit prApnuyAm purushottamam (Udyoga Parva 59)

While I am not proficient in Sanskrit, I certainly derive great mental delight in trying to understand the meanings behind the Names; and in trying to understand the grammatical interpretation behind these Names. The reason for the latter is that it helps one to delve deeper mentally into the guNas of Sri Vishnu and enjoy His qualities even more.

In his Bhagavad guNa darpana, Sri Bhattar proceeds to explain the names of MahA Vishnu in accordance with rules of grammar, etymology, and





interpretation by the great Sages, with special reference to their significance, context, and propriety. Etymology according to the English dictionaries is the analysis of a word, based on its origin and development, including how the words are formed from their simple roots. Sri Bhattar also indicates in his introduction that even though the same name may occur more than once, its interpretation is different depending on the context in which it occurs, and there is no redundancy or repetition in Sri Vishnu SahasranAmam based on the interpretation.

In his commentary on Sri Vishnu Sahasra Namam, Sri Bhattar has beautifully traced a thread of connectivity in the sequence of the 1000 names as they occur in the stotram. He has identified an organization and structure in the composition that refers to the guNas of the Lord in the five manifestations in which He has revealed Himself to us, as described in the PancharAtra Agamas. These manifestations are:

1. para,
2. vyuha,
3. vibhava,
4. archa, and
5. antaryAmi.

Thus, for instance, Sri Bhattar has noted that the first 122 names in the stotram describe the qualities of the Lord in his para vAsudeva form. The next set of names describe the vyuha forms etc. Thus the names as they occur in the stotram are not just a random collection of names, but have a beautiful thread of organization and structure to them. Sri Bhattar has identified 44 such manifestations of Bhagavan in his exposition. Sri Srinivasachariar, in his editorial introduction to Sri Vishnu Sahasra Namam published by LIFCO, (1967), describes this beautifully as an arrangement of the petals of a rose 44 layers deep, or a step of stairs with 44 steps leading to the enjoyment of the Supreme. I will not go into the enumeration of these 44 forms at this stage. but will identify these as we go along. The enumeration and the corresponding



slokas can be found in the LI FCO publication.

A brief introduction to the five types of manifestations of the Lord, to which Sri Bhattar refers in his exposition of the significance of the 1000 names of the Lord, is given below.

The **para** can be viewed as the full and undifferentiated manifestation of the Lord in His complete and resplendent glory in which He has chosen to be unlimited by anything. He does not assume this form as a result of another object, and in this form He is endowed with the fullness of the six qualities - jnAna, bala, aisvarya, vl rya, sakti, teja. In this form, He is the **shAdguNya paripUrNa, mahArNava, ni:sima** - complete in all respects in the Six qualities, the Great Ocean of all that is perfect, unlimited by anything. Sri Bhattar refers to the sAtvata samhita in explaining the para-vyuha, and vibhava forms.

"shAdguNya vigraham devam bhAsvajjvalana tejasam sarvatah pANi pAdam tat iti upakramya param etat samAkhyAtam ekam sarvAsrayam vibhum".

"In the para form, the Lord has the body endowed with all six qualities; He shines with intense brilliance and luminosity, and has hands and feet all around. This form is unique, is the support of all, and is all-pervasive".

In the **vyuha** manifestation, the Lord assumes different forms which are rich in some of the Six qualities, with different functions which emphasize these qualities. The vyuha forms can be viewed as the differentiated forms which arise from the para form. The vyuha forms are also referred to as Emanations by the translator of the Bhagavad GuNa darpana, Sri A. Srinivasa Raghavan. In particular, the following vyuha forms are identified:

1. **pradyumna** - aisvarya and vl rya - function of srshti or creation
2. **aniruddha** - sakti and tejas - function of sthiti or protection and preservation
3. **samkarshaNa** - jnAna and bala - function of samhAra or destruction

The sAtvata samhita describes the vyuha forms as follows:

etat pUrvam trayam ca anyat jnAnAdyaih bheditam guNai: |



viddhi etat vyuha samgjnā vai nissreyasa phala pradām ||

"From this para form emerge three other forms (SamkarshaNa, pradyumna, aniruddha), which are distinguished by the possession of knowledge and other qualities allotted to each one of them, and which bestow these benefits to the devotees".

The **vibhava** is that group of manifestations which are taken by BhagavAn in the form of god, man, animal, etc. (sura, nara, tiryagAdi). Vibhava is of two kinds:

1. mukhya and
2. anuvrtti

also referred to as vibhava and vibhava antara.

Vibhava occurs in one of four forms:

1. Some like matsya and kurma are direct manifestations
2. In some incarnations, the Lord enters into the bodies of distinguished sages such as Sri VyAsa.
3. In others, He invests His sakti for some period of time in others. The example of Puranjaya is given here, and we will dwell into the details when we look at the explanation behind the nAma puranjaya later on.
4. There are others in which He manifests Himself in idols as for instance in the arcAvatAra.

It seems to me that Sri Bhattar, in his vyAkhyAna, has grouped the arcA form as a subgroup of the vibhava form. I request the bhAgavatas in this group to shed more light on whether I have misunderstood this explanation. Sri Bhattar distinguishes the vibhava form from the Lord's creations such as the four-faced Brahma, who are not manifestations of Bhagavan, but are the creations of Bhagavan. Sri Bhattar refers to the following from the Paushkara samhita to give us an understanding of the difference:

jnAnopadeshTA bhagavAn kapilAkshastu adhokshaja: |



vidyAmurti: caturvaktro brahmA vai loka pUjita: ||

tadamsa bhUto vai yasya visva vyanjana lakshaNa: ||

"The red-eyed BhagavAn, Adhokshaja, is the teacher of all knowledge. The four-faced BrahmA who is the embodiment of learning and who is worshiped by all worlds, is but a tiny amsa (part) of Bhagavan. He is the subordinate of BhagavAn, and he only propounds the knowledge he got from Bhagavan to all in the world".

These are distinguished as the prAdurbhAva and prAdurbhAvAntara forms. Here the prAdurbhAva is the adhokshaja form, and the prAdurbhAvAntara is Brahma. It is pointed out that the creations of the Lord such as Brahma, agni, etc., are to be understood at a different level than the manifestations of the Lord in His para, vyuha, and vibhava forms. This is the basis for why those who have been initiated in the worship of acyuta are to worship only Acyuta and not the other gods (prAdurbhAvAnAm ArAdhyatvam .prAdurbhAvAntarANAm ArAdhana nishedhasca).

With the above brief introduction, I will attempt to summarize the meanings behind the Names in Sri Vishnu SahasranAmam. The main source I will be using is the Bhagavad guNa darpaNa by Sri Bhattar. I will be using Sri Sankara's commentary as a secondary reference.

As I am starting this attempt at learning, I am finding out that just by reading books, and without the aid of an AcArya, it is impossible to gain knowledge. However, this is all what I can do at this stage. My request to all of you is to freely comment on and correct what I am saying because I know that it is full of errors and misinterpretations. With that request which goes without my repeating it for future write-ups as well, I present what I understand for the first of the 1000 names.

Sri Bhattar interprets the first 122 nAmas in the stotram as describing the para form of the Lord. Recall that the para form is the all-perfect, undiminished, absolute, manifestation of the Lord. The description of this form includes all the nAmas starting from visvam and including varArohah in slokam



13. Sri Bhattar views this segment of the stotram as Bhishma's response to YudhisThira's first two questions:

kim ekam daivatam loke and kim vApyekam parAyaNam -

who is the one deity to be worshipped, and what is the supreme goal of attainment.

The web-site of SV Temple, Pittsburg, USA contains both Audio and Complete text of Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam and Sri Venkatesa Suprbhatam. The URL of their Stotras site is: <http://www.svtemple.org/stotra/stotras.htm>





A Comparison of the bhAshya-s of SrI Samkara and SrI BhaTTar

In this write-up, we will look at a comparison of the bhAshya-s of SrI Samkara and SrI BhaTTar for SrI vishNu sahasranAmam, using a few select nAma-s (about 10) as examples. The examples are drawn mostly from SrI P. B. aNNa'ngarAcArya svAmi's Introduction to his vyAkhyAnam on SrI vishNu sahasranAmam, even though I have added some examples from other references. Admittedly, an analysis based on less than 1% of the total nAma-s can be viewed as incomplete. A project wherein a systematic analysis of all the nAma-s is undertaken, is a major undertaking, which has to be deferred for the future.

For those who do not wish to go through the whole write-up, here is a brief summary of the trend of thought of this write-up:

1. As SrI PBA has clearly pointed out, SrI BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam emphasizes the guNa-s of saulabhyam and sauSIlyam of bhagavAn that are so much in favor of His devotee, whereas SrI Samkara tends to emphasize the parattvam of Brahman in his bhAshyam.
2. I also echo sentiments of SrI N. Raghunathan in his Foreword to "SrI vishNu sahasranAmam" by SrI P. Samkaranarayanan, namely, that when we get the benefit of different interpretations from different vyAkhyAna-s, we should view these as complementing each other to enhance the richness of the whole. (In my regular write-ups, I draw information from about 10 vyAkhyAna-s which all have some unique aspects as explained later). Thus, when we get the anubhavam of different writers, what we derive is a "multiple bonus" by being exposed to the different anubhavam-s based on the different vyAkhyAna-s.

Now we will go into some specifics.

In looking at the vyAkhyAna's of SrI Samkara and SrI BhaTTar, one has to keep in mind that SrI Samkara is the renowned advaitin, and SrI BhaTTar is





the adopted child of Lord ra'nganAtha and pirATTi ra'nganAyaki, the son of kUrattAzhvAn who was a primary disciple of bhagavad rAmAnuja, and is a great exponent of viSishTAdvaita school. To an advaitin the only truth is nirguNa Brahman - One without any attributes. The saguNa brahman is only an interim means to realize the real truth for the advaitin - namely the realization of the nirguNa Brahman. Thus, it can be expected that the vyAkyAnam of Sri Samkara deals at the level of significance and the interpretation of the nAma-s at the etymological level, with support from the Sruti-s and the smRti-s, but does not get into the deep anubhavam of these guNa-s at the level of saguNa Brahman. He mostly gives his interpretations emphasizing the supremacy of Brahman, the all-powerful nature of Brahman, the difficulty in realizing It, etc.

Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam deals with the interpretation of the nAma-s at the etymological level, and then proceeds further into the guNAnubhavam based on the experiences of the AzhvAr-s, namely the emotion of intense love and bhakti towards emperumAn, associated with the sauSIlyam and saulabhyam of saguNa brahman which is an integral part of the viSishTAdvaita philosophy. This seems to be the main difference between the vyAkhyAna-s of the two great stalwarts.

In the case of most nAma-s, the literal meaning that Sri Samkara and Sri BhaTTar assign will be the same, and when the literal meaning is different, both alternatives are equally acceptable meanings for the nAma-s purely from the point of view of samskRt. The difference arises in the further elaboration of this meaning. Sri Samkara supports his interpretations with quotes from the Sruti-s and smrti-s at the philosophical level. Sri BhaTTar quotes evidences from these same sources, but the message he conveys emphasizes the saguNa brahman so very much enjoyed by the AzhvArs in their divine outpourings. He does not directly quote from the AzhvArs, just as Sri rAmAnuja did not quote directly from the AzhvArs in any of his works. We have already dealt with the reasons for this in previous discussion in this list. But the anubhavam of the AzhvArs is loud and clear in Sri BhaTTar's



vyAkhyAnam. He repeatedly reminds us of bhagavAn's sauSIlyam and saulabhyam - His ease of mixing with His devotees and His easy accessibility to a true devotee, His Infinite Mercy, His waiting to help and forgive a devotee from the enormous sins that have been committed, etc.

SrI PBA observes that both parattvam and saulabhyam are equally important aspects of the greatness of emperumAn. We are given this birth to realize and enjoy both these aspects equally. But of these two guNa-s, the one that touches the devotee intensely and draws him to emperumAn's feet is sauSIlyam. He gives the example of nammAzhvAr, who starts off describing the parattvam of perumAL very nicely -

uyarvaRa uyar nalam uDaiyavan yavan avan.

nammAzhvAr does not become subject to visible external emotion during the description of bhagavAn's parattvam. But later on, when he starts describing the sauSIlyam of perumAL - "ettiRam uralinODu iNaindirundu E'ngiy eLiVE" - he is completely overwhelmed by emotion, and passes out (loses his conscience) for a long duration of six months at this very thought of perumAL's guNam of sauSIlyam.

Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the discussion here is not meant to suggest that the guNam of parattvam is not important, nor is it true that AzhvArs do not sing about His parattvam equally along with His sauSIlyam and saulabhyam. How ever, between the two paths, our viSishTAdvaita AcArya-s do not miss the opportunity to emphasize the anubhavam of His sauSIlyam and saulabhyam, and SrI BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is an outstanding example of this.

If we were to summarize in one sentence the difference between SrI Samkara's and SrI BhaTTar's vyAkhyAna-s, it is that the former emphasizes the parattvam and aiSvaryam (Isitvam or ISvarattvam) of Brahman, and SrI BhaTTar emphasizes the sauSIlyam and saulabhyam of perumAL.

We will go through just a few of the nAma-s, mostly used by SrI PBA in his Introduction, just to illustrate the above points.



sat-kRtih (in Slokam 75) - sad-gatih saT-kRtih sattA....

The simple meaning of the word sat-kRtih is "He of good acts".

The differences in the vyAkhyAnam arise when the vyAkhyAna kartA-s go the next step, and give an explanation of what these "good acts" are. Sri Samkara gives the example of His protecting all the creatures of this Universe as the example of His "good acts".

Sri BhaTTar takes this meaning, and links his anubhavam of this nAma to the previous Slokam, wherein the nAma vAsudevah occurs (*vasuprado vAsudevo vasur vasumanA havih*). He interprets the nAma sat-kRtih in relation to the childhood pranks of Lord kRshNa, such as His stealing butter from the gopi's houses, being tied to the mortar by yaSodA, etc. One may ask the question: Why are these "good acts"? Sri BhaTTar's position is: Because, those who meditate on these acts of bhagavAn are relieved from the bondage of samsAra forever!

The examples given in both cases are relevant and appropriate. However, the current example gives an indication to what we will notice as we see other examples, namely, that Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam will echo the guNAnubhavam of bhagavAn as echoed in the AzhvAr's outpourings.

vijitAtmA (Sloka 66):

The simple meaning of the words in the nAma is: He who has a mind that has been conquered. It does not say "conquered by whom?". This is the place where we see the different anubhavam-s of the two vyAkhyAna-s.

Sri Samkara has interpreted the nAma as One who has controlled His indriya-s and mind - *vijita AtmA mano yena sah vijitAtmA*. In other words, bhagavAn is referred to by this nAma here because He has conquered His own mind.

Sri BhaTTar sees here an example of how bhagavAn's mind is easily conquered by His devotees. So he gives an interpretation which is in a sense the exact opposite of that Sri Samkara - namely, He is one whose mind is easily



conquered by others, namely His devotees. So He is the One who is defeated in His mind control, since He gives in easily to His devotees' wishes. This is another example of how Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is oriented towards the enjoyment of His saulabhyam and sauSI lyam as major aspects of His guNa.

vidheyAtmA or a-vidheyAtmA (SlokaM 66):

This nAma is the very next nAma after vijitAtmA which we discussed above.

Here the difference in interpretation is based on the pATHa-bhedam - or the difference in the words that constitute the SlokaM. Sri Samkara has used the pATHam "vijitAtmA avidheyAtmA...", and Sri BhaTTar has chosen the pATHam "vijitAtmA vidheyAtmA".

Literally, vidheya means "submissive". vidheya AtmA is "One who is of a submissive nature", and a-vidheya-AtmA is "One who is of a non-submissive nature".

Sri Samkara has given the interpretation in samskRt as "na kenApi vidheya AtmA svarUpam asya iti a-vidheya-AtmA" - His nature is not under the sway of anyone else. Sri rAdhAKRshNa SAstri has translated it as "One who is not under anyone else's control". This of course is true of His nature, IF that is what He wants.

Sri BhaTTar uses the pATHam "vidheyAtmA", and has the guNAnubhavam that bhagavAn is completely subservient to His devotee. He describes that it is bhagavAn's essential nature to be at the disposal of His devotees to such an extent that He can be easily commanded by them to do whatever they want. They can command Him 'Come here, stand here, sit here, eat this', etc., and He will just obey if it is a command from His devotee. Sri PBA gives the example of tirumazhiSai AzhvAr commanding to Sonna vaNNam Seida perumAL - "kaNi kaNNan pOginRAn kAmarupU'nkacci maNi vaNNA! NI kiDakka vENDA", and perumAL packs up His snake bed and leaves as commanded by AzhvAr. Later, when AzhvAr tells perumAL - "painnAgap pAi virittuk koL", He gets back and spreads out His snake bed and resumes His original sevai again. There is



also the example of arjuna commanding Lord to take the chariot to the middle of the two armies during the start of the mahAbhArata war, and bhagavAn obeys arjuna's command.

So the difference in the vyAkhyAnam here is associated with the pATHa bhedam. But the example is another illustration where Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam emphasizes His subservience, soulabhyam, and sauSIlyam to His devotees, whereas Sri Samkara seems to direct His explanations in terms of the absolute supremacy of brahman (paratvam, aiSvaryam, etc.).

Sat-kl rti: (Sloka 66)

Sri Samkara's vyAkhyAnam for this nAma is: **satI (a-vitathA) kl rti asya iti sat-kl rti** - He of true fame, One whose fame is true and well-established. This is the correct meaning of the word sat-kl rti.

Sri BhaTTar starts with this meaning, and proceeds to attribute the source of His true fame to His sauSIlyam - **sauSIlyam, sattvena ati-mahatI kl rti asya iti sat-kl rti** - His kl rti is well established and true because of His being so amiable and affable by nature. Sri BhaTTar continues and points out that His kl rti is so great, that no matter what one says about His kl rti, it is true, but it is only a small part of His kl rti; it is indescribable in words. Thus, in this instance, Sri Samkara and Sri BhaTTar use the same meaning for the nAma, but Sri BhaTTar emphasizes bhagavAn's sauSIlyam at every opportunity in his vyAkhyAnam.

Chinna-samSayah: (Sloka 66)

Sri Samkara vyAkhyAnam for the nAma is: He who sees everything with clarity like a fruit in the palm, and so He who is free from any doubt. In other words, it is bhagavAn who has no doubt of any kind, and so He is called chinna-samSayah.

Sri BhaTTar's interpretation for the nAma is that He has the nAma chinna-samSayah because He destroys the doubts in His devotees' mind. Both are



equally valid interpretations of the samskRt term "chinna samSayah".

SrI BhaTTar takes his interpretation and links it to His sauSI lyam. If anyone has any doubts such as: "Can He can be easily known or is very difficult to be known, Can He be easily pleased or difficult to please, Is He easily accessible or difficult to access" - these doubts stand dispelled right away because His sauSI lyam and saulabhyam are well-known. In other words, bhagavAn conducts Himself in such a way that He removes any doubts anyone has about Him.

Once more, we see that SrI BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam heavily emphasizes bhagavAn's kalyANa guNa-s such as His sauSI lyam and saulabhyam, and uses these in his interpretation to the utmost extent, and SrI Samkara keeps his vyAkhyAnam in praise of the Supremacy of Brahman in all aspects.

anI Sah (SlokaM 67):

The literal meaning of the nAma is "Not-Master". This could mean that "There is no Master above Him", or "He is not the Master when He chooses not to be the Master".

SrI Samkara has chosen the former interpretation, and SrI BhaTTar has chosen the latter. The first interpretation is obviously true of the Supreme Brahman. SrI BhaTTar takes the side of the devotee. When it comes to the devotee commanding Him to do anything, He just obeys, and loses His Mastership very readily and willingly, and enjoys this loss of Mastership. One is reminded of a father or mother losing willingly in a mock game with their young child and delighting in losing. SrI BhaTTar gives the examples of our giving Him a bath, tying Him up for dressing Him while decorating Him, etc. When yaSodA tied Him up with a rope, or threatened to beat Him up for stealing butter, etc., He was not the Master of the scene, but accepted all that very willingly. SrI PBA points to periAzhvAr's pASuram -

nAraNA neerADa vArAi, inRu nI nIraDa vENDum empirAn ODAde vArAi, SeNbagap pUc cUTTa vArAi, iruvATcippUc cUTTa vArAi, etc., and He obeys all these dictates from His devotee.



sammitah (Sloka 12 - vasur vasumanAh...):

The difference between Sri Samkara's and Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAna-s here arises because of pATHa bheda. Sri Samkara has used the pATHam "a-sammitah", and Sri BhaTTar has used the pATHam "sammitah". Thus, they end up with opposite meanings.

sammitah literally means "that which can be well-defined, easily understood", or "that which is unlimited by anything".

Sri Samkara bhAshyam is "sarvaih a-paricchinnah amita iti a-sammitah" - unbounded by anything, undefined precisely by anything, etc. This is how the Sruti-s describe Brahman - The Unknown and The Unknowable.

But the bhakti school of AzhvArs is that He is Unknown and Unknowable only to those who do not seek Him with sincere devotion. To a true devotee, He is as easily known as a "fruit in the palm". Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is "hastasthah iti samyak paricchinnah" - His devotees understand Him well as someone in their hands - well within their control. Such was the experience of daSaratha, yaSoda, etc. daSaratha declares "Una shoDaSa varsho me rAmo rAjI va locanah" - Note "me rAmo" - My rAma. Vasudeva declares "mama ayam tanayo nijah" - Note again "mam tanayah". Sri PBA gives the quotes from peria tirumozhi -

"azhugaiyum a'nji nOkkum an-nOkkum aNi-koL Sem Siru vAi neLippaduvum, tozhugaiyum ivai kaNDa aSOdai tollai inbattu irudi kaNDALE" - She is experiencing the ultimate in tollai in her interaction with Him.

mahA-koSah (Sloka 46 - vistArah sthAvarah ..):

KoSa means shield as well as treasure. Sri Samkara uses the former meaning, and Sri BhaTTar uses the later meaning. Sri Samkara vyAkhyAnam for this nAma is:

mahAntah koSA annamayAdayah AcchAdakA asya iti mahA-koSah - One who has got as His covering the great sheaths like annamaya etc. I have copied part



of our previous write-up for this nAma in the list. The following description shows how difficult it is to realize bhagavAn:

SrI Samkara's interpretation is based on the meaning "shield" for koSa. His interpretation is that the real nature of the soul is shielded by the five koSas:

1. anna maya koSa,
2. prANa maya koSa,
3. mano maya koSa,
4. vij~nAna maya koSa, and
5. Ananda maya koSa,

and bhagavAn is the mahAkoSa who is shielded from all except the yogi-s. The dharma cakram writer points out that:

1. by control of our indriya-s we can cross the anna maya koSa,
2. by control of breath we can cross the prANa maya koSa,
3. by control of the mind the manomaya koSa is crossed,
4. by channeling one's intellect and through control of worldly desires and passions we can cross the vij~nAnamaya koSa, and
5. through meditation on the Self we cross the Anandamaya koSa, and ultimately realize Brahman.

SrI BhaTar's vyAkhyAnam is based on the meaning "treasure" for the term koSa. In his vyAkhyAnam, mahA-koSa refers to bhagavAn being a vast, inexhaustible treasure. Even though BhagavAn is giving away Himself and His belongings always to His devotees in all ways, still it does not diminish. SrI v.v.rAmAnujan refers us to "Unam il Selvam enko?", pointing to the un-diminishing Affluence called BhagavAn.

Again we see the difference between the approaches of SrI Samkara and SrI BhaTTar. While the former presents Brahman as the difficult One to realize and not easily accessible, SrI BhaTTar emphasizes the easy accessibility of bhagavAn, His infinite Mercy, His inexhaustible love to His devotee, etc.



Needless to say, both aspects are true of bhagavAn, but the former probably will appeal to those who can practice the intense discipline to realize Him through the difficult and unsure path of yogic discipline, and the latter will appeal to the ordinary people who are either unable or not qualified to practice the former.

Another major aspect of Sri BhaTTar's bhAshyam is that in addition to giving the etymological interpretation for each nAma, Sri BhaTTar sees a thread of connectivity between the 1000 nAma-s, and groups the 1000 nAma-s into 44 groups. He associates each group with one of the incarnations or vibhUti-s of bhagavAn. Thus, in his vyAkhyAnam, invariably one will see the explanation of each nAma being linked to the vyAkhyAnam for the previous nAma within a given group.

For example, nAma-s 1 to 122 are explained by Sri BhaTTar as describing the para vAsudeva form, nAma-s 123 and 124 describe samkarshaNa, etc Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives one example of how sometimes interpreting a nAma in the context of the nAma-s that immediately precede or succeed the given nAma can be much more enjoyable than when just the individual meaning of the nAma is looked at.

In the sequence: **anukUlah**, **SatAvartah**, **padml**, and **padmanibhekshaNah**, Sri SAstri explains "**anukUlah**" as He who helps in reaching the goal (**kUlam** means the shore, and **anukUlah** is One who takes us to the shore). **SatAvartah** means One who repeatedly appears. Sri SAstri points out that it is much more enjoyable to see this nAma in the context of the previous nAma, and interpret "**SatAvartah**" as suggesting that He appears repeatedly and keeps offering help repeatedly, to ensure that His devotee reaches the shore for sure. He then proceeds to interpret **padml** as referring to Him who has a lotus in His hand to signify His easy accessibility when He offers this help to His devotee. **padma-nibhekshaNah** is interpreted as indicating that He has eyes which resemble the pleasant lotus flowers, re-assuring the devotee that He is there to help them. Thus the interpretations of the four nAma-s are inter-related to each other, and they all reinforce the idea that bhagavAn is intensely





interested in helping His devotee, and manifests this interest in various ways.

Even though this example is Sri SAstri's own and is not drawn from Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam, nonetheless it is an excellent illustration of the additional bhagavad guNAnubhavam that one derives when the nAma-s are interpreted in the context of each other in some cases, rather than as standalone nAma-s.

The Benefit to Us:

Readers are aware that I have used several vyAkhyAna-s in my write-up (those by Sri BhaTTar, Sri Samkara, Sri v.v. rAmAnujan, Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri, Sri satyadevo vAsishTha, the dharma cakram writer, Sri P. B. aNNa'ngarAcArya, and Sri cinmayAnanda, Sri kRshNa datta bhAradvAj, and a few others). Each one of these vyAkhyAna-s has some special aspect about it that is not found in the others. For instance, Sri Samkara's bhAshyam is the oldest among those listed above, and is also the one which is probably the lead text which all the later advaitin vyAkhyAnakartA-s have used. Similarly, Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is the first from one who is from the viSishTAdvaita school, and has served as the basis from which other viSishTAdvaita followers have drawn. Sri v.v. rAmAnujan's work is unique in that it gives profuse examples from divya prabandham for each nAma, mostly from nammAzhvAr's tiruvAimozhi. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha is among the most thorough in looking at the etymology of each nAma, and goes into great detail on the grammatical derivation of each nAma from its root, without exception. In addition, he also is unique among the vyAkhyAna kartA-s in that he has composed 1000 Sloka-s for the thousand nAma-s, each Slokam summarizing his vyAkhyAnam for that nAma. The dharma cakram writer takes elaborate effort to relate each mantra (nAma) to the real world, and explains to the common man what lesson needs to be taken from each nAma.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri summarizes both the bhAshya of Sri Samkara and Sri BhaTTar in his text, but in addition has added his own quotes from the Sruti-s and smriti-s in different places. Sri kRshNa datta bhAradvAj is a





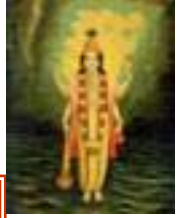
samskRt scholar in his own right, and has given additional support for each nAma from the Sruti-s and smRti-s as well. Sri cinmayAnanda's write-up is in simple English that many of us can easily understand. Sri P. B. aNNa'ngarAcArya's vyAkhyAnam is in tamizh and follows Sri BhaTTar's bhAshyam, and is mainly meant for those who may not understand Sri BhaTTar's detailed vyAkhyAnam in samskRt, but Sri PBA's introduction where he compares the vyAkhyAna-s of Sri BhaTTar with some of the others, is a contribution in itself that is not matched by any other writer.

I have drawn from all the above sources, and tried to bring the unique aspects of the different vyAkhyAna-s together. The approach that has been taken is to view the differences in the vyAkhyAna-s as a "multiple bonus" for us - that when we look at the vyAkhyAna-s, we get multiple anubhavam-s of the Infinite dimensions of the guNa-s of Sri mahA vishNu.

I hope that the above summary places the readers in a better position to enjoy the guNAnubhavam of vishNu as reflected in the summary of the meanings of the nAma-s that is being presented in the series.

-dAsan kRshNamAcAryan





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SIOkams and Commentaries



viSva rUpa darSanam to arjun



SIOkam 1

विश्वं विष्णुर्वषट्कारो भूतभव्यभवत्प्रभुः ।

भूतकृद्भूतभृद्भावो भूतात्मा भूतभावनः ॥

visvam vishNurvashaTkArO bhUtabhavya bhavatprabhuh |
bhUtakrudbhUtabhrudbhAvO bhUtAtmA bhUuta bhAvanah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 1. विश्वं - visvam

- a) Universe or Cause of Universe
- b) One who is full in all respects.

viSvAya namah.

The nAma is derived from the root viS - to enter. ViSvam means "Universe". Sri BhaTTar gives the reference to the following verse from moksha dharma:

veSanAt viSvamityAhu: lokAnAm kASisattama |
lokAnSca viSvameva iti pravadanti narAdhipa ||

They say BhagavAn is viSvam because He enters all the worlds. (The worlds themselves are called viSvam because of this). Sri BhaTTar interprets the term "Worlds" or "Universe" here to denote entirety. He points out that it is quite fitting that the first name of vishNu in Sri vishNu sahasranAmam suggests His immense glory, the fullness to the brim of His essential nature, form, qualities, etc., which are all natural, unexcelled, auspicious and superior. Sri v.v. rAmAnujan adds that this completeness is in respect of His rUpam, svarUpam, guNam, and everything else. He quotes nammAzhvAr - **uvaryaRayar nalam uDaiyavan** (tiruvAimozhi 1.1.1). It is to explain this aspect of the fullness of bhagavAn in every aspect that the remaining 999 nAma-s follow the



nAmA viSvam, thus emphasizing the deep meaning embedded into this first nAma as denoting bhagavAn's fullness in all respects.

SrI Samkara views that bhgavAn who is Brahman or the Supreme Person created viSvam and is therefore, called viSvam. Brahman is the kartA or the Creator here (the Cause), and viSvam is the creation or the effect. Because the Cause who is Brahman is being called by the nAma viSvam which is the effect, this is used by advaitins as an argument to say that effects are nothing different from the Cause, and everything is Brahman. In other words, the argument is advanced that Brahma who is the creation of vishNu, can be praised as an appropriate form of vishNu. SrI BhaTTar points out that the two terms, brahman and viSvam, should not be taken as referring to their being identical. viSvam or Universe is just a mode or extension of bhagavAn, as are the other 999 nAma-s.

SrI v.n. vedAnta deSikan in his commentary on tiruvAimozhi, observes: "To regard Brahman and World identical is samAnAdhikaraNya to which AzhvAr does not subscribe. The world is the prakAra or vibhUti of the Lord. He is the cause, sustainer, controller, and the soul of all things and beings".

SrI cinmayAnanda explains the nAma "viSvam" by referring to the viSva rUpam or virAT purusha. He refers us to SrI vishNu purANam - sa eva sarva bhUtAtmA viSva rUpo yato avayayah - (vishNu purA. 1.2.69). He is the soul of all that exists, and everything is His body.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha interprets the nAma viSvam or "Universe" as indicating that everything in this Universe came from Him, and also everything in this Universe goes back into Him. So in both senses, He is "viSvam".

It should be noted that the words viSvam is in the neuter gender. SrI BhaTTar points out that it still is a nAma of vishNu, representing His guNa of absolute fullness and power. Consistent with this, the nAma to worship is "viSvAya namah" as adopted by the viSishTAdvaita school. The Samkara school uses the form as "viSvasmai namah".

The different anubhava-s of the nAma viSvam can be summarized as:



The nAma indicates His Fullness in all respects; the succeeding 999 nAma-s all elaborate on this first nAma - the Fullness of Him in all respects. Nothing in the Universe exists without Him, and everything in this Universe ultimately finds refuge in Him, and in this sense also He is viSvam or "Universe".

nAma 2. विष्णुः - vishNuh

- a) One who permeates everything, is inside every sentient and non-sentient being.
- b) One who surrounds everything.

vishNave namah.

This nAma occurs again as nAma-s 259 and 663.

This nAma can be derived from the root vish - vyAptau - to pervade, or vis - praveSane - to enter. Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is - sva vibhUti bhUtam cit acit Atmakam sarvam viSati iti vishNuh. The idea is that keSava exists everywhere and permeates everything that is His Wealth; He is unlimited by space, time, and substance (Sri Samkara); He pervades the whole universe internally and externally. Sri BhaTTar gives the following references in support.

viveSa bhUtAni carAcarANi

He entered all beings, movable and immovable

tat srshtvA | tadevAnuprAvisat

Having created it, He entered into the same.

"vyApya sarvAn imAn lokAn sthitah sarvatra kesava: |

tatasca vishNu nAmAsi viserdhAto: pravesanAt ||

"KeSava exists everywhere having pervaded all these worlds. Therefore His name is VishNu since the root viS denotes entry i.e., pervasion".

Under nAma 259, Sri BhaTTar explains vyApti (pervasion) further, and



explains the relation between bhagavAn and the jI va-s as of the nature of the relation between fire and smoke. When there is smoke, there is fire, but the reverse is not always true (as in the case of a red hot iron rod). Thus, bhagavan and the jI va-s are related in the sense that without bhagavAn the jI va-s do not exist. The supreme Person and the jI va-s are never identical, but there is inseparable connection between bhagavAn and the rest. He is greater by virtue of the diverse kinds of help He renders to all who are of a lower order. SrI BhaTTar refers us to the gl tA -

na tadasti vinA yat syAt mayA bhUtam carAcaram (10.39)

"There is no object, moving or non-moving, which can exist without Me".

Another anubhavam of this guNa of vyApti is that it is not just the fact that He is in everything and is inseparably bound to everything, but it is one of His showering everything with His infinite Mercy (SrI v.v. rAmAnujan). His sauSIlyam is to be enjoyed here. SrI kRshNa datta bhAradvAj derives the meaning from the root vishu - secane - to sprinkle, to pour out;

veshati (si'ncati) bhakta tarUn ASIrvArI bhih iti vishNuh.

nammAzhvAr declares:

"tiDaviSumberivaLi nI r nilamivaimiSai paDar poruL muzhuvadumAiavai torum uDan miSai uyir enak karandu e'ngum paranduLan"

(tiruvAimozhi 1.1.7)

The Lord created the five elements, and from them He created all others. Indeed He became all others. He pervades everything in and out. He is the Soul for the body of everything and every being. The term "He enters all the worlds" should be understood as "He enters everything in all the worlds".

SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives another view of the reason why bhagavAn has pervaded everything. It is for the purpose of ensuring that everything is in its designated and assigned place, and things don't come into collision with each other, for example, the different planets and constellations etc. He quotes from the taittiriya AraNyaka, wherein first the question is asked -



keneme vidhRte ubhe

"Who is keeping the two things from colliding with each other?", and responds:

vishNunA vidhRte bhumi ; iti vatsasya vetanA

"vishNu is the One who is supporting them with His Sakti; this is the finding of sage vatsa".

SrI Samkara gives the following supports for this nAma:

antar bahiSca tat sarvam vyApya nArAyaNah sthitah

(mahA nArAyaNa upa. 1.13)

nArAyaNa pervades the whole universe externally and internally.

"yasmAd vishTam idam sarvam tasya SaktyA mahAtmanah |

tasmAd vishNuriti khyAto veSer dhAtoH praveSanAt ||

(vishNu purANam 3.1.45)

"Because the whole world has been pervaded by the energy of the great Self, He is named vishNu, from the root viS - to enter or pervade."

vyApte me rodasI pArtha kAntiscApadhika sthita |

kramaNaccApyaham pArtha! VishNuriti abhisamgij~nita: ||

(mahAbhA. 350.43)

"As I have pervaded the horizons, my glory stands foremost, and as I have measured by my steps the three worlds, O Arjuna! I am named vishNu".

SrI anatakRshNa SAstri interprets the term kAnti here as referring to His Effulgence - His radiance pervades the firmament and transcends it.

SrI BhaTTar has given the explanation of the nAma vishNu in terms of His power of pervasion (Sakti) under nAma 663. He refers to the mantra about bhagavAn: sarva SaktyAtmane - He, Who is the embodiment of all powers. He also gives reference to the Slokam: "yasmAd vishTamidam sarvam tasya SaktyA mahAtmanah." given earlier. As an instance of this Sakti, the trivikrama incarnation is also cited - the smRti declares "vishNuh vikramaNAt



devah" - mahA bhA. udyoga. 5.68.13, a reference to His name being vishNu because He measured the three worlds with His steps.



Sri vishNu
(Courtesy : www.stephen-knapp.com)

Sri v.v. rAmAnujan gives reference to nammAzhvAr's praise of His Sakti:

"ennaik koNDu en pAvam tannaiyum pARak kaittuEzh ezhu piRappum mEvum tan
maiyaMAkkinAn vallan empirAn en viTTuvE"

(tiruvAi. 2.7.4)

"He changed me from a nitya samsAri to a nitya sUri; He exterminated all my



sins, those of my predecessors and my successors for several generations, so that all of us have reformed to become His. Who did this? VishNu! He will do this because His name implies all-pervasiveness".

SrI BhaTTar interprets the nAma-s kRtAgamah, anirdeSya vapuh, vishNuh, and vIrah (nAma-s 661 to 664) as indicative of His being the Lord of Sakti.

SrI cinmayAnanda refers us to I SAvAsya upanishad:

I SAvAsyam idam sarvam yat ki'nca jagatyAm jagat -

Everything that exists in the universe is nothing but of the nature of the Lord, and without Him nothing exists. He pervades everything, unlimited by space, time, or substance.

SrI kRshNa datta bhAradvAj gives an additional interpretation not found in other vyAkhyAna-s:

vi + shNuh = vishNuh - viSesheNa snAvayati prasrAvayati bhakta abhilAshAn
iti vishNuh

He who bestows the wishes of the devotees like a fountain. Note that the root from which the second nAma is derived is the same as the root from which the first nAma - viSvam - was derived. However, the interpretation is different. The interpretation here is that BhagavAn has entered all beings - sentient and non-sentient, that He has created. The meaning for the first nAma was that bhagavAn is everything, the Absolute, full in all respects.

SrI v.v. rAmAnujan nicely paraphrases the two nAma-s:

"a'ngu pUrtiyil nOkku, I'ngu vyAptiyil nOkku".

the first nAma emphasizes His Fullness and Perfection, and the second nAma indicates that He permeates everything.

SrI rAdhAkRshNa Sastri observes that meditation on the significance of the first two nAma-s - namely that Lord vishNu is in everything around us and in every one of us, and that without Him nothing exists, will lead us closer to a life of peace, tranquility, ahimsA, and selfless service to Him.



Sri Surin, in his commentary on amara KoSa, has given the following derivation for the word VishNu - **veveshti iti vishNu:** - One who surrounds and envelops. This is derived from the root word vesht - to surround (recall the word veshti in Tamil for dhoti, which surrounds!).

One interesting question that can be raised is: Given that the stotram is called vishNu sahasranAmam, why did Sri VyAsa not start the stotram as **vishNur viSvam vashatkAro**, and instead chose to start it as **viSvam vishNur vashatkAro...?**

Based on the Sri BhaTTar's anubhavam, viSvam is the name that symbolizes the primary attribute of the para form as one of **shAdguNya paripUrNatva**, and vishnu and the following names then elaborate on the name or the guNa represented by the name viSvam.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha rhetorically asks the question: If Lord vishNu is everywhere, in everything, why is it that most of us don't see Him? The key is the SraddhA.

SraddhayA vindate vasuh - Rg veda. 10.151.4

SraddhayAgnih samidhyate SraddhayA hUyate havih |

SraddhAm bhagasya mUrdhani vacasA vedayAmasi (Rg. 10.151.1)

SraddhAm prAtar havAmahe SraddhAm madhyam dinam pari |

SraddhAm sUryasya nimrucci Sraddhe SraddhApayeha nah | (Rg. 10.151.5)

He who is endowed with the sAttavic disposition, or has developed it, keeps seeing vishNu in everything around him all the time.

To summarize,

1. the nAma vishNu refers to the guNa of bhagavAn in pervading everything He has created, including all sentient and non-sentient objects from a blade of grass to brahma;
2. His pervasion is because of His Sakti; in other words, He is the power behind everything that exists; an instance of His Sakti is illustrated by



His measuring the three worlds with His Foot;

3. His vyApati is indicative of the inseparable relation between Him and everything else outside Him, in the sense that nothing exists without Him.
4. His pervasion of everything is of the form of His enveloping and showering everything around Him with His Mercy. It is not just His sausIlya that is indicated by this nAma; all His powers including that of creation, sustenance, His Lordship, etc., are to be understood by this nAma.
5. It is because of His pervasion of everything in this universe that things (for example the constellations, the planets, etc.), are in their respective positions without colliding with each other.

He is also called vishNu because He bestows the wishes of His devotees profusely like a fountain.

nAma 3. वषट्कारः - vashaTkArah

One who controls and directs (not merely pervades).

vashaTkArAya namah

Sri Bhattar interprets the names VishNu, vashatkAra, and bhuta-bhavya-bhavat-prabhu, as additional elaborations of the name visvam. The root of the word is vas - to control as He wills.

It should be noted that Sri Bhattar has pointed out in his commentary for visvam that BhagavAn is everywhere with His shAdguNya paripUrNatva WHICH IS NATURAL TO HIM:

1. in the commentary for vishNu that He permeates everything that HE CREATES AND POSSESSES, and
2. in the current one for vashatkAra that He controls AS HE WILLS.

Thus, all these guNas are not something that have been acquired or imparted





by something external, but this is His will and schema.

The following passages from the sruti are given in support of the interpretation of this nAma:

1. *sarvasya vaso sarvasya IsAna: - He is the Controller of all and the Ruler of all.
2. *jagadvase vartatedam - The Universe is under His control.

The summarization from Nirukti is svecchayA yo sarvam vase karoti sa: vashatkAra: - One Who controls and directs everything and everyone as He wills.

Sri Sankara provides a very different interpretation for this nAma. He points out that BhagavAn is Himself the vashatkAra mantra, where vashat is a sacred sound (similar to PraNavam, svAhA, etc). used on sacrificial offerings. It is also used in the anganyAsa and karanYasa practice before chanting the sacred slokas (e.g., sahasrArchis saptajihva iti saktyai sikhAyai vashat). Note the similarity of vashatkAra to PraNavAkAra, a word with which we are familiar. VashatkAra is thus a mantra, and BhagavAn is the mantra svarUpi. The explanation in terms of BhagavAn having control over all His creations is appealing because of the continuity it provides to the interpretations of the previous nAmas.

nAma 4. भूतभव्यभवत्प्रभुः - bhUta-bhavya-bhavat-prabhuh

The Master of all things past, future, and present.

bhUta-bhavya-bhavat-prabhave namah

Nirukti - trikAla vartinAm seshi

The Lord of all things that exist in the past, present, and future.

From the srutis, we have

"bhUta-bhavya-bhavan-nAtha: kesava: kesi sUdhana: "

Kesava, the slayer of Kesi, the asura, is the Lord of past, future, and present.





The idea that BhagavAn is beyond the physical laws as we know them, such as the laws and constraints of time, can be inferred from this nAma. In order for Him to be the Lord of all things past, future, and present, He existed before anything existed, exists now, and will exist forever into the future. Thus the well-known and established physical law that all living things come to an end does not apply to Him. He is beginningless and endless.

Sri Bhattar has explained that the nAmas 2, 3, and 4 elaborate the first nAma by indicating how the All-pervading vAsudeva is :

1. in everything living and non-living,
2. controls everything, and
3. is the Master of everything past, future, and present.

He now proceeds to explain the next 5 nAmas as further expanding on this last aspect - how He is the Master of all things past, future, and present. We will see that this is so because:

1. He is the creator of all beings (nama 5),
2. the supporter of all beings (this nAma 6 seems to be further elaborated by nAmas 8 and 9),
3. has existence independent of any other being and as the Lord or Director of all that exist (7),
4. supports all that He has created by being their antaryAmi or inner soul (8), and
5. supports by nourishing them and growing them (9).

nAma 5. भूतकृत् - bhUtakrut

The creator of all beings.

bhUtakrute namah

Sri Bhattar points out that this act of creation of is done by Him without dependence on anything external.



"sarvANi bhUtAni svatantra: srjati"

note the word svatantrata:

"bhutAni karoti iti bhUtakrt"

One who creates all the beings.

In BrhadAraNya upanishad -

"sa visvakrt sa hi sarvasya kartA"

He is the creator of the Universe and all the beings in the Universe.

"tvam kartA sarva bhUtAnAm"

You are the Creator of everything that exists - VishNu PurANa 1-4-15.

nAma 6. भूतभृत् - bhUtabrut

The supporter of all things.

bhUtabrute namah

BhUtAni Bibharti iti bhUta-bhrt

One who supports all. (seems to be further elaborated by nAmas 8 and 9)

Sri Bhattar explains that this support is like that of the support at the center for a wheel and its spokes. If this central support does not exist, the rest of the spokes and the wheel collapse. Thus, one can think of this support as the responsibility for the existence of all the things that He creates. This support is in the form of being the inner soul or atman of all beings (nAma 8 below), and as the One who nourishes and protects all beings (nAma 9 below).

Sri Radhakrishna Sastri in his work on Sri VishNu sahasranAma explains this support as that provided by Adi Kurma to support this universe, or by Sri VishNu as varAha mUrthi when he retrieved and bore the world.

Sri Sankara interprets nAma 6 above as referring to the acts of creation or destruction ("bhUtani krtanti krNoti hinsti iti bhUta krt"), and nAma 7 as referring to the act of sustenance, in the context of the three functions of



creation, sustenance, and destruction.

nAma 7. भावः - bhAvah

1. He who exists with all the splendor
2. He who exists always, independent of anything else.

bhAvAya namah

This nAma is derived from the root bhU (bhavati - exists). Sri ChinmayAnanda gives the derivation: "bhavati iti bhAva:"

nAma 8. भूतात्मा - bhUtAtmA

The AtmA or soul of all beings - sarveshAm bhUtAnAm AtmA

bhUtAtmane namah

All things are His body, and He is the soul of all things. The soul enters the bodies, and directly controls and directs all their activities.

Sri Sankara gives the following reference from BrhadAraNya Upanishad:

esha ta AtmA antaryamyamrtah (3.7.3)

The Lord is the soul, the antaryAmi or inner ruler of all beings, and amrta or never ceasing to exist.

Sri Chinmayananda gives the following reference from Kathopanishad:

"eko vasI sarva bhUtAntarArmA rUpam rUpam pratirUpo bahisca"

The One Lord manifesting Himself as the souls of all beings who have different external forms.

nAma 9. भूतभावनः - bhUtabhAvanah

One who nourishes and nurtures all beings that He created.





bhUtabhAvanAya namah

The key word that both Sri Bhattar and Sri Sankara use in their vyAkhyAnas for this nAma is **vardhayati** - makes them grow - the act of nourishing is emphasized.

Sri Bhattar's words are:

tAni dhAraka poshaka bhogyapradAnena vardhayati iti bhUta-bhAvanah -

He is bhUta-bhAvana because He makes all things grow by bestowing on them things that sustain them, nourish them, and contribute to their enjoyment.

Sri Sankara bhAshya says: **bhUtAni bhAvayati janayati vardhayati iti vA bhUta-bhAvanah** -He makes them shine (bhA - to shine), generates or invigorates, and makes them grow.

With this, we have concluded the first sloka out of the 107 slokas. We notice that Sri Bhattar has beautifully brought out the continuity in the description between the 9 nAmas covered in this first sloka.





SIOkam 2

पूतात्मा परमात्मा च मुक्तानां परमा गतिः ।

अव्ययः पुरुषस्साक्षी क्षेत्रज्ञोऽक्षर एव च ॥ २ ॥

pUtAtmA paramAtmA ca muktAnAm paramA gatih |
avyayah purushas sAkshI kshetrajn~Oskshara eva ca ||

nAma 10. पूतात्मा - pUtAtmA

The Pure Self - One who is untainted by the effects of karma - good or bad.

pUtAtmane namah

PUta AtmA yasya sa pUtAtmA

One who has the pure Atma is pUtAtmA.

Our Atmas reap the fruits of the actions that we are involved in because of their association with our body. BhagavAn is also associated with the same bodies since we are all extensions of His body. However, He is Pure Atman because He is not affected by the fruits of the association with the bodies.

Sri Bhattar gives a very simple example to make this point. A teacher uses a stick to strike a student. Both the teacher and the student come in contact with the same stick, but the pain of association with the stick is felt by the student, but not by the teacher. So also, even though both the Lord and the jIvAtmans are associated with the bodies of the jIvAtmans, the Lord is not affected by the fruits of the actions of the jIvAtmans.

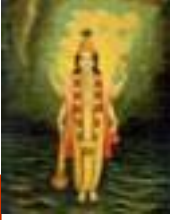
In the Gita, Sri KrshNa says:

"na mAm karmANi lipanti"

actions do not taint me.

Also, the sruti says:





subhAsubah karmabhiryo na lipyati kadAcana

never tainted by actions, good or bad.

nAma 11. परमात्मा - paramAtmA

The Supreme Soul - for whom there is no other guiding or superior soul

paramAtmane namah

paro mA asya .sa AtmA paramAtmA

That Soul for whom there is none superior is paramAtmA.

All of us have Him as our inner souls, but BhagavAn has no one as His Inner Soul that guides Him. There is no one superior to Him. The author of Nirukti says:

"Atma I svaratvAt paramAtmA"

One who is the Lord of Himself is paramAtmA.

Sri Eknath Easwaran indicates that Lord Krishna says in the GI tA: "I am in every one, but no one is in Me". He does not give the reference to the Sanskrit sloka, and I am unable to reference it. I would like help from the Bhakti members in identifying the relevant sloka. There are several pramAnas from the srutis for this:

"na param puNdarI kAkshAt drsyate bharatarshabha"

There is nothing superior to the Lotus-eyed.

"param hi puNdarI kAkshAt na bhUtam na bhavishyati"

There was nothing in the past, and there will be nothing in the future, that is superior to the Lotus-eyed Lord.

"na daivam kesavAt param:"

There is no God superior to Kesava.

"matta: para-taram nAnyat kincidasti"





Greater than Myself, there is nothing else (GitA 7-7)

"param hi amrtam etasmAt visva-rUpAt na vidyate"

There is no greater nectar than the Lord of Universal form.

"parah parANAm paramah paramAtmA"

He is greater than the great; He is superior, and he is the Supreme Soul (visHNU purANa - 1.2.10)

"paramAtmA ca sarveshAm AdhAra: paramesvara: |

vishNurnAma sarva-vedeshu vedAnteshu ca gl yate" ||

(VishNu purANa 6.4.10)

The Isvara above all Isvaras, the paramAtmA who is the supporter of every being, is sung by all vedas and vedantas as Lord VishNu.

nAma 12. मुक्तानां परमा गतिः - muktAnAm paramA gatih

One who is the ultimate goal for all muktas or Released or Liberated Souls.

muktAnAm paramA gataye namah

Muktas are those who are already released from all bondage, and enjoy every bliss that the BhagavAn has. They have equality with God in the enjoyment of this Bliss. The goal that such a mukta longs for at this stage is to constantly serve the Lord., and thus the Parama purusha is muktAnAm-paramA-gatih.

The muktas are compared to those who reside in the celestial world, the sveta dvl pa. They have no needs such as food, no wants, no desires, etc. For these people who have accomplished everything and who are equal to God in their enjoyment of bliss, the one goal that is of interest is the unceasing servitude to God, and thus God is the Supreme and Ultimate Goal for the muktas.

ParamA gati is the goal after attaining which you won't desire anything else. In other words, this is the limit of the goal. Normally, the nature of any goal is such that if you attain that goal, then you will want to attain the next higher



goal. This is not the case with paramA gati. Some pramANas from the srutis are the following:

".....mAmeva anuttamAm gatim"

(They attain) Me, the unsurpassed goal -Bhagavad GI tA 7.18

"sA kAshthA sA parA gatih"

He is the highest means; He is the Supreme Goal - kaThopanishad -3.11.

Sri Bhattar interprets the next 5 names in terms of why the muktAs choose BhagavAn as their Supreme goal. It should be noted that Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna weave a thread of continuity in the sequence of the names occurring in the stotram, and for this reason Sri Bhattar extends the interpretation to levels beyond what is etymologically derived from the word.. relatively speaking,

Sri Sankara seems to more strictly adhere to the literal meaning of the word in his vyAkhyAna.

Of course, there are also inevitable differences in interpretation because of the visishtAdvaita vs. advaita philosophies.

The reasons for the muktAs choosing Sri MahA VishNu as their Supreme goal are:

1. He does not send them back to the cycle of samsAra once they reach Him (13),
2. He gives the enjoyment of His Bliss to the muktas in abundance (14),
3. He witnesses the muktas' enjoyment of Him and is in turn pleased, which pleases the muktas (15),
4. He knows the right place for the muktas to get their eternal Bliss (16), and
5. He is one whose Greatness never diminishes over time in spite of the constant Bliss that He provides to the muktas (17).



nAma 13. अव्ययः - avyayah

- a) One who does not send back anyone who has reached Him (to the cycle of birth and rebirth (Sri Bhattar)
- b) Indestructible (Sri Sankara)

avyayaAya namah

Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna -

na vI yate - na vyapagamyate iti avyayah

He is avyaya because He does not send them back (to samsAra)

In the Yama Smrti, we find the following:

"sattvam vahati sUkshmatvAt param nArAyaNam prabhum |

paramAtmAnam AsAdya param vaikunTam I svaram ||

amrtatvAya kalpeta na nivarteta vai puna:| "

The Mukta bears a body of pure and subtle sattva and attains the Supreme Lord nArAyaNa. Once he reaches the Supreme Lord in the supreme VaikuNTha, he becomes fit for immortality and is not returned back to this world any more.

Sri Sankara's vyAkhyAna -

Sri Sankara gives a different interpretation to this name - Indestructible - based on na asya vyayah iti avyayah, where vyaya means something that can be destroyed. He gives the following pramANa from the BrhadAraNya Upanishad:

"ajarah amarah avyayah"

He is undecaying, immortal, and indestructible" (6.4.25).

See also the nArAyaNa sUktam - anamavyayam kavim The Immortal and Indestructible Seer.





nAma 14. पुरुषः - purushah

- a) One who bestows on the Muktas the enjoyment of the Bliss of Himself in plenty - puru sanoti iti purushah
- b) One who is reclining in this body - puri sete iti purushah
- c) One who existed before anything else existed - purA AsI t iti purushah
- d) One who completes and fulfills existence everywhere - pUrayati iti purushah

purushAya namah

Puru sanoti iti purushah

One who gives in plenty; puru means plenty, and sanoti means giver.

Or, purUNi phalAni sanoti - dadAti iti pururshah - One who gives plentiful benefits.

We find in the taittiriya upanisahd -

"rasi vai sah , rasam hveyAm labdhvA AnandI bhavati" -

"He is Pure Bliss Itself. Having attained Him, the Mukta becomes endowed with joy".

Several other explanations for this name are possible. One of these that is also given by Sri Sankara in addition to the above that Sri Bhattar has also chosen, is supported by the following in MahAbhArata

"navadvAram puram puNyam etairbhAvaih samanvitam |

vyApya sete mahAtmA yastasmAt purusha ucyate || (12-203-35)

"Since the great Soul pervades and resides in this holy city (the body) with nine dvAras or gates, possessed of these organs (senses, etc.), He is called purusha".

Another alternative interpretation that Sri Sankara gives is

"puri sete iti purushah" - One who dwells in this Fort city - our body".





He refers to the following from the taittiriya AraNyaka -

"pUrvameva aham iha Asam iti purushasya purusahtvam" - I indeed existed here before; as I existed before, I am called purusha.

We recall that the purusha is sometimes pronounced as pUrusha in vedic chantings (ato jyAyAgasca pUrushah - in purusha sUktam as an example). Pura is used to refer to this body, as in Gita 5-13:

nava dvAre pure dehe.. the fortress with nine gateways.

Sri Chinmayananda suggests that these different ways of interpreting the meanings of the names is a way to understand more and more about the Nature of the Lord.

nAma 15. साक्षी - Sakshi

One who directly witnesses everything, as it is.

The All-Knower, The Omniscient BhagavAn sees everything directly by His own awareness without any instrument for seeing (such as the sense organs) in between.

sAkshiNe namah

SAkshAt Ikshate - The Direct Cognizer.

Just as the sun illumines everything but is not affected in anyway by the state of the objects it illumines, so also the Lord witnesses everything but is not affected by all that He witnesses. The jIvAtmAs see everything through some sense organ or the other, and so the deficiencies of these organs limits what is seen. Not so in the case of the Lord.

Sri Bhattar interprets this name as indicating that the Lord witnesses the muktas enjoying the Bliss that He confers on them, and is thus happy Himself. Obviously, this give great pleasure to Mukhtas, since they are interested in His happiness, and this is one of the reasons for His being their paramA gati.





nAma 16. क्षेत्रज्ञः kshEtraj~nah

One who knows, and can lead the muktas to the exact place where the muktas will get their sought-after Supreme Bliss.

kshEtraj~nAya namah

Sri nArAyaNa is the vaikunTha vAsi. is the place after reaching which there is no return to this world. That this is a place which even the greatest of sages can realize only after intense meditation and devotion to the Lord is evident from the following passage attributed to Sage Agastya in varAha purANa -

"adyApi tam lokavaram dhyAyan tishThAmi suvrata! |

kada prApyet tu asau loka: sarva loka varottamah ||

"I am even now steeped in the meditation of that supreme world. When am I going to reach that best and noblest of all worlds? This is the thought that is haunting me".

In varAha purANa, BhagavAn tells Sage Agastya:

"pasya lokamimam mahyam yo na vedestu drsyate |

tvat-priyArtham ayam lokah darsitaste dvijottama ||"

" See this world which exists for my sake and which is not seen even by the vedas. O best of Brahmins! This world has been shown to you in order to please you". (Note that even a sage of the standing of Agastya has not seen this place except when God chose to show it to him.)

Sri Sankara has interpreted this name based on Bhagavad GI tA Chapter 13 - slokas 1 and 2, in particular. Here, the word kshetra refers to the body, and kshetrajna refers to One who knows (understands the principle or tatva behind) all the bodies and is the direct witness of the actions of all the bodies (by being directly inside the bodies and not needing any secondary means to witness these). May be kshetrajna is a guNa of the Supreme Soul, and is an elaboration of the name "bhUtAtmA".





nAma 17. अक्षरः aksharah

One whose greatness never diminishes over time in spite of being enjoyed by the muktas constantly.

aksharAya namah

na ksharati iti aksharah.

His greatness is innate, and does not derive from something external. So it never diminishes.

In Nirukti, this is explained as follows:

"sadA anubhUyamAno'pi nissI ma guNa gauravAt |

muktai: kvacit na ksharati iti akshara: parikI rtita: ||"

Sri Sankara's interpretation is: "sa eva na ksharati iti aksharah - He alone exists without dying. Sri Bhattar has thus explained nAmas 13 to 17 as the reason why muktas consider the Lord the paramA gati.



SIOkam 3

योगो योगविदां नेता प्रधानपुरुषेश्वरः ।

नारसिंहवपुः श्रीमान् केशवः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ ३ ॥

yOgO yOgavidAm nEtA pradhAnapurushesvarah |
nArasimhavapuh srImAn kEsavah purushOttamah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 18. योगः - yOgah

- He Who is the sole means or upAya for salvation or mukti.
- He Who is reached through yoga (meditation).

yOgAya namah

The word yoga has several different meanings given in the amara koSa: means, meditation, union, fitness, remedy, etc.

yogah sannahana upAya dhyAna sa'ngati yuktishu (amara koSa 3.3.22)

Given this diversity of meanings for the word 'yoga', now let us see the different interpretations for the nAma 'yogah'.

- SrI BhaTTar uses the meaning 'upAya' or 'means' for the term 'yoga'. His interpretation for the nAma is that bhagavAn is the sole means or upAya for mukti (salvation) – asyaiva nirupAdhika mukti upAyatvamapi vakti – yogah – He alone is the natural and independent means for salvation. He further comments – sa sAyujyasya ananyApekshah sAkshAt hetuh ityarthah – The meaning is that He is the immediate cause of salvation, and does not stand in need of the help of anything else.

He gives support the brahma sUtra and from the gl tA:

tad-hetu-vyapadeSAc-ca (brahma sUtra 1.1.15) – He is the cause of the Bliss



that all souls enjoy. – esha hveya AnandayAti (taitt. Ananda. 2.7.1)

aham tvA sarva pApebhyo mokshayishyAmi (gl tA 18.66) – “I will release you from all sins”.

SrI satya sandha tI rtha gives multiple interpretations, one of which uses the meaning “upAyam” for the word ‘yoga’. The explanation is along the lines given by SrI BhaTTar – bhatAnAm bhava taraNa upAya iti yogah – He Who is the means of salvation for His devotees.

Another vyAkhyAna kartA who uses the meaning ‘upAyam’ for the word ‘yoga’ is SrI kRshNa datta bhAradvAj – yogah bhakta abhilAsha adhigamAya amogha upAyah – The unfailing upAya or means for attaining the desires or wishes of the devotees.

b) SrI Sa’nkara uses the meaning ‘union’ or ‘oneness’ for the term ‘yoga’, and gives an interpretation that supports the advaita concept that the individual soul and the Supreme Soul are not different from each other. He notes that yoga is the process of controlling the senses and the mind, and realizing this “oneness”, and He is called yogah because He is to be reached by means of yoga as described here (in other words, by attaining this knowledge of oneness).

(It should be noted that one of the main reasons for the great AcArya-s undertaking to write commentaries on important works such as the vishNu sahasra nAmam, the gl tA, the brahma sUtra-s, the upanishad-s, etc., is to show that their particular philosophy is what is supported and advocated by the different smRti-s, Sruti-s, purANa-s, etc. To quote svAmi AdidevAnanda from his Introduction to bhagavad rAmAnuja’s gl tA bhAshyam, “Such a method involves some text-torturing to get the meaning that one wants.... To impart a sense of consistency of a text to their followers, they are compelled to give interpretations that may sometimes look far-fetched to others”. SrI AdidevAnanda is careful to point out that on the whole, the AcArya-s give a reasonable and satisfying interpretation of their philosophy in the process. This is not just limited to SrI Sa’nkara’s interpretation, and can be seen in all



interpretations. The current interpretation by Sri Sa'nkara is one example of assigning interpretations that bring 'support' for their philosophy from the ancient scriptures).

c) Sri baladeva vidyA bhUshaN seems to use both the meanings 'union' and 'meditation' for the word 'yoga', and gives the interpretation that bhagavAn is called yogah, because the devotee's mind becomes one with Him when the devotee meditates on Him - *yujyate manah asmin iti yogah samAdheh SubhASrayah*.

d) Sri cinmayAnanda uses the meaning 'meditation' for the term yoga, and gives the interpretation for the nAma 'yogah' as "One Who is realized through yoga". His interpretation is "By withdrawing the sense-organs from their objects of preoccupation, when the mind of the seeker becomes quiet, he is lifted to a higher plan of consciousness, wherein he attains 'yoga', meaning he realizes the Reality". He notes: "At such moments of equanimity and mental quiet 'yoga' is gained - *samatvam yoga ucyate (gl tA 12.48)*". Note that while Sri Sa'nkara also interpreted the nAma as "One Who is attained through yoga", his interpretation of yoga was 'attaining knowledge of oneness of self and the Self', whereas Sri cinmayAnanda's meaning for the word yoga is meditation by quieting the mind and controlling the senses.

Sri satya sandha tI rtha also uses the meaning 'meditation' for the word yoga in one of his interpretations - *yujyate hRdi yogibhih dhyAyata iti yogah* - He Who is meditated upon by the yogi-s is yogah .

This nAma is probably a very good example where different vyAkhyAna kartA-s use the diversity of meanings for a word, and give interpretations that support their own schools of philosophy, and we get the benefit of diverse enjoyment of His guNa-s in the process.

nAma 19. योगविदां नेता yOgavidhAm nEta

One who leads those who practise yogA until they reach their Goal.



yOgavidhAm nEtrE namah

From Sankara BhAshya, a yoga-vit is one who inquires into, realizes, or acquires yoga - yogam vidanti, vicArayanti, jAnanti, labhanta iti vA yoga vidah. Nayati iti netA - one who leads .

In GI tA, Sri Krishna says:

"ananyAs-cintayanto mAm ye janAh paryupAsate|

teshAm nityAbhiyuktAnAm yoga-keshemam vahAmyaham|| (GI tA - 9-22)

" On those who meditate on me with single-minded devotion, those that want to be with Me unceasingly, I confer on them .the Bliss of .union (yoga) with Me constantly and never returning back to samsAra again (the safety or kshema)"

nAma 20. प्रधानपुरुषेश्वरः - pradhAna-purushEsvarah

One who is the Lord of Primordial Matter as well as the Jivas.

pradhAna-purushEsvarAya namah

PradhAna here refers to the cause of bondage, and purusha refers to the jivAtmA. Perhaps the easiest way to understand the concept of prakrti or pradhAna is through the following explanation for the Brahma Sutra - deha yogAdvA so'pi - This concealment of the true nature of jiva is caused by the contact with the body (at the time of creation) or by the contact with the Primordial Matter (prakrti or pradhAna) at the time of deluge. Thus prakrti or pradhAna can be conceived of as the undifferentiated or 'asat' form of the bondage of the jiva, and the sarIra or body can be conceived of as the sat form that keeps the jiva in bondage.

Chapter 13 in the Bhagavad Gita deals elaborately with the concepts of prakrti and jIvAtmA and their interrelationship to each other. In sloka 19 of chapter 13, BhagavAn points out that both prakrti and purusha have always existed, and this nAma indicates that He is the Lord and Master of both. "prakrtim purusham caiva vidyanAdau ubhAvapi". prakrti can be considered to be





composed of rajas, tamas and sattva, and from these all the rest such as the panca bhUtas, the eleven indriyas, the five indriya-gocaras, etc. arise. These are explained in detail in the gltA bhAshya by TirukkaLLam Sri NrsimhAchArya.

nAma 21. नारसिंहवपुः - nArasimhavapuh

He Who is possessed of a body of man and lion combined.

nArasimha-vapushe namah.

Sri BhaTTar captures several thoughts about this incarnation of bhagavAn in one sentence in his commentary: sva-bhaktyantarAyanivAraNam bhkatabhayApaha tadapekshA samakshaNa pratipannayathAkAma divya mahA-nRsimha samhananh.

1. This incarnation shows a removal of impediments to devotion to Him.
2. He takes incarnations at will.
3. His incarnations are divine.
4. They remove the fear of His devotees .
5. The incarnations are assumed the moment the request is made.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri elaborates on these, and add his own anubhava-s. Among his additional thoughts are:

1. This incarnation shows that when it comes to bhagavAn, our "normal" rationalization should not be applied to anything with Him. For instance, we know that man is the best evolved species in the thinking capability (brain power). Similarly, lion is the most evolved in physical strength. Its strength is located in its body and its powerful nails. So, in order to destroy a powerful asura such as hiraNya kaSipu, it would have made a lot more sense if bhagavAn had taken a form with the head of a human being (with the associated highly evolved brain), and the body of a lion (the most evolved with respect to physical strength). BhagavAn does





exactly the opposite - the head of a lion, and the body of a human being. This is a simple illustration of the point that He is beyond our capabilities of analysis.

2. BhagavAn does whatever it takes to fulfill the request of His devotee, irrespective of whether it shows Him in the best light or not. ANDAL refers to His varAha incarnation as "mAnam ilAp panRi" - the shameless boar with dirt dripping from all over its body, to go after another rAkshasa, hiraNyAksha, the brother of hiraNyakaSipu. Anyone who observes a scene of an asura being torn to pieces with its nails by a lion-faced form with a human body, will be terror-stricken. And yet, we see prahlAda standing in great reverence, unperturbed, and pleased at having the divya darSanam of the Lord. But seeing the same form, hiraNyakaSipu was terror-stricken as the half-man-half-lion form emerged from the pillar. Thus, at the same time, with the same form, bhagavAn was pleasing to the eye of the devotee, and causing terror to the devotee's enemy. This is another revelation of the greatness of bhagavAn - that simultaneously He is with all opposites at the same time.
3. In addition to the aspect of His being able to induce fear or love at the same time, there is the beauty aspect to His form of half-man half-lion. Just for a moment, think of some human form with the head of a lion appearing in front of us, and imagine the aversion that this sight will induce in us. Not so with Lord nRsimha. He was absolutely beautiful in this form, as Sri BhaTTar elaborates in the next nAma - Sri mAn - because He is always associated with Sri or Lakshmi. tirumazhiSai AzhvAr describes His beauty as "ari po'ngik kATTum azhagu (nAnmugan tiru. 21) - The beauty of nRsimha form looked like beauty bubbling and spilling over because it can't be contained anywhere.
4. In normal course of life, something that came from breaking a jaDa form such as the pillar should be expected to be another piece of the same jaDa form. One should expect a live form to be originating only



from another life form. Hers relating to Him, we should not be applying normal logic as we are used to do.



nArasimha vapu - mAIOlan - Sri ahObila Mutt

SvAmi deSikan describes this unusual birth of Lord nRsimha from the pillar in his daSavatAra stotram in one of his poetic naya-s. He describes the lucky pillar from which Lord nRsimha emerged, as the grandmother of brahmA - mahAsura gRha sthUNA pitAmahyabhUt (Slokam 5). The "lineage" in this description is that bhagavAn is the father of brahmA, and since the pillar gave "birth" to Lord nRsimha, the pillar thus becomes the grandmother of brahmA.



SrI satyadevo vAsishTha does not support the interpretation that bhagavAn had an actual mixed body consisting of some aspects of man and some aspects of lion. Instead, he suggests that the nAma means that He took a normal form that possessed the best aspects such as the strength of a lion, and the best aspects of man such as the ability to think. We will not go into the merits of this interpretation. Only the interesting philosophical aspect that he brings out is dealt with here. He sees in this nAma the illustration that neither karma alone, nor j-nAna alone, are sufficient in the fulfillment of any undertaking, and that both are needed. He quotes from the Srtuti-s in support:

idam me brahma ca kshatram ca ubhe Sriyam aSnutAm (yajur. 32.16)

yatra brahma ca kshatram ca samya'ncou caratah saha |

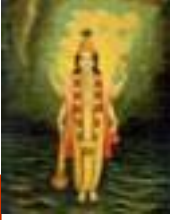
tam lokam puNyam pra-jnesham yatra devAh sahagninA || (yajur. 20.25)

As a lesson to take from this nAma, SrI vAsishTha makes the point that whatever action one undertakes, this should be done after fully analyzing and understanding the consequences associated with this action. One can also extrapolate from this the thought that it is not enough to have the ability to use force, but also along with that, one should know how to use this force, when to use this force, etc., in order for the force to have beneficial effects.

svAmi deSikan describes the six rahasya-s associated with bhagavAn's incarnationshis SaraNAGati dI pikA Slokam 17. All of these naturally apply to nArasimha vapuh also. These are:

1. He takes many incarnations with different forms at will as needed - nAnA vidhaih. One of these is the nRsimha incarnation.
2. The incarnations are all true forms that He assumes, and not just mAyA forms - a-kapaTaih. Every incarnation of His is fully endowed with His parattvam and all His kalyANa guNa-s in full, irrespective of the incarnation He takes - ajahat-svabhAvaih
3. His forms in His incarnations are not made of pa'nca bhUta-s like ours, but His tirumEni in His incarnations is also made of Suddha-sattva, and so He is beyond the three guNa-s, sattva, rajas, and tamas - a-





prAkRtaih

4. The forms in His incarnations are taken as part of His leelA, and not as a result of any karma as in our case - nij-vihAra-siddhah
5. They are taken purely for the protection of His devotees and the destruction of their enemies - AtmIya rakshaNa vipaksha vinASanArthaih.

nAma 22. श्रीमान् - srImAn

One with a lovely form.

srImatE namah

In the context of the uncommon and frightful form of nara-simha that we encountered in the previous nAma, one would not normally expect this to be a form of beauty. Not so in the case of BhagavAn, since His form is celestial, charming and beautiful. It is difficult to translate the description that Sri Bhattar has given in Sanskrit - soundarya lAvaNyAdibhih ati-manohara divya rupa.

Sri Sankara interprets this name as One who has Lakshmi always with Him in His vaksha-sthala - yasya vakshasi nityam vasati srI: sa srImAn. And for this reason, even though He has the form of a man-lion, there is no diminution in His beauty.

nAma 23. केशवः - kEsavah

One with lovely locks of hair.

kEsavAya namah

The name can be derived from the word kesa - hair. He is beautiful not only because he has Lakshmi with Him, but because He is naturally beautiful. "prasastah kesAh santu asya iti kesavah".





An additional interpretation for this name, which is supported by VishNu purANa, is given by Sri Sankara. This interpretation says that kesava derives from the fact that KrishNa is the destroyer of the demon Kesi who was sent to kill the child KrishNa by Kamsa.

"yasmAt tvayaiva drshTAtmA hatah kesI anArdana: |
tasmAt kesava nAmnA tvam loke jneyo bhavishyati || "

However, the name kesi-hA appears later on in the stotra, and this literally means the destroyer of kesi. So a different interpretation here will be appropriate since otherwise there is the punarukti dosha, or the fault of repetition. In fact, the name kesava itself repeats later on in the stotra, and we will wait to see what interpretation the great vyAkhyAna kartAs are going to give us at that time (kesavah kesi-hA hari:).

nAma 24. पुरुषोत्तमः - purushOttamah

The Supreme amongst the purushas (i.e., individual souls).

purushOttamAya namah

Purushebhya: uttama:, purushANAm uttama:, purusheshu uttama: are all possible derivations for this nAma.

We find the uttama purusha (purushottama) described in more detail in the Gita in sloka 15.16 and 15.17. Here the purushas are described as of two kinds;

1. the kshara or those who have the association with prakrti and are under the bondage of samasara, and
2. the akshara or the muktas who are released from bondage.

The uttama purusha is different from either of these kinds of purushas, and is the paramAtmA who supports the acetana and the chetanas who are either the baddhas (purushas under bondage) or muktas (purushas released from bondage)..

In Gita 15-18, Lord Krishna summarizes the above as follows:





"yasmAt ksharam atI to'ham aksharAdapi cottama: |
ato'smi loka vede ca pratithah purushottama: ||

"Because I am superior to both kinds of purushas - the kshara and the akshara, all the srutis and smrtis praise Me as purushottama."

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*vishNu sahasra naama roopam
(drawing made out of the 1000 names of sri mahA vishNu)*





SIOkam 4

सर्वशर्वशिवस्स्थाणुर्भूतादिर्निधिरव्ययः ।

सम्भवो भावनो भर्ता प्रभवः प्रभुरीश्वरः ॥ ४ ॥

sarvas sarvas sivas sthANur bhUtAdir nidhiravyayah |
sambhavO bhAvanO bhartA prabhavah prabhurI svarah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 25. सर्वः - sarvah (sa as in sanAtana)

One who is all - the cause of creation and destruction of all things.

sarvasmai namah

We have the following from MahAbhArata -

"asatasca satascaiva sarvasya prabhavApyayAt

sarvasya sarvadA jnAnAt savamenam pracakshate" (MB .68.11)

"He is the origin and end of all things, chetana and achetana, and He has full knowledge of all beings at all times, and so He is called sarva".

Sri ChinmayAnanda gives a very simple illustration to help understand the concept behind this nAma. - "All waves arise from the same ocean, and so the ocean is the essence in all waves".

nAma 26. शर्वः - sarvah (sa as in kEsava)

The Remover of all sins

sarvAya namah

I am unable to get a good understanding of the interpretation of this nAma. The word is derived from the root sr - to tear to pieces, to kill, to hurt.



Neither Sri Bhattar nor Sri Sankara have given references to other srutis for this nAma. If any of you know of a context in the Gita or elsewhere that this name occurs or is referred to, please advise me since I would like to understand the significance of this nAma better.

Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna says that the Lord is called sarva because He removes the evils of objects that are His body (sva sarIra bhUtAnAm aSubhamapi srNAti iti sarvah). Perhaps this means that BhagavAn destroys the sins of His devotees, but the significance of the word . "aSubhamapi" in the above is unclear.

The author of Nirukti interprets Sri Bhattar's above vyAkhyAna as follows: "sva sarI ra jagad-duhkham sarva: sa sthAt srNAti yah"-

Sri Sankara interprets this word in terms of the action of BhagavAn at the time of pralaya in withdrawing all beings unto Himself - srNAti samhAra samaye samharati samhArayati vA sakalAh prajA: iti sarvah.

In this context, Sri RadhAkrsNa Sastri points out that this destruction at the time of pralaya is not really to be considered cruel, since this is like "destroying" the shape of raw rice when it is cooked in order to make it edible - the beings are destroyed in order to give them new life.

nAma 27. शिवः - sivaH

One who confers auspiciousness

sivAya namaH

subha Avahasca sivaH - One who bestows auspiciousness on all.

In Mahabharata Drona Parva (202), we have the following for supporting the above interpretation:

"sameghayati yan-nityam sarvArthAn sarvakarmasu |

sivamicchan manushyAnAm tasmAdesha sivaH smrtah ||"

"One who bestows all that is desired always by all His devotees is called Siva



because of this guNa of His".

Two instances of Sri VishNu being referred to as Siva are in nArAyaNa upanishad -

1. "sAsvatam sivam acyutam" - The Eternal, The Auspicious, and the One Who never lets His devotees fall"
2. "sa brahma sa sivah sendrah so'ksharah paramah svarAt" - He is Brahma, He is Siva, He is Indra, He is Eternal, He is Supreme, He is the Lord of all.

nAma 28. स्थाणुः sthANuh

One who is firm in His benefits and anugraha to the devotees.

sthANavE namah

The name derives from the word stha - tisThati, indicating firmness or steadiness. Sri Bhattar interprets this name as indicating that the result of BhagavAn's anugraha is firm in its effect of blessing the devotee far beyond what other lesser acts can bestow.

Sri Radhakrishnam Sastri indicates that sthANu is also the name for a tree which has matured to such an extent that no changes affect it any more, including sun, rain etc. He interprets this name as indicating BhagavAn's guNa of not being affected by changes such as growth, decay, etc., nor impacted by the changes of time, place, etc.

We will revisit the name sthANu again in the sloka "vistArah sthAvarah sthANuh.....", where we should expect a different interpretation for this guNa in the context that is applicable at that part of the stotram.

nAma 29. भूतादिः bhUtadih

a) One who is eagerly sought after by all beings





bhUtadayE namah

Sri Bhattar gives the interpretation **bhUtaih sprhaNI yatanatayA AdI yate** - One who is eagerly sought after by all beings.

Sri Sankara gives the interpretation **bhUtAnAm Adi-kAraNatvAt bhUtAdih** - BhagavAn is called bhUtAdih because He is the first cause of all beings. It is possible that Sri Bhattar chose to interpret it differently because the second interpretation is similar to the meaning for bhUtakrt (nAma 5). I would like to request any of our bhaktas to comment further.

Sri ChinmayAnanda gives another plausible interpretation . - The very cause for the first five great elements - the panca bhUtas - Space, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth. BhUtAnAm Adih

nAma 30. निधिरव्ययः - nidhirvyayah

The inexhaustible treasure.

nidhayE avyAya namah

Avayayah nidhih - He is like the wealth that is kept under safe keeping and always available at the time of distress to His bhaktas.

Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that the term nidhi means that in which precious things are stored away or preserved secretly - **nidhiyate asmin iti nidhih**. Surely BhagavAn is a treasure that is not understood or obtained easily by everyone.

Sri Sankara interprets this nAma as meaning that VishNu is the One in whom all things go and lie merged therein temporarily till the next creation, and so He is the Immutable Treasure Chest.

nAma 31. सम्भवः - sambhavah

(Though like a Hidden Treasure), One who manifests Himself at will to .those





who sincerely seek Him.

sambhavAya namah

He manifests Himself at any place and at any time and in any form (e.g., nrsimha, matsya, kUrma, etc.).

Note the following:

"dharma samsthApanArthAya sambhavAmi yuge yuge" (GI tA 4-8)

"svecchayA sambhavAmyevam garbha duhkha vivarjitah"

nAma 32.भावनः - bhAvanah

(Having manifested thus), One who regenerates all by dispelling all their evils.

bhAvanAya namah

The author of Nirukti summarizes Sri Bhattar's interpretation by the following words: yo janitvA janAn ujjIvayati sah bhAvanah - One who, after having manifested Himself (sambhavah - see above), brings back all to life.

Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that to do bhAvana is to give, and BhagavAn gives the fruits of action as they deserve to all, and so He is bhAvana. This is consistent with Sri Sankara's interpretation that BhagavAn is bhAvana because He gives the fruits of actions to all jivas.

nAma 33.भर्ता - bhartA

Supporter.

bhartrE namah

Sri Sankara gives the following vyAkhyAna - prapancasya adhishTAnatvena bharaNAt bhartA - BhagavAn is bhartA (Sustainer) because He sustains the universe as its Lord.

Sri Bhattar points out that He does this nourishing of His devotees by giving





Himself up to His devotees because this is His Nature - yasmAt pushNAti Atma-dAnAt.

nAma 34. प्रभवः - prabhavah

One whose birth is of a sublime nature.

prabhavAya namah

Asya bhavah prakrshTa iti prabhavah - His birth (bhava) is unsullied by any blemish, and is capable of uprooting the fetter of birth of all those who realize Him. Or, prakarsheNa bhavati .

nAma 35. प्रभुः - prabhuh

He who is all powerful.

prabhavE namah

Sri Sankara's vyAkhyAna is - sarvAsu kriyAsu sAmarthya atisayavAn prabhuh - One who is the most powerful, showing it forth in all His actions.

The author of Nirukti summarizes Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna thus:

"brahmAdI nAm ca sarveshAm bhoga-moksha-samarpaNe |
samarthah prabhu: ityuktah sarveshTa phalado manuh || "

He is prabhu - most powerful - because he can bestow fruits such as the enjoyment of the pleasures associated with those of Brahma and even moksha.

nAma 36. ईश्वरः - I svarah

a) One who has the supreme power of control over all beings

b) One who has the ability to do anything without the help of any other beings or things





IsvarAya namah

This nAma is interpreted based on its relation to the word aisvarya or to the word ishta.

The first meaning derives from the word aisvarya - **nirupAdhikam aisvaryam asya iti Isvarah** - He is Isvara because he has unlimited might or power. The second meaning derives from **IshTe iti Isvarah** - One who can do whatever He wills without the help of anything else.





*svayambhUh - para vAsudEvan - SrI ranga vimAnam
(Courtesy : www.srirangapankajam.com)*



SIOkam 5

स्वयम्भूश्शम्भुरादित्यः पुष्कराक्षो महास्वनः ।

अनादिनिधनो धाता विधाता धातुरुत्तमः ॥ ५ ॥

svayambhUh sambhurAdityah pushkarAkshO mahAsvanah |

anAdinidhanO dhAtA vidhAtA dhAturuttamah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 37. स्वयम्भूः - svayambhUh

He who manifests Himself by His own free will.

svayambhUvE namah

Svayameva bhavati iti svayambhUh - One who is self-born.

Sri RADhA KrishNa Sastri gives the example of how in the case of the birth of Lord KrshNa to Devaki and Vasudeva, the child was born unlike any other child, decorated with beautiful jewels, smiling, lotus-eyed, with divya rUpa, etc., and with no pain or discomfort to the mother. In Srimad BhAgavatam, we find the following description:

tam adbhutam bAlakam ambujekshNam

caturbhujam sankha gadAryudAyudham |

srl vatsalakshmam galasobhikaustubham

pl tAmbaram sAndra payodasoubhagam ||

"(Sri KrshNa at birth) was of magnificent appearance, lotus-eyed, adorned with sankha, cakra, and gada, with four arms, the kaustubha around his neck, adorned with pitAmbara (yellow silk cloth) around His waist, and beautiful like the water-laden cloud".



nAma 38. शम्भुः - sambuh

One who causes happiness to everyone by the beauty of His appearance.

sambhavE namah

1. Sam bhAvayati iti sambuh - here sam (sa as in Shiva) means sukham or happiness. This happiness is caused by the sheer beauty of His manifestation. In RAmAyaNa we see the following passages:
2. "rUpa audArya guNai: pumsAm drshti citta apahAriNam" - (Sri Rama) attracts the eyes and hearts of beholders by His beauty, generosity, and similar qualities.
3. "candra kAntAnanam rAmam atIva priya darsanam" - Rama who has a face lovelier than the moon, and who has an extremely pleasing appearance.

nAma 39. आदित्यः - Adityah

- a) The purusha in the Sun
- b) One of the twelve Adityas
- c) One who sustains and nourishes everything like the Sun

AdityAya namah

Sri Bhattar points out that this is one example of BhagavAn manifesting Himself at His will.

We are all familiar with "dhyeyah sadA savtr-manDala madhyavarti nArAyaNa...." -

Sriman nArAyaNa who is in the centre of the orb of the Sun must always be meditated upon.

We also have "sa yascAyam purushe, yascAsAvAditye, sa eka:" (taittiriya upanishad) -



He is one and the same deity who is in the hearts of men and who is in the middle of the Sun.

Sri Sankara gives the additional explanation that this nAma can refer to Lord VishNu being one of the twelve Adityas or Aditi's sons. He gives the Bhagavad Gita in support of this:

"AdityAnAm aham vishNur-jyotishAm raviramsumAn |

marI cirmaruTamasmI nakshtrANAm aham saI || (10-21)

"Among Adityas, I am VishNu", (the twelfth Aditya)

Sri Chinmaya points out that BhagavAn incarnated as Aditi's son in His vAmana incarnation. Sri Chinmaya also points out that another way to enjoy this nAma is to realize that BhagavAn is like the Sun in that everything depends on the Sun for its survival, and so BhagavAn is Aditya or the Sun or the supporter and nourisher of everything.

nAma 40. पुष्कराक्षः - pushkarAkshah

The Lotus-eyed.

pushkaAkshAya namah

Sri ChinmayAnanda refers us to the famous quote "The eye is the reflection of the mind", and points out that the reference to the beauty of the eye in this nAma is to be contemplated on in terms of the Inner Joy and Peace that BhagavAn beams out to all through His eyes and magically lifts out all the sorrows in His devotee's hearts. This nAma re-occurs as nAma 561 later, where we will find a new interpretation.

Pushkare akshiNI yasya sa pushkarAkshah;

PoshayatI bhUtAni pushkare akshiNI yasya sa pushkarAkshah.

nAma 41. महास्वनः - mahAsvanah

He of the venerable sound (of the vedas)





mahAsvanAya namah

In BrhadAraNya upanishad, we have the following:

"asya mahato bhUtasya ni:svasitametad yad-rg-vedo yajur-vedah sAma vedo-
atharvAngirasa: itihAsa: purANam vidyA upanishada: slokA:
sUtrANyaNuvyAkhyAnAni vyAkhyAnAni" (4.4.10)

Thus has been breathed from this great Being what we have as Rg veda, Yajur veda, sAma veda, and atharva veda, etc.

nAma 42. अनादिनिधनः - anAdi-nidhanah

One who is without beginning or end.

anAdi-nidhanAya namah

Yasya Adi nidhanam na asti sa anAdi-nidhanah - One for whom there is neither beginning nor end.

nidhana, which commonly refers to poverty or lack of wealth, also has a second meaning, death or destruction. BhagavAn is anAdi-nidhana because His form is not composed of earthly elements like fat, flesh and bone -

na tasya prakrtA mUrTi:mAmsa-medosthi-sambhavA (varAha purANa 75.44),

His body is beyond the range of the sense-organs, and can be cognized only by the eye of the mind - rUpam vA atIndriyam, antahkaraNapratyaksha nirdesAt, His body is not made up of the combination of elements like earth, water, etc.

- na bhUta sangha samsthAno deho'sya paramAtmanah (MahAbhArata - sAnti parva 206-60), etc.

nAma 43. धाता - dhAtA

- One Who created the Universe (dhA - to produce, or dhA - to lay upon).
- He Who supports and sustains (dhA - dhAraN poshaNayoySca).
- He Who has no support other than Himself (a-dhAtA).





d) He Who 'drinks' everything during pralaya (dheT - pAne - to drink).

e) One Who is the antaryAmi of the four-faced brahmA.

dhAtrE namah

This nAma occurs again in Slokam 102 (nAma 951).The nAma can be derived from the roots

1. dhA - to produce, to bear, to place, to lay upon; .
2. dhA - dhAraNa poshaNayoH - to support and nurture, or,
3. dhEt - pAne - to drink.

SrI Sa'nkara has also provided an alternate interpretation based on the pATham a-dhAtA.

SrI BhaTTar interprets the current nAma as "The Creator of everything, including the four-faced brahmA". has the responsibility for creation of everything inside the brahmANDa, through the powers given to him by bhagavAn. On the other hand, bhagavAn creates the brahmANDa itself, and brahmA as the first one in the brahmANDa, before brahmA is given the responsibility for the creation of the rest of the things inside brahmANDa. BhagavAn performs the function of creation inside the brahmANDa by being the antaryAmi of brahmA. Thus, bhagavAn is the true Creator of everything. BhagavAn's role as the true Creator is repeatedly sung by nammAzhvAr in his tiruvAimozhi.

SrI BhaTTar's interpretation for the current instance of the nAma can be understood based on the root dhA - to put, place, lay, put in, lay on or upon (SrI Apte's dictionary). The main idea being conveyed here is that bhagavAn is the Creator of all, including the four-faced brahmA, rudra, etc., all the way down to the blade of grass.

SrI BhaTTar's interpretation is:

aniruddha svarUpaH sarva yonau acit-samashTi bhUtAyAm prakRtau cit-samshTi bhUtam viri'ncAtmakam garbham dadhAti iti dhAtA



BhagavAn, in the form of aniruddha, places the aggregate of sentient beings (selves) into the prakRti (the aggregate of non-sentient principles), and it is this 'laying' of one on the other, or association of one with the other by bhagavAn, that is the cause of all beings, namely, creation. Sri BhaTTar gives the gI tA Slokam 14.3 in support of his interpretation:

mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbham dadhAmyaham |
sambhavaH sarva bhUtAnAm tato bhavati bhArata || (gI tA 14.3)

"prakRti (referred to here by the term mahad brahma, meaning 'very large') is like My womb. In that I lay the germ (garbham dadhAmi; the 'germ' or seed referring to the collection of all the jIva-s), and this is what results in the birth or creation of all life forms with a body associated with the self, O bhArata!".

Sri BhaTTar gives additional supports from two other sources:

1. dhAtA kshetre karma-bl ja- bhUtam garbham dadhAti (maula samhita)
2. 'dhAtA' places the foetus (the jIva, which is the seed for actions) in the kshetra (prakRti).
3. Apa eva sasarja Adau tAsu vl ryam apAsRjat (manu. SmRti 1.8) - First He created the waters (referring to the aggregate of prakRti); and in them hee put His vigor (the aggregate of sentients).

We also have references to His function of creation in the following:

tamasaH paramo dhAtA Sa'nkha cakra gadA dharaH
(yuddha kANDa 114.18)

where maNDodarI describes Lord rAma as dhAtA (The Creator).

sUrya candramasau dhAtA yathA pUrvam akalpayat |
divam ca Rthivl m cAnthariksham atho svah || (Rg. 10/190/3)

He recreates the world with the sun, moon, etc., the same way all over again after each pralaya.



Sri bala deva vidyA bhUshaN gives an interpretation along the lines of that of Sri BhaTTar:

“utpatti vinASa virahAdanAdi nidhanaH kAraNatve

virin'cyAdibhyo viSesham Aha dhAtA iti |

acit samashTau prakRti yonau cit samshTau

virin'ci garbhasya dhAraNAt ituarthaH |”

He Who is the cause of creation, protection and destruction, and He Who sows the seed for brahmA (creates brahmA), by the union of the cit samashTi and acit samsashTi (samashTi = conglomerate).

All the other interpreters that we cover have used the root dhA - dhAra poshaNayoH, or the root dheT - pibe - to drink. These interpretations are covered under nAma 951 (Sloka 102).

nAma 44. विधाता - vidhatA

vidhAtre namaH.

- a) He Who specially protected the seed He sowed for brahmA till the seed fully developed into the creation of catur-mukha brahmA.
- b) The Ordainer of the laws of conduct for all, including the likes of yama.
- c) The Dispenser of the fruits of action and the inducer of action.
- d) The Supporter of all supports such as AdiSesha.
- e) He Who lays down the code of conduct and the fruits to be attained from them.
- f) He Who protects the beings of this world in diverse ways (vi-dhAtA; vi = vividhaiH).
- g) He Who bestows the desires of His devotees.
- h) He Who is borne by garuDa, His vehicle (vi-dhAtA; vi = garuDa).





This nAma occurs again in Slokam 51 (nAma 485).

The meaning for the nAma can be understood based on the following meanings given in the dictionary, and the derivation given by SrI vAsishTha, among others:

1. vidhAtR - A maker, a creator. Grantor, giver, bestower.
2. vidhAnam - arranging, disposing.
3. vidhAnam - a rule, precept, ordinance, sacred rule or precept, sacred injunction.
4. vidhAtA - vidhAnasya kartA - He Who ordains the rules etc.

For nAma 43, SrI BhaTTar uses the meaning "Creator" for the word dhAtA. For the current nAma, he continues on this interpretation, discussed below. SrI baladeva vidyA bhUshaN also continues on this same line. All the other interpreters we have been covering, use one of the other meanings for their interpretations. These other interpretations are covered under nAma 485 in Slokam 51.

a) For nAma 44, SrI BhaTTar continues on the interpretation of nAma 43 (dhAtA - The Creator), and gives the explanation that bhagavAn is vidhAtA because He not only initiated the creation of brahmA in the form of the garbha (nAma 43), but also He protected the garbham until brahmA was born. SrI v.v. rAmAnujan explains that the nAma dhAtA refers to bhagavAn creating the seed for brahmA, and vidhAtA as referring to nurturing this seed and making it come into existence. SrI mad SrI mushNam ANDavan explains the nAma as: viSesheNa dhAtA vidhAtA.

SrI BhaTTar gives several supporting references:

yo brahmANam vidadhAti pUrvam yo vai vedAnSca prahiNoti tasmai |

tam ha devam Atam buddhi prakASam mumukshur-vai

SaraNam aham parapdye ||

(SvetAS. 6.18)

"I, an aspirant after liberation, seek refuge in the effulgent God who created





brahmA first, and who endowed him with the Vedas also, and on account of whom my intellect shines”.

1. hiraNyagarbham paSyata jAYamAnam (tait. NArA.) – BhagavAn saw brahmA as he was being born.
2. tasmAt virAT ajAyata (purusha.sUk.) – From Him, virAt (i.e., brahmA) was born.
3. tasmin jaj~ne svayam brahmA sarva-loka pitAmahaH (manu. 1.9) – Therein was born brahmA himself, who is known as the grandsire of the universe”.

SrI baladeva vidyAbhUshaN's interpretation is the same as that of SrI BhaTTar – tam garbham pariNamayya AvirbhAvayati it vidhAtA. SrI kRshNan's anubhavam is that bhagavAn is called vidhAtA because He carefully protected brahmA in His beautiful nAbhi kamalam or the lotus in the navel, until he was born.

Please see the write-up under Slokam 51 (nAma 485) for other interpretations.

nAma 45. धातुरुत्तमः - dhAturuttamah

- a) One who is far superior to Brahma (dhAtr)
- b) The best of all basic constituents

dhAturuttamAya namah

The first interpretation is self-explanatory based on the previous two nAmas. Another explanation given is based on the word dhAtu, which means "element" or basic constituent. He is the ultimate constituent of all, and so He is dhAturuttama.



SIOkam 6

अप्रमेयो हृषीकेशः पद्मनाभोऽमरप्रभुः ।

विश्वकर्मा मनुस्त्वष्टा स्थविष्ठस्स्थविरो ध्रुवः ॥ ६ ॥

apramEyO hrushikEsah padmanAbhOsmaraprabhuh |

visvakarmA manustvashTA sthavishThas sthavirO dhruvah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 46. अप्रमेय - apramEyah

One who cannot be defined, explained, measured, etc. through logical means, (but who can only be experienced)

apramEyAya namah

pramAtum na yogya: aprameyah -

He is beyond reach through normal means because:

1. He is beyond sense organs (**pratyaksha**) such as our mortal eyes, ears, etc.;
2. nor through inference (**anumAna**) because he is devoid of the marks leading to inference (e.g., the presence of fire can be inferred through smoke but, for this inference, one should have witnessed fire and smoke together at least once. No one has seen the Lord with or without anything associated);
3. nor through analogy or comparison (**upamA**), because He is without parts and everything else is only parts, and hence no comparison can be made;
4. nor through **Apta vAkyA** or **shabda pramANa** (someone else who has seen Him telling us, or through sacred texts) because no one can see Him, since even the **muktAs** only experience Him.



Sri Bhattar goes on to point out that BhagavAn is aprameya because He is beyond the sense organs of even Brahma and other gods (Sri RADhAKrshNa Sastri points out that the means of sensing is the same for Brahma and other gods as it is for people). He is not describable as This or That, like this or like that, or inferred because of this or because of that, etc., and so He is aprameya.

nAma 47. हृषीकेशः - hrushI kEsah

- The controller of the sense-organs of all including Brahma, Rudra etc.
- One who, in the form of the Sun and the Moon, makes this world happy through His rays

hrushikEsAya namah

The two interpretations are derived by looking at this word as hrshI kA + I sa or hrishI + kesa. The first explanation is derived from "HrshI kANAm I sah hrshI kesah - The Lord of the sense-organs. The second interpretation is given based on kesa - rays, hrshI - that give happiness.

Sri Sankara gives the following support from MahAbhArata, Moksha dharmā, SAnTi parva for the second interpretation:

"sUrya candramasoh SaSa vadamSubhi: keSa samjnitaih |
bodhayan svApayanScaiva jagadutthisThAte prthak ||
bodhanAt svApanAccaiva jagato harshaNam bhavet ||
agni shoma krtairebhih karmabhih pANdunandana |
hrI keSo'hamI sAno varado lokabhAvana: ||"

"The sun and the moon through their kesa or rays always uphold the world by awakening it and causing it to sleep. By such awakening and sleeping, the world is delighted. It is in consequence of this act of fire (Sun) and Soma who uphold the universe that I have come to be known as HrshI keSa...".

Sri T.S. Krishnamurthy, who has written an English translation to Sri Sankara





bhAshya, has taken this guNAnubhava one more step by saying that the keSa - hair of the Lord in the form of the rays of the sun and the moon give delight (harsha), and thus He is HrshI keSa.

"Chathurmudhgaramakhy'Emi 'Hrusheek'Esam Ta'Diti-prabham"



rchitralekha

hrushI kEsah





nAma 48. पद्मनाभः - padmanAbhah

One from whose navel the lotus (the cause of the Universe) emanates.
Sarva jagat kAraNam padmam nAbhau yasya sa padmanAbhah

padmanAbhAya namah

Sri Bhattar points out that this name substantiates or summaries all that has been said through the previous nAmas about BhagavAn being the creator or cause of Brahma (e.g., dhAtA, vidhAtA, dhaturuttamah).

Sri RadhAkrshNa Sastri gives a beautiful and simple explanation to enable the appreciation of this nAma. In our normal life, the child before and at birth is connected to the mother through the navel chord, and gets its nourishment from the mother through this chord. Similar is the chord from the Lord's navel, which is nothing but the Universe in its prakrti form, and which looks like a lotus which has not expanded. This is prior to its expansion through Time, and He is the nourisher of this creation of His (which is none other than Brahma).

nAma 49. अमरप्रभुः - amaraprabhuh

The Lord of the immortal gods.

amaraprabhave namah

AmarANAm prabhuh amaraprabhuh.

The Lord is amaraprabhu because He created the different devatAs and entrusted them with acts such as creation, destruction, etc., made them immortal because of their functions, and directs them in their functions.

Sri Bhattar quotes the following words ascribed to Brahma in Uttara kANda in RAmAyaNa -

"mahArNave SayAnau'psu mAm tvam pUrvam ajIjana: |
prAhApatyam tvayA karma sarvam mayi niveSitam ||

(104-4)





"You were lying on the waters of the great ocean and you first of all created me. The entire duty of the Prajapati (the rulership of the beings) was entrusted to me by you".

Also, the following from Mahabharata is given -

"etau dvau vibudha SreshThau prasAda-krodhajau smrtau |
tadAdarSita panthAnau srshTi samhAra kArakau ||" (169-19)

"These two great gods (Brahma and Rudra) are said to have emerged from the sweet temper and wrath of Bhagavan respectively. They carry out the duty of creation and destruction in the way shown by Him".

nAma 50. विश्वकर्मा - visvakarma

- One who is the agent of all actions with regard to the Universe.
- The Creator of the Universe

visvakarmaNe namah

viSvam karma jagad-vyApAraha yasya sa viSva karma. Sri Bhattar points out that this name signifies that all the entire work with regard to the affairs of the Universe are His alone either before or after the creation of Brahma. In other words, He is the director and controller.

Among the many passages in the sruti that support the interpretation are:

"so'kAmayatabahu syAm prajAyeya iti" taittiriya Aranya - 6

He willed, I shall become many, I shall take birth".

"so'bidhyAya SarI rAt svAt sirsksu: vividhAh prajA:"

"Brahman willed to create different kinds of beings out of Its body and so It did"

nAma 51. मनुः - manuh

The Great Thinker:





MananAt manuh

manavE namah

In the BrhadAraNya upanishad, we have

"nAnyo'to'sto mantA"

(B.U. 3.7.23)

"There is no thinker but Him"

To mentally conceive an act prior to the act itself is mananam. BhagavAn has to but think and not do anything else in order to achieve what He wills. The creation of the cosmos was only a minute part of His will. Sri Bhattar uses the word sankalpa lava mAtrAt - by the *mere* fraction (lava mAtrAt) of His will, to explain this

nAma 52. त्वष्टा - tvashTA

One who created all the different forms and names in this Universe.

tvashTrE namah

This name is derived from the root tvaksh - to pare, to reduce, to chisel. Sri Bhattar uses this meaning to interpret this nAma to mean that BhagavAn has "chiseled" so many diverse forms and names of gods, man, birds, plants, insects, etc., and thus He is tvashTA. He gives the taittiriya araNyaka (3-11) in support

tvashTArAm rUpANi vikurvantam vipascitam.

Sri Sankara uses the same meaning to interpret this name as indicating that BhagavAn pares down all the beings or makes them shrink at the time of cosmic dissolution or pralaya. It is interesting to note that the first interpretation refers to the creation of forms and shapes from the primordial matter, and the second interpretation refers to the dissolution of forms and shapes back into primordial matter.



nAma 53. स्थविष्ठः - sthavishThah

One who is exceedingly huge in size.

sthavishThAya namah

The name is derived from the two words sthUla and ishTha - One who willed to be huge.

Sri Bhattar points out that this huge size is the manifestation of BhagavAn as the brahmANDa (the egg-shaped universe) with the fourteen worlds. which are the places of residences for all the beings that He has created, as well as its sheath, and the sense-organs of all the beings, as well as the sound, touch, and other qualities that are the objects of these sense-organs, as well as their effects. The fourteen worlds are referred to by Sri Ramanuja in his Sri VaikuNTha-gadyam (caturdaSa bhuvanAntaram aNdam daSa guNitottaram ...) in his reference to Sri VaikunTham's location far, far beyond the limits of these fourteen worlds.

nAma 54. स्थविरः - sthavirah

One who has always existed, Older than the oldest.

sthavirAya namah

The name is derived from the root stha - tishThati - to stand. This nAma signifies that BhagavAn is not constrained by Time. All His creation goes through the cycle of creation and pralaya, and He uses Time for His creation and dissolution, but He is not constrained by it. Thus He is older than the oldest.

nAma 55. ध्रुवः - dhruvah

One who is unaffected by Time, Unchanging, Permanent.



dhruvAya namah

The word is derived from the root dhr - to carry, maintain, preserve, to be eternal, immovable - (**sthiratvAt dhruvah**). The previous nAma indicated that BhagavAn is the oldest of the oldest. This nAma signifies that He is unchanging while Time keeps moving.

Perhaps because both the nAmas sthavira and dhruva refer to the quality of BhagavAn being beyond the influence, effect, or control of Time, Sri Sankara has chosen to interpret the two words as one nAma - **sthaviro dhruvah** - One who is unchanging and older than the oldest.

Thus the sequence number for the nAmas that follow start differing from this nAma between Sri Sankara bhAshya and Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna.



SIOkam 7

अग्राह्यश्शाश्वतः कृष्णो लोहिताक्षः प्रतर्दनः ।

प्रभूतस्त्रिककुद्धाम पवित्रं मङ्गलं परम् ॥ ७ ॥

agrAhyah sAsvatah krushNO IOhitAkshah pratardanaH |

prabhUtas trikakuddhAma pavitram mangaLam param ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 56. अग्राह्यः - agrAhyah

One who is beyond the grasp of others.

agrAhyAya namah

The interpretation for this nAma by Sri Bhattar is that BhagavAn cannot be physically grasped, controlled, or acted upon by anyone or anything, and is thus beyond grasp. He gives the following reference to the sruti:

nainam Urdhvam na tiryancam na madhye parijagrabhat

One could grasp Him neither in the vertical dimension, nor in the horizontal dimension, nor in the third dimension, or for that matter, any other dimension.

Sri Sankara's interpretation is karmendriayah na grhyata iti agrAhyah -

One who cannot be grasped by the organs of action. He gives the following reference to taittiriya upanishad - yato vAco nivartante, aprApya manasA saha - He cannot be described through speech, and cannot be reached by mind.

Sri ChinmayAnanda gives us yet another interpretation. He points out that the Lord is not the "object" of perception ever by any one, but He is the "subject" who perceives. Thus He is ever the Subject but never the object of perception. He is imperceptible and incomprehensible. Sri Chinmaya refers us to the kenopanishad passage "yat cakshushA na paSyati yena cakshUmsi



paSyanti tadeva brahma tvam viddhi - Understand that Brahman is That which cannot be seen by the eyes, but because of which eyes are perceiving other things.

nAma 57. शाश्वतः - sAsvatah

One who is eternal.

sAsvatAya namah

shASvat bhavati ti shAshvatah - That which remains the same at all times is the Permanent.

Sri Bhattar points out that the fact that BhagavAn is SASvata is evident from the eternal flow of action pertaining to the world (i.e., creation etc.).

Sri Chinmaya points out that for something to be permanent, it has to be changeless with time, and BhagavAn is the controller of time, and is not controlled or affected by time, and so is Eternal and permanent.

nAma 58. कृष्णः - krushNah

- a) One who is always in a state of Bliss (with His sport of creation etc.).
- b) One who has a dark-blue complexion.

krushNAya namah

The first interpretation is supported from the following verse in MahAbhArata -

krshir-bhU-vAcakah Sabdo NaSca nirvrti vAcakah |

vishNus-tad bhAvayogAcca krshNo bhavati SASvatah ||

(MB Udyogaparva 5.68.5)

Approximately translated, this says: krishi means bhU, Na means nirvrtti or happiness and bliss, and BhagavAn is called KrshNa because He is the union of these two.





Sri krushNa
(Courtesy: www.stephen-knapp.com)

Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar interpret the name slightly differently with this same starting point. Sri Sankara interprets bhU to mean existence (bhU - bhav - to be), and Sri Bhattar interprets bhU to mean a receptacle or ground or container (e.g., bhUmi). So Sri Bhattar says that krshNa here means the receptacle of extreme joy because of His constant sport of creation etc. referred to in the previous nAma. Sri Sankara interprets the name to mean that He is the union of existence and bliss.

The second interpretation also has its support in the MahAbhArata -

krshAmi prthivi m pArtha bhUtvA kArshNAyaso halah |

krshNo varNaSca me yasmAt tasmAt krshNo'ham arjuna ||



SAnti parva 342.79

Note the words krshAmi, kArshaNa, and krshNa in the above. Each of these words leads to a new and different interpretation of the meaning of the nAma here. The meaning of the first line in the above sloka is "When the earth becomes shelled by its hard crust, I shall turn myself into an iron plough-share (black-colored), and shall plough the earth." The name krshNa can arise out of the fact that He is doing the act denoted by the word "krshAmi".

Sri Chinmaya beautifully points out that this "ploughing" refers to His ploughing all the stupidities in His devotees and preparing the heart-field, weeding out all the poisonous growth of sin, and cultivating therein pure Bliss.

The second part of the verse means "O Arjuna! Because of my dark complexion, I am called KrshNa". The dark complexion referred to above could be because He is the (dark colored) iron plough, or because He is dark complexioned like the water-bearing cloud. Either way, because of His dark complexion, He is called krshNa. Notice that the dark complexion is associated with "kAr mugil vaNNan" or "nI la megha syAmalan" - One who has the color of the rain cloud loaded with His limitless mercy.

Sri Chinmaya points out that the inner meaning behind the "dark" complexion is that BhagavAn is not easily recognized (i.e., He is veiled behind some darkness) by those who aspire to reach Him except through single-minded devotion.

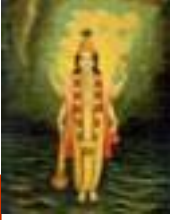
The nAma krshNa can also be interpreted in terms of the word "AkarshaNa" or magnetic attraction. He is krshNa because He irresistibly attracts all His devotees. Or He sweeps away (like a magnet drawing away the iron filings) the sins in the hearts of those who meditate upon Him.

This nAma occurs once more later as nAma 554 in "vedAh svAngo'jitah krshNo.....". Sri Bhattar gives the meaning b) for nAma 554, and gives the first explanation for the current nAma describing the paravAsudeva form.

nAma 59. लोहिताक्षः - IOhitAkshah

One with eyes red like the beautiful lotus flower.





Lohite akshiNi yasya sah lohitaKshah.

lohitaKshAya namah

Sri Bhattar enjoys the beauty of this nAma by ascribing the redness in the eye to the supreme joy that BhagavAn has. One can recall the mantra "sa mA vrshabho lohitaKshah sUryo vipaScit mansA punAtu", which we chant during our sandhyavandanam. This is the second reference so far to the beauty of BhagavAn's eyes (the earlier one was pushkaAksha).

While Sri Bhattar explains the redness of the eye as resulting from extreme joy, another explanation given is that the redness is a result of BhagavAn's anger towards the evil-doers, for the destruction of whom He takes the different avatAraS - vinASaYa ca dushkrtAm.

nAma 60. प्रतर्दनः - pratardanah

The Destroyer.

pratardanAya namah

This name is derived from the root tardih - to cause destruction. Pra-tarda means extreme destruction. Sri Bhattar gives the following from kaThopanisahd - yasya brahma ca kshtram ca ubhe bhavatah odanah - He who has for His food the brahmins and the kshatriyas (i.e., all beings of the universe) at the time of pralaya. Sri RadhAkrshNa Sastri points out that given the interpretation for this nAma, the redness of the eye in the previous nAma can be appropriately the result of anger at the time of dissolution.

nAma 61. प्रभूत - prabhUta

One who is affluent, ever full, and well-endowed with wisdom, greatness, and other qualities.

prabhUtAya namah

Literally, the word means "born full" pra-bhUta. Even though at the time of





pralaya, BhagavAn destroys everything, still His affluence remains since He has the parama-pada (the transcendental world), which is full of Bliss. And His essential Nature, well-endowed with jnAna, bala, aisvarya, vIrya, Sakti, and tejas still remain. Even after reducing everything at pralaya, the vAmana can be the trivikrama.

nAma 62. त्रिकुद्धामा - trikakud dhAmA

There are three words in this name - tri, kakub or kakut, and dhAma.

1. tri means three;
2. kakub means the direction or quarter of a compass (for example);
3. kakut means the hump (such as the hump on the back of a bull, or a peak or mountain);
4. kakub and kakut also are interchangeably used for either meaning.
5. dhAma means abode or residence, and also a ray of light or brilliance.

Several interpretations arise depending on the choice of the meanings.

trikakuddhAmanE namah

We will start with dhAma meaning brilliance. Sri Bhattar indicates that if this meaning is used, dhAma will have to be considered as a separate nAma. The first part is then interpreted as tri-kakut, which refers to the incarnation of BhagavAn as the varAha, the Boar with three horns. This interpretation for tri-kakut is supported by the following sloka from moksha dharma in the mahAbhArata -

tathaiva Asam tri-kakudo vArAham rUpam Asthitah |

trikakut tena vikhyAtah SarI rasya pramApaNAt || (moksha dharma 343-63)

"Then I assumed the form of a Boar with three horns. So I became known as 'tri-kakut'. With that form I killed the rAkshasa."

Sri Bhattar gives the above only as an alternative interpretation, but does not interpret the phrase tri-kakud-dhaAma as two separate words as explained



above. Sri Sankara also interprets tri-kakub-dhAma as one nAma.

One interpretation Sri Bhattar gives for tri-kakud-dhAma is One who has as His abode parama-pada, which is thrice as large as this universe. An alternative interpretation given is that the three parts refer to the three groupings of the six guNas (jnAna, bala, aisvarya, vlrya, Sakti, tejas), and since He is the abode of these three groups of guNas, He is tri-kakud-dhAma.

Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that He is the base or support for the three regions of the entire space, the upper, the lower, and the middle, and therefore He is tri-kakud-dhAma.

Sri Chinmaya gives the vedAntic interpretation that He is the base or support for the three states of consciousness, viz., the jAgrat, svapna, and sushupti, and this is why He is called tri-kakud-dhAma.

nAma 63. पवित्रं - pavitram

Purity Incarnate.

pavitrAya namah

Up to this point, the qualities, possessions, and body of BhagavAn have been portrayed step-by-step. Now we are passing to His essential Nature which is to be cognized through all of the above. The word is derived from poo - to purify. Either He is the Deity that purifies, or He is the means of purification. The purity referred to here is the inner purity of the mind, which He gives to those who meditate on Him.

Both Sri RadhAkrshNa Sastri and Sri Chinmaya offer a second and more uncommon interpretation - One who gives protection (trAyate) from the thunderbolt of Indra (pavi). Sri Chinmaya points out that in vedAnta indra refers to the mind (indriyANam rAjA indrah - the mind), and the thunderbolt of mind can destroy all the accomplishments of a sAdhaka, and uninterrupted meditation of Sri VishNu can give the protection against such distractions, and thus VishNu is pavi-tra.



nAma 64. मङ्गलं परम् - mangaLam param

The Embodiment of Supreme Auspiciousness

mangaLAya parasmai namah

Sri Sankara quotes the following from VishNu PurANa -

aSubhAni nirAcashTe tanoti Subhasantatim |

smrti-mAtreNa yat pumsAm brahma tanmangalam viduh ||

"Brahman is known as beneficence because He wards off all evils and brings on a series of benefits to men on being merely remembered by them".

param just emphasizes that He is the Supreme Beneficence. We may recall the introductory sloka "pavitrANAm pavitram yo mangalAnAm ca mangalam" by Bhishma; two names occur now sequentially here.



SIOkam 8

ईशानः प्राणदः प्राणो ज्येष्ठश्चेष्टः प्रजापतिः ।

हिरण्यगर्भो भूगर्भो माधवो मधुसूदनः ॥ ८ ॥

I sAnah prANadah prANO jyEshThas srEshThah prajApatih |

hiraNyagarbhO bhUgarbhO mAdhavO madhusUdanah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 65. ईशानः - I sAnah

The controller

IsAnAya namah

By this name, BhagavAn is clearly distinguished from the bound souls, released souls, and ever-free souls. The name signifies that it is His innate nature to keep all things under control under all circumstances. The name is derived from the root Is - to command, to control, to rule, to possess.

nAma 66. प्राणदः - prANadah

The life-giver

prAnadAya namah

a) prANAn dadAti iti prANa-dah

This gives the first example of how BhagavAn is the controller as indicated in the previous nAma. Sri Bhattar indicates that the life-giving function referred to here is the act of BhagavAn in giving the strength to the nitya-sUris or ever-free Angels to visualize Him always, enjoy Him and do service to Him.

Sri Sankara points out that in addition to the above interpretation, the same name can be interpreted to mean that BhagavAn is also the taker of the prANa



- prANAn dyati iti - One who takes away the prANa or vital airs at the time of death, or prANAn dl payati iti - One who purifies and brightens the vital airs.

nAma 67. प्राणः - prANah

Life.

prANaya namah

That which sustains is prANa - prANiti iti prANah. That which has prANa functioning in it is a prANI. BhagavAn is PrANa because He sustains the PrANI. The name can also be understood as referring to BhagavAn being the cause of the prANA or life-impulse in the air that sustains the life - in kenopanishad we find the Supreme defined as prANasya prANah - the prANA of prANA itself.

nAma 68. ज्येष्ठः - jyEshThah

Older than the oldest.

jyEshThAya namah

Vrddhatamo jyeshThah.

Brahma is called vrddha-tara since he is older than all other beings that he created as a result of this function being entrusted in Him by BhagavAn; BhagavAn is vrddha-tama because He created Brahma, and is thus older than Brahma. Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that jyeshTha is the superlative of vrddha (vrddha - aged; jyAyAn - more aged; jyeshTha - most aged).

nAma 69. श्रेष्ठः - srEshThah

Most praise-worthy.

srEshThAya namah





PraSasyatamo SreshThah.

SreshTha is the superlative of sreya - glorious. It is to be noted that the sequence of the three names above, prANa, jyeshTHa and SreshTHa is the same sequence that occurs in the chandogyopanishad - prANo vAva jyeshThaSca SreshTHASca.

nAma 70. प्रजापतिः - prajApatih

Lord of the Ever-free Angels.

prajApatayE namah

PrakarsheNa jAyante iti prajAh, teshAm patih prajApatih - The leader of those who have a glorious birth - the nitya-sUris, who are far superior to the baddha and mukhta, or the bound and freed souls.

An explanation which interprets the term prajA to mean all beings, rather than the special class of Ever-free Angels, has also been provided, and thus the meaning in this case will be Lord of all beings.

nAma 71. हिरण्यगर्भः - hiraNyagarbhah

He who is in a lovely Abode.

hiraNyagarbhAya namah

The word hiraNya means golden. Sri Bhattar interprets it as fitting or lovely. The word garbha means womb. Sri Bhattar interprets it as the Abode or Living Place. Thus the meaning - One who is in a fitting or Lovely Abode, viz. The Parama Padam. Or, He is the garbha , or originator, of hiraNya or gold, a term used to refer to all that is the Object of fulfillment and joy.

nAma 72. भूगर्भः - bhUgarbhah

One for whom the Earth is the object of protection.





bhUgarbhAya namah

He is the protector of Mother Earth. It can also mean One who has the Universe in Himself - bhU garbhe yasya sah bhUgarbhah. Or, He is the garbha, or Originator, of the Universe. BhU, which is His garbha, is constantly and lovingly nurtured and nourished through His very Essence.

nAma 73. माधवः - mAdhavah

- a) The consort of MA or Lakshmi.
- b) One who is attained through the madhu vidyA, or through mauna, dhyAna, and yoga
- c) The Lord of knowledge or the propounder of the knowledge of the Supreme Being.
- d) One who is born in the race of Madhu, a yAdhava
- e) One for whom there is no Lord (i.e., One who is the Lord of everyone)
- f) A silent observer, a maunee,

mAdhavAya namah

The nAma mAdhava occurs three times (nAma 73, 169, 741) in Sri VishNu sahasranAmam, and different interpretations are offered in the three contexts. We will deal with all the different interpretations here, and will refer back to this section for the future.

- a) MAyAh dhavah mAdhavah - One who is the Lord or consort of MA or Lakshmi.

The concept here is that BhagavAn and Sri are eternally and constantly associated with each other, and inseparable. As if to emphasize this, Sri Bhattar gives the detailed explanation for the qualities of MA or Lakshmi under this name, rather than dwell on the nAma MAdhava.

In Brahma PurANa, we have

tat Saktih durjayA bhI mA vishNu-Saktih iti smrtA |



sarvabhUta hrdabjasthA nAnArUpa dharA parA ||
prANAkhyA mantramAtA ca viSvasya janani dhruvA ||

"Her power is invincible and awe-inspiring and She is considered the power of VishNu Himself. She is the Supreme Being who lives in the hearts of all beings of the universe and She is endowed with divine forms. Her name is prANa or life. She is the Mother of all mantras, and is the eternal Mother of the Universe".



mAdhavan

(sri LakshmikaNta PerumAL at Hedathale, Mysore.)

(A rare image of the samaashrayaNa thirukolam with reverse aayudhams and padmam and gadhai in upper hands)

(pic. Courtesy: Sri Lakshminarasimhan Sridhar, Bangalore)

It continues on to say that She pervades the entire universe, moving and non-moving - jagat carAcaram idam sarvam vyApya vyavasthitA.

In Sri Lakshmi sahasranAmam, She is called the Supreme Prakrti who possesses the six qualities (shAdguNya)- jnAna, bala, aiSvarya, vIrya, Sakti, tejas. She is the supreme, unique, and eternal Sakti of BhagavAn. She is one



with Him, and yet remains distinct like the moon-light of the cool-rayed moon. She pervades the Universe and is the very embodiment of all Saktis. She is endowed with all glory and qualities, and is eternal. Her dharma is the same as that of BhagavAn. She is the life-giving Sakti of all beings on earth. These are expressed in the following Slokas:

mahAvibhUteh sampUrNa shAdguNya vapushah prabhoh |

bhagavad vAsudevasya nityaiva eshA anapAyinI ||

ekaiva vartate bhinnA jyotsneva himadI dhiteh |

sarvaSaktyAtmikA caiva viSvam vyApya vyavasthitA ||

sarvaiSvarya guNopetA nityam taddharma dharmiNI |

prANaSaktih parA hyeshA sarveshAm prANiNAM bhuvi ||

The secret of the true nature of MA is thus summarized -

SraddhayA devo devatvam aSnute

Madhava gets His Lordship because of His association with MA or Lakshmi.

b) One who is attained through the madhu vidyA, involving mauna, dhyAna, and yoga.

The support for this comes from the mahAbhArata -

madhuvidyAvabodhatvAt dhavatvAdvA Sriyo'niSam |

maunAd-dhyAnAcca yogAcca viddhi bhArata mAdhavam ||

(Udyog a parva 68.4)

Here, mA stands for mauna, dha stands for dhyAna, and va stands for yoga. He is experienced by the seeker who has stilled his mind through mauna, dhyAna, and yoga practices. Or, it can be said that He is mAdhava because He is endowed with mauna, dhyAna, and yoga - He silently observes the physical, mental, and intellectual activities of all beings, and is ever the non-interfering Observer.

c) The Lord of knowledge.



In this interpretation, mA stands for knowledge, and dhava is Lord. The support for this interpretation comes from HarivamSa -

mA vidyA ca hareh proktA tasyA | So yato bhavAn |
tasmAd mAdhava nAmAsi dhavah svAmI ti Sabditah ||

(HarivamSa 3.88.49)

"O Hari! You are the Lord (dhava) of mA (knowledge); hence you are named Madhava, the Master of mA".

d) madhukule jAtatvAt mAdhavah - One who is born in the race of Madhu, a yAdava.

e) mA dhavah yasya sa mAdhavah - One for whom there is no other Lord. This interpretation is included as one of the explanations for this name by ThirukkaLLAm sri NrsimharAghavAchAriAr in his bhAshya on Sri Bhagavad GI tA.

f) One who is the Silent Observer - this is discussed under item b) above.

nAma 74. मधुसूदनः - madhusUdanah

The slayer of the evil demon called Madhu.

madhusUdhanAya namah

In the MahAbhArata we have the following -

vishNu karNodbhavam cApi madhu nAma mahAsuram |
tasya tAvadvadhAdeva deva dAnava mAnavAh madhusUdhana
ityAhur-rshayaSca janArdanam ||

(MahAbhArata 2.63.13)

"Because Sri VishNu destroyed the mahAsuran by name madhu, He is called MadhusUdhana by the sages, devas, asuras, and men".

Sri ChinmayAnanda indicates that madhu is a term used in vedAnta to refer to



the fruits of actions. Since BhagavAn destroys the effects of the fruits of actions of those who meditate on Him, He is madhusUdana.



SIOkam 9

ईश्वरो विक्रमी धन्वी मेधावी विक्रमः क्रमः ।

अनुत्तमो दुराधर्षः कृतज्ञः कृतिरात्मवान् ॥ ९ ॥

I svarO vikramI i dhanvI mEdhAvI vikramah kramah |
anuttamO durAdharshah krutaj~nah krutirAtmavAn ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 75. ईश्वरः - I svarah

The Ruler.

IsvarAya namah

This nAma occurred earlier (nAma 36). At that time we had indicated that the name can be interpreted as One who has unlimited aiSvarya, or One who can do whatever He wills (IshTe). AiSvarya means might or power, sovereignty, affluence or wealth, etc. Sri Sankara seems to interpret the first occurrence of this nAma as One who has unlimited might, and the next one as One who has unlimited power. Sri Bhattar interprets the first occurrence as One who has supreme power of rulership over all beings, and seems to interpret the second one as One who does whatever He wills - *yatra kAma gamo vaSI* - He has self-control and goes wherever He wants. Sri ChinmayAnanda interprets the first occurrence as One who has the ability to do whatever He wants and the second occurrence as One who is Omni-potent or All-powerful, with control over all forms of Sakti - *kriyA Sakti*, *icchA Sakti*, and *jnAna Sakti*. However, all of them seem to use the two variants we have covered under nAma 36.

nAma 76. विक्रमी - vikramI

a) The most courageous, The most powerful.



b) One who has the "Special" footsteps viz. Vamana

vikramiNe namah

Vikramah Souryam, tadyogAt vikramI - vikrama is courage; He who is ever a courageous One, is vikramI .

Sri Bhattar points out that the name signifies that it is His nature that it dispels all possibility of anything going against His will or desire.

Sri ChinmayAnanda gives the additional interpretation which uses the meaning of krama as steps, and interprets the nAma as One who has "Special" footsteps, referring to the vAmana incarnation.

nAma 77. धन्वी - dhanvI

The wielder of the bow.

dhanvinE namah

Dhanurasya asti iti dhanvI .

He is the wielder of the divine bow Sarnga. It is well-known that in His incarnation as Sri Rama, He had to dedicate a substantial part of His life wielding His bow.

In the GitA, Sri KrshNa says -

rAmah Sastra bhrtAmaham - I am Rama among the wielders of the bow.

nAma 78. मेधावी - mEdhAvI

One who is capable of powerful memory.

mEdhAvinE namah

Sri Sankara gives the following definition -

"medhA bahugrantha dhAraNa sAmarthyam, sa yasya asti sa medhAvI - medhA is the ability to grasp several ideas on different subjects at the same time;



One who has this ability naturally is medhAvI .

Sri RadhAkrshNa Sastri points out that BhagavAn is I svara, vikramI , dhanvI , etc., because He is a medhAvI , one who can command the knowledge of anything at any time as desired.

nAma 79. विक्रमः - vikramah

- One with great strides (see nAma 76), such as in the vAmana incarnation
- One who rides on the king of birds, the Garuda.

vikramAya namah

The first meaning has been explained under the earlier nAma 76. The second is derived as follows: vi refers to the king of birds, Garuda; krama refers to His sancAra playfully on the Garuda who is the embodiment of the three vedas, around the world.

nAma 80. क्रमः - kramah

- One who is the basis for the order in the Universe
- One who controls and bestows the power of movement
- One who is highly prosperous

kramAya namah

Krama can refer to systematization, sequence, ordering etc. (The word kramam is commonly used in Tamil as a word acquired from Sanskrit with this meaning). It can also refer to steps, as we indicated under vikramI , virkramah, etc., and as a result, motion.

Based on the meaning as ordering or sequence, He is the one who makes the events of the world conform to an order, for e.g., night and day following each other.

Based on the meaning as steps or motion, He is responsible for the power of



His creatures having the power of motion or movement.

According to PaNini sUtra 1.3.38, which reads "vrtti-sarga-tAyaneshu kramah", krama also can indicate continuity, energy, or good progress or development. Sri Bhattar uses the last of these, and gives the meaning "One who has great prosperity".

nAma 81. अनुत्तमः anuttamah

One for whom there is nothing superior or better.

anuttamAya namah

na vidyamAna uttamo yasmAt sah anuttamah - One for whom nothing superior is known.

The nirukti summarization of Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna is uttamo nAsti yasmAt sah anuttama udAhrta.

nAma 82. दुराधर्षः durAdharshah

daityAdhibih dharshayitum na sakyata iti durAdharshah -

One who cannot be overcome by the demons and others.

durAdharshAya namah

nAma 83. कृतज्ञः krutaj~nah

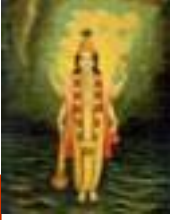
One who is grateful.

krutaj~nAya namah

Sri Bhattar gives the following references from the GI tA in support of this interpretation:

api cet sudurAcAro bhajate mAm anayabhAk |





sAdhureva sa mantavyah samyag vyavasito hi sah ||

(9.30)

A portion of the translation of the bhAshya of Sri RAmAnuja for the above sloka is: "If even the most sinful man worships Me with undivided devotion, with worship as the only purpose, such a person must be considered highly righteous. He is eminent among the worshippers of VishNu - a great Sri VaishNava (vaishNava SreshThasara eva mantavyah are Sri RAmAnujA's own words). He must be esteemed as fit for honor."

BhagavAn is so grateful that the mere worship of Him with sincerity is sufficient for Him to forgive all other sins committed by the worshipper.

The second support given by Sri Bhattar for the gratefulness of BhagavAn for a devotee who cried for help with full surrender to Him is from the MahAbhArata -

govindeti yadAkrandat krshNA mAm dUravAsini |

rNam pravrdhamiva me hrdayAt na apasarpati ||

(MB 3-58-22)

"That cry for help uttered aloud by Draupadi even from a distance, calling me "Govinda" - that cry is never away from my mind like a debt that has increased with the interest accumulated on it".

Sri Sankara points out that He confers emancipation (moksha) on those that offer to Him in worship even such common objects as a leaf or flower - patrapushpAdyalpamapi prayacchatAm moksham dadAti.

Another explanation given for this nAma is that BhagavAn is One who knows the actions of all the other beings, good and bad - prANinAm puNya apuNya Atmakam karma krtam jAnAti iti krtajnah. He is the one Knower who knows all physical activities, all emotional feelings, and all intellectual thoughts and motives.

Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that He knows the exact depth of sincerity, the true ardency of devotion, the real amount of purity in the heart of His devotees, and as a result of His gratitude, He brings joy and bliss to their hearts because He is a krtajna.





nAma 84. कृतिः krutih

One who is the cause of the virtuous act of His devotees.

krutayE namah

In the previous nAma we saw that BhagavAn has great gratitude for the good acts of His devotees. Through the current nAma it is pointed out that in reality BhagavAn is really the cause behind the good deeds, and all we can and should do is practice pure and sincere devotion.

Sri Bhattar points out that BhagavAn alone makes us do virtuous acts when He wants to lift us up from the worlds of material existence. The virtuous act of the Jiva owes its origin to the Lord when He is pleased - *tacca teshAm sukrtam asmAdeva prasannAt iti krtih.*

nAma 85. आत्मवान् - AtmavAn

The real Owner and Controller of the souls of those who do these virtuous acts.

AtmavatE namah

The basic elemental fact that stands out from the last three nAmas is that it is not we who bring about our salvation through our effort or actions; it is He who makes it happen based on the sincerity of our devotion, trust, and surrender to Him as the sole cause of our salvation. He is the krtajna who, just pleased immensely by our small effort of sincere devotion, will cause our souls which He owns, and divert it towards actions that He will then use as the hetu or reason or pretext for conferring His blessings on us.

Another explanation Sri RAdhAkrshNa SAstri gives for this nAma is One who is not dependent on anything else for His actions - for example when He killed PUnA the demoness, He drank the same milk that she gave Him to bring about her destruction.



SlOkam 10

सुरेशशरणं शर्म विश्वरेताः प्रजाभवः ।

अहस्संवत्सरो व्याळः प्रत्ययस्सर्वदर्शनः ॥ १० ॥

surEsassaraNam sarma visvarEtAh prajAbhavah |
ahassammvatsarO vyALah pratyayassarvadarsanah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 86. सुरेशः - surEsah

- a) The Lord of all the other gods.
- b) The best among those who can bestow their devotees' desires.

surEsAya namah

a) SurANAm I Sah sureSah.

The word sura means one who can fulfill the desires of the devotees (sushThu rAti - dadAti - iti surah. He is sureSa because He created the other gods (sura) such as Brahma and Rudra and conferred on them the functions for which they are responsible.

b) su rA I sah - Best among those who can bestow blessings on their devotees. su - Sobhanam, rAti - dadAti, I sah - Their Lord or The Best. Thus sureSa means the best among those who can fulfill the desires of the devotees. Sriman nArAyaNa is the only one who can fulfill the ultimate desire of the devotees - that of moksha.

nAma 87. शरणम् - saraNam

The Refuge.

saraNAya namah



According to amarakoSa, SaraNam means protection as well as home - SaraNam vadha rakshitror grha rakshaNayorapi. BhagavAn is the Ultimate Refuge to those who are in misery - ArtAnAm Arti hantAram. He is the also the final Goal or the Destination - nivasishyasi mayyeva ata Urdhvam na samSayah; the one who realizes Him comes to live in Him. Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that He is not only the Home for those who have realized Him, but in pralaya time He is the home for all beings.

nAma 88. शर्म sarma

One who is Bliss, the Highest Goal to be attained.

sarmaNE namah

AmarakoSa gives this word as an alternative (i.e., with the same meaning) as prIti, sukha, etc. In the vyAkhyAna for amarakoSa, LingAyasurin gives the following derivation - SrNAti dukkham iti Sarma - One who destroys or removes the sorrows. Both Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar give the meaning "Bliss". ParamAnanda rUpatvAt Sarma, and sukham paramprApyam iti Sarma, respectively. I could not find the root word for the nAma from the dictionary. Sir William-Monier's dictionary speculates that the name is probably derived from Sri.

nAma 89. विश्वरेताः - visvarEtAh

The seed for the Universe.

visvarEtasE namah

retas means seed. ViSvam kAryam asya iti viSvaretA, or viSvasya kAraNatvAt viSvaretA.

The name denotes that He is the seed from which the tree of life has sprung forth. Later on, in nAmas 118 and 151, we will see that He is the also the viSvayoni where the seed develops and takes full form. In other words,





everything results from Him and exists because of Him. Sri Bhattar notes that the purpose of His creation is for His service and His service only. In vishNu tatva, we have the following -

"vicitrA deha sampattih I svarAya niveditum |

pUrvameva krtA brahman! Hasta-pAdAdi samyutA ||

"Brahman! This wonderful wealth, namely body, associated with hands, legs, etc., has already been created by me with a view to enable beings to use them in the service of the Supreme."

nAma 90. प्रजाभवः - prajAbhavh

One from whom all beings have originated.

prajAbhavAya namah

In nAma 70, prajApati, we found that prajA can refer to those special births (prakarsheNa jAyante) such as the nitya suris. So here prajAbhava can refer to the general interpretation that prajA refers to all beings, or more specifically that He created all the other suris or Ever-Free Angels. Sri rAdhAkrshNa SAstri points out that while normal evolution starts with primitive forms and evolves to higher forms, BhagavAn deiced to create the higher forms such as Brahma first, and then the forms that are not as accomplished, such as all the animals, the humans, etc., later.

nAma 91. अहः - ahah

- a) One who never forsakes anyone.
- b) One who is like the Day that awakens people from ignorance.
- c) One who does not destroy His devotees.

The first interpretation is based on "na hInah asya asti iti ahah - There is no one who is abandoned by Him. The second interpretation is based on the





traditional meaning of the word aha - day. The third interpretation is derived by a-ha, where ha means destroy; One who does not destroy is a-ha.

nAma 92. संवत्सरः - samvatsarah

He who lives for the uplift of His devotees.

samvatsarAya namah

This name repeats again as nAma 423. The meaning is derived from the root vas - to live. *samuddharaNAya samvasati iti samvatsarah*. The term samvatsara is also used to denote the year, and hence another interpretation for this nAma is that BhagavAn is Time itself.

nAma 93. व्याळः - vyALah

a) One who accepts the devotees - e.g., vibhI shaNa.

b) One who is beyond grasp such as a vyAla - a serpent, an elephant, a tiger, etc.

vyALAYa namah

Sri Bhattar gives the first interpretation based on the root IA - to take or accept. VyAla also means a serpent, a mad elephant, a vicious tiger etc. BhagavAn is vyAla because He is slippery like a serpent to grasp, or beyond grasp like a huge elephant. Or He is impossible to be controlled by the demons, like a mad elephant - *vyAlavat bhujangavat gajavat grahI tum aSakyatvAt vyALah*.

nAma 94. प्रत्ययः pratyayah

One who can be relied upon.

pratyayAya namah





Pratlyate asmin iti pratyayah - One in whom we can place confidence. In the sabhA parva in mahA bhArata, we have

"yadi te hrdayam vetti yadi te pratyayo mayi |
bhl masenArjunau SI ghram nyAsabhUtau prayaccha me || (20.7)

"If your heart understands me, and if you have FAI TH in me, place Bhl ma and arjuna immediately at my disposal".

nAma 95. सर्वदर्शनः sarvadarsanah

- a) One who shows all His grace to His devotees
- b) The All-seeing.

saravadarsanAya namah

Sri Bhattar interprets darSana to mean He shows everything, and Sri Sankara interprets this word to mean He sees everything. Great indeed are the ways great minds see and enjoy the BhagavAn in many different ways! Sri Sankara gives the following reference to the sruti -

"viSvataScakshur viSvAksham - One who has eyes on all sides - One who has a Universal eye". (taittiriya AraNyaka 10.1, 11).

Sri ChinmayAnanda gives the following reference to GI tA -
sarvato'kshi Siromukham - One who has eyes and heads everywhere.





SLOkam 11

अजस्सर्वेश्वरस्सिद्धः सिद्धिस्सर्वादिरच्युतः ।

वृषाकपिरमेयात्मा सर्वयोगविनिस्सृतः ॥ ११ ॥

ajassarvEsvaras siddhah siddhis sarvAdiracyutah |

vrushAkapi ramEyAtmA sarvayOga vinissrutah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 96. अजः - ajah

- a) Unborn.
- b) The Remover of all obstacles.
- c) One who moves in the hearts of the devotees
- d) One who removes the ignorance from the hearts of His devotees
- e) One who is the root of all sound (akshara "a").

This nAma occurs two more times later (nAma 206 and 524).

ajAya namah

a) The first meaning is derived as na jAyata iti ajah - One who is not born in the traditional sense.

Sri Sankara gives the following from the srutis to support this explanation:

na jAto na janishyate (Rg veda 1.81.5)

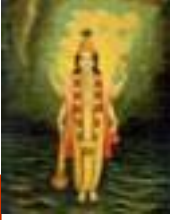
He was neither born nor will be born

"na hi jAto na jAye'yam na janishye kadAcana |

kshetraj~nah sarvabhUtAnAm tasmAt aham ajah smrtah ||

MB SAntiparva 330.9





"I was not born, nor am I born, nor will I have a future birth; I am the soul in all beings; hence I am called the Unborn".

Other references to the name aja are:

1. "ajo nityah SASvato'yam purANah" (kaThopanishad 1.2.18), and
2. "sa vA esha mahAn aja AtmA" (brhadAraNyaupanishad 4.4.22).

Sri Bhattar points out that BhagavAn only emerges out of a pillar etc., but is not born like others (see the explanation for svayambhuh - nAma 37).

b) There are several interpretations of the nAma aja using the meaning "movement" for the root aj - aja gati kshepaNayoh - The root 'aj' signifies movement or throwing away .

Sri Bhattar uses this meaning and interprets the name as meaning "The Remover of all obstacles" to ensure that His devotees accomplish in their objective of reaching Him.

Sri Sankara uses the same meaning for aja (movement, motion) and comes up with the explanation - ajati gacchati kshipati iti vA ajah - He who moves into the heart of His devotees.

Sri rAdhAkrshNa SAstri uses the meaning "movement" and interprets the name as Remover of the ignorance in us, or One who goes to the bhaktas to enable them to reach Him, or One who throws away His weapons at anyone who disturbs or causes hardship to His devotees.

One other explanation given for aja is akAravAcyatayA jAtah - One who is known through the letter "a". - akAra vAcyatayA jAtah ajah. In the gltA we have "aksharANaAm akAro'smi - (gl tA 10.33) - I am "a" among the syllables. Sri rAdhAkrshNa SAstri points out that at the time of pralaya the panca bhUtas coalesce into ether (the reverse of AkASAt vAyuh, vAyoragnih, aganerApah, adbhyah pethivi, etc.), and the ether coalesces into its tanmAtra, the sound, and Sabda ultimately dissolves into the sound "a", which is the form of BhagavAn at the conclusion of pralaya. The sruti is 'akAro vai sarvA vAk". In tirukkural we have "akara mudalAya ezhutthellAm Adi





bhaghavan mudatre ulagu".

nAma 97. सर्वेश्वरः - sarvEsvarah

- a) One who reaches all who seek Him
- b) One who is the I svara for all isvaras

sarvEsavarAya namah

- a) Sri Bhattar derives the first interpretation from the root aS to pervade. By the uNAdi sUtra 738, aSnoterASukarmaNi varat ca - the affix varat comes after the root aS - to pervade, when the word formed from it refers to "having the power of granting success soon". Thus aS + varat = ISvarah. The interpretation is that He is sarveSvara because He quickly reaches all those who have taken refuge in Him in order to avoid delay in dispelling their uneasiness whether they are qualified or not. Or rather, the sufficient qualification is that they have taken refuge in Him.
- b) sarveshAm ISvarANAm ISvarah sarveSvarah. The Sruti says - esha sarveSvarah - BrhadAraNya upanishad - 4.4.22 - He is the Lord of all lords.

nAma 98. सिद्धः - siddhah

One who is available at the hands of His devotees.

siddhAya namah

niruktam summarizes Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna as svarUpeNaiva bhaktAnAm siddhatvAt siddhah ucyate - He is in the hands of His devotees in His true form. A siddha can also mean One who has accomplished all that has to be achieved. Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that He is ever perfect - nitya nishpanna rUpatvAt siddhah.

An interpretation for the amarakoSa gives the definition siddhyati iti siddhah.





nAma 99. सिद्धिः - siddhih

The Goal.

siddhayE namah

The word siddhi literally means accomplishment, success etc. BhagavAn is siddhi because He is the Goal or accomplishment by adopting the means. Or, in the context of success or accomplishment, He is siddhi because He gives the ultimate fruit of action, moksha. All other accomplishments can only give lesser benefits such as the lesser joys of heaven etc., but only by attaining Him one can get moksha, the ultimate success.

nAma 100. सर्वादिः sarvAdih

The Origin or Cause of all things.

sarvAdayE namah

SarveshAm purushArtAnAm Adih sarvAdih or sarva bhUtAnAm AdikAraNatvAt sarvAdih. One who is the very beginning of all; One who was in existence earlier than anything else. Even before the effects arise, the Cause. The Infinite which was before creation, and from which the created beings emerged out.

nAma 101. अच्युतः - acyutah

- One who has never slipped from His glory.
- One who never lets His devotees slip.
- One who undergoes no modifications such as birth, growth, decay, disease, etc.

acytuAya nam





*Sri acyutan - ThiruvahIndrapuram
(Courtesy: ramanuja dasargaL at www.pbse.com/svami)*

This nAma occurs two more times later (320 and 557).

a) **cyti** means "fall" and **cyuta** means "fallen". acyuta means "One who has never fallen from His true nature". Several explanations are given to further expand this guNa of the Lord. Sri Bhattar points out that He does not ever fall from His position of overlordship unlike Brahma, Indra, etc. who are subject to loss of position, and therefore He is called acyuta. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that He also does not slip from His position by being influenced by kAma etc. unlike Brahma, Indra etc.

In mahAbhArata we have

"yasmAt na cyuta pUrvo'ham acyutastena karmaNA"

SAnti parva 12.330.16.

Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar have interpreted the above sruti slightly



differently. Sri Sankara's words are - svarUpasAmarthyAt na cyuto na cyavate na cyavishyata iti acyutah - He has not lapsed, is not lapsing, and will not lapse from His own glory; hence the name acyuta. Sri Bhattar's interpretation of the above Sruti lead to the second meaning, which follows:

b) Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna for the above is "I have never abandoned (my bhaktas). Because of this act of mine, I am known as acyuta". His words are "tebyah prapannebhyah na apagatah acyutah - He is never away from those who have sought refuge in Him". Sri tirukkaLLam nrsimharAghavAchAryar in his bhagavadGItA bhAshya has given the explanation na cyAvayati iti acyutah - One who does not let His devotees slip - arjuna using this name here to call Lord krshNa who has taken it upon Himself to be his charioteer and who will not let him slip.

c) cyutam means modification. The upanishad says of BhagavAn - "SASvatam Sivam acyutam" - Eternal, Auspicious, and Changeless" - taittiriya AraNyakam - 10.11). Sri rAdhAkrshNa SAstri points out that BhagavAn is acyuta because he does not slip from stage to stage in the sequence of events such as birth, living, growth, change in appearance, decay, and finally disappearance from the body.

nAma 102. वृषाकपिः - vrushAkapih

One who lifted the Earth from the waters of adharma in the form of varAha.

vrushAkapayE namah

In the mahAbhArata we have

"kapi varAhah SreshThaSca dharmasca vRsha ucyate |
tasmAd vRshAkapim prAha kASyapO mAm prajApatih || (Santi parva 330.24)

"The word vRsha means dharm, and the word kapi refers to boar (pA means to protect and ka means water, and so kapi refers to varAha incarnation where He protected the Earth from the waters). Sri chinmayAnanda points out that the name derives from the fact that He protected the Earth from the ocean



of adharmā in His varAha incarnation. The meaning dharmā for the word vRsha is based on the ability of dharmā to shower all that is desired.

Sri chinmayAnanda points out that this is one of the nAmas on which there is wide controversy between the different vyAkyAna kartAs; however, in the few tests that I have referred to, this indication of serious controversy is not evident. If any of you can elaborate on other interpretations by our AchAryas and other vyAkhyAna kartAs, I will be extremely grateful.

nAma 103. अमेयात्मा - amEyAtmA

One whose Nature cannot be comprehended.

amEyAtmanE namah

Ameya means unaccountable or incomprehensible. Sri ChinmayAnanda indicates that the virAt purusha form of the Lord is suggested here. His self or nature is such that it cannot be measured by any particular standard and determined.

nAma 104. सर्वयोगविनिस्सृतः - sarvayOgavinisrutah

- a) One who is beyond any attachment
- b) One who is easily attained by all means by His devotees

sarvayOgavinisrutAya namah

The word yoga can mean union or it can mean the means. Depending on which one of these is chosen, we get a different interpretation. VinissRta means gone forth or out, or escaped according to the Sanskrit dictionary by Sir William-Monier.

Using the first meaning for yoga, we get the interpretation that He is free from any and all of kind of bondage, and so He is sarva yoga vinissRta. Using the second meaning, Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that He is attainable easily by all means. His interpretation is -



1. yOgaih - upAyaih;
2. vi - viSheshENa - vEda parama guhyairiva;
3. nissRtah - prAptum yogyah, sugraha iti vA.



SlOkam 12

वसुर्वसुमनास्सत्यस्समात्मा सम्मितस्समः ।

अमोघः पुण्डरीकाक्षो वृषकर्मा वृषाकृतिः ॥ १२ ॥

vasur vasumanAs satyas samAtmA sammitas samah |
amoghah puNDarI kAkshO vrushakarmA vrushAkrutih ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 105. वसुः - vasuh

- a) One who dwells in the hearts of His devotees.
- b) One who dwells in the Milk-Ocean.
- c) One who is the wealth that His devotees seek.
- d) The best among the eight vasus - pAvaka.
- e) One who lives in the sky.

vasavE namah

This nAma occurs two more times (nAma 271 and 701).

a) & b): **vasati iti vasuh** - One who dwells.

He dwells in the hearts of His devotees even with a small amount of devotion, and He dwells in the kshIrArNava. Sri krshNa-prEmi in one his upanyAsas remarks that Sri man nArAyaNa chose to dwell in the Milk-Ocean as if to be nearer to those devotees who are not yet accomplished enough to join Him to SrivaikuNTham, or as if He can be closer to the devotees so as to rush to help those who need Him.

We have the following from the srutis -

"sa lokAnAm hitArthAya kshI rOdhE vasati prabhuh"





The great Lord resides in the milk ocean for doing good to the people of the world.

"Esha nArAyaNah SrImAn kshIrArNava nikEtanah"

This nArAyaNa is always with Lakshmi, and resides in the Milk-ocean (HarivamSa 113.62).

c) The word vasu also means wealth - **vasati nItimatAm gRha iti vasu**. In gl tA we have vAsudevah sarvam - vAsudeva is everything (gl tA 7.19). He is the wealth that great men seek.

d) He is vasu because He is one of the eight vasus. Sri Sankara gives the following reference to the gl tA to support this interpretation - **vasUnAm pAvakaScAsmi** - I am pAvaka among the vasus (gl tA 10.23).

e) One who, as air, moves about and has residence in the mid-region. In kaThopanishd we have vasurantiksha sat (kaThopanishahd 2.5.2).

nAma 106. **वसुमनाः - vasumanAh**

a) One who has a 'wealthy' or rich mind.

b) One who has a mind which thinks of His devotees as a treasure.

vasumanasE namah

a) BhagavAn is vasu-manA because His mind is unpolluted by anything such as rAga, dvesha (attachment, hate), and similar secondary afflictions such as mada or infatuation. He has a mind which has none of the sins of passions and pains, none of the storms of desires and jealousies, none of the quakes of likes and dislikes.

b) Sri kRshNa says in the gl tA that the high-souled man is very hard to find - sa mahAtmA sudurlabhah - gl tA 7.19.





nAma 107. सत्यः - satyah

- a) The Truth
- b) One whose form is made up of prANa, matter and sun
- c) One who is well-disposed towards the good.

satyAya namah

This nAma occurs two more times later (nAma 213, 873).

- a) The most commonly known meaning for this word is Truth. The direct support for this interpretation comes from mahAbhArata -

"satye pratisThitah kRshNah satamasmin pratishThitam |
sattAsattE ca gOvindah tasmAt satyah satAm matah ||

(udyOga parva 69.12.13)

"KRshNa is rooted in satya and satya is rooted in kRshNa. Existence and non-existence are grounded in govinda. So great men opine that kRshNa is Truth itself".

- b) Sri Sankara gives the following from aitrEya AraNyaka in support of the second interpretation -

saditi prANastI tyannam yamityasAvAdityah - sat means prANa, ti means food, and yam the sun. He is satya because His form is made up of prANa, matter and sun.

- c) satsu sAdhutvAt satyah - He is satya because He is well-disposed (excellent) towards the noble souls. The pANini sutra that supports this interpretation is tatra sAdhuh (4.4.98) -

tatrEti saptamI samarthAth sAdhurityEtasminnarthE yatpratayO bhavati

The affix yat comes after a word in the locative construction, in the sense of 'excellent in regard thereto'.

Sri ChinmayAnanda points out that in philosophy, satya is that which is the





same in all three periods (past, present, and future). He is the only one who fits this definition, and so He is satya.

nAma 108. समात्मा - samAtmA

One who has an even mind.

samAtmanE namah

One whose mind is undisturbed by love or hatred. He is also sama AtmA since He does not distinguish one from another when it comes to His thoughts on His devotees. Since He is the soul in everything, He finds no distinction between them. Since He is unattached to anything, He sees everything and everyone as equal.

nAma 109. सम्मितः - sammitah

- One who has let Himself be understood (controlled) by His devotees.
- The One Truth who is accepted by the Rshis and revealed in the upanishads.

sammitAya namah

Either meaning seems to be based on the word sammata - accepted. The first interpretation is by Sri Bhattar, who points out that this name signifies that He willingly accepted the role of being 'controlled' by devaki, kausalyA, yasoda, dasaratha, vasudeva, etc. He chose the parents to whom He was going to be the child, and then 'played' the role of the child willingly.

Sri chinmayAnanda points out that sammita can mean that He is the only one who is the accepted Truth or sammata by the Rshis and the upanishads.

The advaita pATha is asammita, which is interpreted as referring to One who is limitless or immeasurable.





nAma 110. समः - samah

One who treats all His devotees equally.

samAya namah

In gl ta we have "samO'ham sarva bhUtEshu" - I am equally disposed towards all beings (gl ta 9.29).

Sri Sankara interprets the meaning as One who is the same at all times. He gives another interpretation also - He is (sa) with (mAyA) lakshmi always; therefore, He is *sama*.

nAma 111. अमोघः - amOghah

One who always gives fruits to those who worship Him.

amoghAya namah

MOgha means futile. Mogham nirarthakam is amrakOSa. AmOgha is the opposite of it. We have the following from rAmAyaNa -

"amOgham darSanam rAma na ca mOghah tava stavah |
amOghAstE bhavishyanti bhaktimantaSca yE narAh ||

(rAmAyaNa yuddha 120.31)

"o rAma! A sight of You is never futile. The praise of You is also never futile. Those who are endowed with devotion to You will always be successful in their life".

nAma 112. पुण्डरीकाक्षः - punDarI kAkshah

- One whose eyes are beautiful like the lotus flower
- One who resides in the heart space of everyone and observes all
- One who is like the eye to the residents of Sri vaikunTham.



puNdarIkAkshAya namah

puNdarIkam means lotus flower. PuNdarIkE iva akshiNI yasya sah puNdarIkAkshah - One whose eyes are beautiful like lotus flowers.

lingAyatasUrin in his bhAshya for amarakOSa gives a second interpretation as well - puNdarIkam hRtkamalam akshatIti vA - One who pervades the heart space - akshati pervades.

SrI Bhattar gives the meaning 'vaikuNTham' to the word puNdarIkA based on the following, and interprets puNdarIkAkshah as One who is the eye for the residents of SrI vaikuNTham -

puNdarIkam param dhAma nityam aksharam avyayam |

tadbhavAn pundarIkAkshah ||

PuNdarIkA is the Transcendental world which is eternal, indestructible, and immutable. You are like the eye to that world and so you are known as puNdarIkAksha." - (MahAbhArata udyoga - 69.6).

nAma 113. वृषकर्मा - vrushakarmA

One who is of righteous actions.

vRshakarmaNE namah

VRsha means dharma or virtue - abhilashitam varshatIti vRshah. SrI chinamayAnanda points out that His actions are righteous, and He acts only to establish righteousness - dharma samsthApanArthAya sambhavAmi yugE yugE. In gl tA BhagavAn says that He does his actions according to His dharma even though He has nothing to gain or lose by any action - na anavAptam avAptavyam varta eva ca karmaNi - 3.22.

nAma 114. वृषाकृतिः - vrushAkruti

One who is an embodiment of dharma.



vRshAkRtaye namah

vRsha - dharma, AkRti - form. One whose form is itself dharma. Lord Rama is considered Dharma Incarnate. Or it can mean One who incarnates for the sake of preserving dharma - dharma samsthApanArthAya sambhavAmi yuge yuge.



SIOkam 13

रुद्रो बहुशिरा बभ्रुर्विश्वयोनिश्शुचिश्रवाः ।

अमृतश्शाश्वतस्स्थाणुर्वरारोहो महातपाः ॥ १३ ॥

rudrO bahusirA babhru visvayOnissucisravAh |
amrutas sAsvata sthANur varArOhO mahAtapAh ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 115. रुद्रः rudrah

- a) One who brings tears to the eyes.
- b) One who confers the good on the devotees
- c) One who destroys misery.

rudrAya namah

rOdayati iti rudrah - Sri Bhattar interprets this to mean that He brings tears of joy to the eyes of His devotees.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAStri gives an example from SriMad bhAgavatam in support of this, but probably because of a typographical error in the book I could not find the particular Sloka in my copy of SriMad bhAgavatam. The gist of this reference is that one who is not shedding tears of joy on hearing of bhagavAn's guNas, singing His praise etc., must indeed have a heart made of stone. The reference given is MB 3.3.24.

It could also mean that He brings tears to the eyes of the beings when He withdraws them during the pralaya.

Sri Sankara points out that it could also mean one who confers (ra) the good (rud), or it could mean one who destroys (dru) misery and its cause (ru - dukham) - rum drAvayati iti rudrah.



nAma 116. बहुशिराः - bahu-sirAh

One who is multi-headed.

bahu-SirasE namah.

In purusha sUktam of Rg veda we have the description of the cosmic form of BhagavAn described as "sahasra SIrshA purushah sahasrAkshah sahasra pAt - The purusha of thousand heads, thousand eyes and thousand feet..... In gl tA we find the following description of the viSvarUpa of bhagavAn - sarvAScaryamayam devam anantam viSvatOmukham - the rUpa with uncountable faces in all directions (11.11). Again in gl tA (13.13), we have "sarvatahpANi pAdam tat sarvato'kshi SirO mukham - The Pure jivAtma savarUpa has hands and legs everywhere, has eyes, heads, and mouths everywhere.....". Sri Bhattar has interpreted the name as referring to the form of bhagavAn as ananta, in which form He has many faces and over a thousand hoods.

nAma 117. बभ्रुः - babruh

The Supporter.

babhravE namah

bibharti IOkAn iti babhruh - The one who supports the worlds. He as AdiSesha supports the earth. He is also the supporter of the Earth as Adi kUrma, Adi varAha, etc.

nAma 118. विश्वयोनिः - visvayOnih

- a) The cause of this world.
- b) One who unites His devotees with Himself.





viSva-yOnayE namah

yOni means cause. Since He is the cause of this world He is called viSvayOni. In nAma 89 - viSvarEtA - we saw that He is the seed from which the world originates. This nAma says that He is also the place where the seed develops into its full blossom. yOni means womb, and He is the seed, the womb, the sustainer after the birth of the world, the one who impartially observes as the kshetraj-na, etc. Note that we have referred to the following from the gl tA a few times before, and it applies here again - vAsudevah sarvam.

The word yOni can also be derived from the word yu - to unite (yu miSraNE). Thus yOni can refer to bhagavAn's act of uniting His devotees with Him. Without His will, no one will be united with Him. He is viSvayOni because He unites His devotees with Himself.

nAma 119. शुचिश्रवाः - suci-sravAh

- a) One who listens to words which are pure.
- b) One whose names are worthy of being heard.
- c) One who has beautiful and divine ears.

Suci-Sravase namah.

- a) Sucl ni SrAvaNyAni SRNoti iti Suci-SravAh

One who listens to words that are pure. Sri Bhattar gives the following reference to mahAbhArata in support of this interpretation -

Sucl ni SrAvaNI yAni SRNomi iha dhanan-jaya |
na ca pApAni gRhNAmi tato'ham vai SuciSravAh ||

(MB Santi parva 344.61)

"O dhanan-jaya! I listen here to all that is pure and agreeable to hear. I do not heed to what is sinful. I am known as Suci-SravAh".

In this context, Sri Bhattar points out the incident where bhagavAn just kept





listening to the words of vidura which were full of dharma, and the night passed away for KRshNa unnoticed -

dharmyA ramyASca arthavatI h vicitrArtha padAksharAh |

SRNVanto vividhA vAcah vidurasya mahAtmanah |

akAmasyaiva kRshNasya sA vyatI yAya SarvarI ||

(MB Udyoga 93.2)

b) Sri Sankara gives the following interpretation -

Sucl ni Sravamsi nAmAni SravaNI yAnyasyeti Suci-SravAh

One whose names and glories are very holy and purifying to hear.

c) The word Sravas also means ear. chinmayAnandA thus interprets the name as meaning One who has divine ears - He is the Hearer of all ears.

nAma 120. अमृतः amrutah

a) The unsatiating nectar to His devotees

b) One who is Immortal

amRtAya namah

a) The devotees never get satiated by doing service to bhagavAn, and He is sweet to the devotees to an unlimited extent.

b) na vidyate mRtam maraNam asya iti amRtah - He has no decay or death. The sruti says He is non-decaying and Immortal - ajarah amarah -(bRhadAraNya upanishad 4.4.25).

Sri chinmayAnandA points out that He is amRtah because He can cure the disease of ignorance in His devotees.

nAma 121. शाश्वतस्थाणुः - sAsvata-sthAnuh

One who is Eternally Firm.



SaSvata-SthANave namah.

The two parts of this name, SASvata and SthANu, occurred as separate names earlier (SASvata - which occurred as nAma 57, and sthAnu as nAma 28). sthANu also occurs as part of the current nAma and of nAma 427 - sthAvara-sthANuh later. Recall that sthANu was earlier interpreted as One who is firm in blessing His devotees, and SASvata was interpreted as One who is Eternal because of His unceasing act of creation, sustenance and destruction.

SASvata-SthANu here is interpreted as one name in all the references I have, and there is no discussion on why it is treated thus.

Sri Bhattar gives this name the meaning 'Eternal and Steady'. Unlike the nectar for which the devas and asuras churned the Ocean, He is Eternal because he cannot be taken away from those who enjoy Him. Sri Sankara gives the meaning "Eternally Firm". Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri gives the interpretation that He is SASvata because He has no beginning or end, and sthANu because He does not age or decay.

nAma 122. वरारोहः - varArOhah

- One who is the most supreme object of attainment.
- One of Excellent Ascent.

varArohAya namah.

Varam means supreme, and Arohanam means ascent. Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that He is the Supreme object of attainment, since all other objects are inferior. Sri Sankara gives the meaning that He is of Excellent Ascent. Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri suggests that bhagavAn is varAroha because He is reclining on AdiSesha, the high paryanka.

In the second or third article in this series, I had indicated that Sri Bhattar interprets the first 122 nAmas as describing the para-vAsudeva form of the Lord, which is not conditioned by any limiting adjuncts and which is not the



effect of another object. It is endowed with six qualities (~jnAna, bala, aiSvarya, vIrya, Sakti, tejas). This is the object of attainment of the released souls. The transcendental nature (paratva) of bhagavAn has been spoken of mostly by the names ending with the above nAma - varAroha. Sri Bhattar also interprets the contents of the first 122 names as the response from Bhl shma to YudhisThira for the first two of the six questions posed to him -

- 1) kim ekam daivatam loke?
- 2) kim vApi ekam parAyaNam?

The next set of nAmas are interpreted by Sri Bhattar as a) representing the vyuha (emanation) forms, and b) responding to YudhisThira's question - stuvantah kim - eulogising whom? The vyuha forms are four in number - vAsudeva, samkarshaNa, pradyumna, aniruddha. Of these, vAsudeva can be taken as having been included in the para form. The vyUha forms are in charge of the work of creation, sustenance, and destruction; they propound the Sastras, explain their significance, and give the fruits in accordance with the rules laid down therein; they also teach the method of meditation and worship of bhagavAn. The six qualities of the para rupa are distributed amongst the four vyUhas and each has its own form and duties. They are the means for the attainment of salvation.

The samkarshaNa form is associated with knowledge and strength. Starting with the next nAma, the samkarshaNa form - the second in the vyuhas - is to be dealt with.

nAma 123. महातपाः - mahA-tapAh

One who is endowed with great knowledge.

mahA-tapase namah.

Tapas is given the meaning "great knowledge" based on muNdakopanishad - yasya ~jnAnamayam tapah - Whose tapas is the nature of knowledge.





Mahat is pUjyam - worthy of respect. Here, knowledge is the ability to guide people so that they may be rid of the miseries of the world which they have been having from time immemorial.

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SIOkam 14

सर्वगः सर्वविद्भानुः विश्वक्सेनो जनार्दनः ।

वेदो वेदविदव्यङ्गो वेदाङ्गो वेदवित्कविः ॥ १४ ॥

sarvagah sarvavidbhAnuh vishvaksEnO janArdanah |

vEdO vEdavidavyangO vEdAngo vEdavit kavih ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 124. सर्वगः - sarvagh

One who reaches all.

sarvagAya namah.

sarvatra gacchati iti sarva-gah - One who pervades everything.

Or, by His strength which displays His capacity to support, He supports everything He has taken in during the pralaya, and thus He reaches all.

nAma 125. सर्ववित् - sarvavit

One who is the All-knower.

sarva-vide namah.

Sarvam vetti vindata iti vA sarva-vit - One who knows everything or One who obtains everything.

In the first interpretation, bhagavAn is the knower in all - the inner soul.

In the second interpretation, He performs the function as pradyumna and recovers or obtains all the jivas that have been absorbed into Him in the form of samkarshaNa.





nAma 126. भानुः - bhAnuh

One who shines.

bhAnave namah.

bhAti iti bhAnuh.

In spite of His act of creation and maintenance, He remains unchanged and continues to shine undiminished.

nAma 127. विश्वक्सेनः - vishvaksEnah

One who has His army in all directions for the protection of all.

vishvaksenAya namah.

Sri Bhattar interprets this nAma as referring to aniruddha, the protector. The word senA is derived from "inena vartate iti senA" - where inena means svAmin saha. So sena is one which is with the Lord always - seSvara. This nAma indicates His Sakti which indicates His capacity. *a-niruddha* refers to One who is not under anyone else's control. This nAma also indicates the gUna of the Lord by which He is always there to protect His devotees.

nAma 128. जनार्दनः - janArdanah

- a) One who destroys the wicked.
- b) One who protects people from the wicked.
- c) One who is approached by devotees for their wishes.

janArdanAya namah.

Sri Bhattar gives the support from mahAbhArata - *dasyu-trANAt janArdanah* (MB udyoga parva 71.6) -He is janArdana because He protects people from dasyus (demons). Sri Sankara gives the following two interpretations: One who





destroys those who are wicked - janAn - durjanAn, ardayati - hinasti (destroys). and also means to beg, to ask - gatau yAcane ca. janaih ardyate - yAcyate - One who is approached by His devotees for whatever they want.

nAma 129. वेदः - vEdah

One who is the embodiment of scriptures.

vedAya namah.

Veda is derived from vid - to know. Vedayati iti vedah - One who explains everything or That which explains everything - the Ultimate Truth - is vedah. Since veda-s originated from His breath, they are not distinct from Him.

In mahAbhArata, we have

"sarve vedAh sarvavidyAh saSAstrAh sarve ya~jnAh sarva ijyASca kRshNah"

"All the veda-s, all the vidyA-s, all the Sastra-s, all the ya~jna-s, and all offerings, are kRshNa".

In Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna, this nAma again refers to the vyUha form of

nAma 130. वेदवित् - vEdavit

The true knower of the meaning of the veda-s.

veda-vide namah.

This nAma appears once more in this slokam itself (nAma 133).

Vedam, vedArtham vetti iti vedavit. Or, vedAn vinte - vicArayati iti vedavit. One who knows the veda-s, or One who spreads the knowledge of veda-s (e.g., in the form of pradyumna, vyAsa, etc.).

He is vedavit since He is the knower without any doubts or errors of interpretation, and He is the only one.

In gl tA the Lord says - vedAnta-kRt vedavideva ca aham - I am the author of





the upanishads - vedAnta-s, and I am indeed the knower of the vedas (gl tA - 15.15).

He is also vedavit in the sense of knowing the true meaning behind the veda-s, viz. dharma. Sri Bhattar interprets this nAma as representing the pradyumna incarnation- as one who propounds the Sastra-s and explains their significance. samkarshaNa who has knowledge as one of His attributes.

nAma 131. अव्यङ्गः - avyngah

One who has no imperfections.

avya~ngAya namah.

vya~ngam is imperfection. a-vya~ngam is no imperfection. In the context of the previous nAma-s relating to His originating veda, and His full knowledge of veda, this nAma means that He is not in any way deficient in the knowledge of the chandas, kalpa, and other accessories of the veda-s which He himself has created. One could also interpret the nAma as meaning that He is not deficient in any way in any of the six guNas - ~jnAna, bala, aiSvarya, vl rya, Sakti, and tejas.

nAma 132. वेदाङ्गः - vEdAngah

a) One who has veda-s as His body.

b) One who has the sruti-s and smRti-s as His body.

vedA~ngAya namah.

vedAh a~ngabhUtAh yasya sah vadA~ngah. In kenopanishad we have vedAh sarvA~ngAni... - all veda-s are His limbs. Or He is vedA~nga since the sruti-s and smRti-s are His commands. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the following quotes from Sri mad BhAgavatam in support of the interpretation that He has veda-s for His body:





"...trayI m tanum svAm paridhunvate namah - We offer our worship to One who has veda for His body" - (Sri mad bhAgavatam 3.13.34)

"trayI mayam rUpamidam ca saukaram - One who has the varAha form which is the veda svarUpam" - (Sri mad bhAgavatam 3.13.41).

nAma 133. वेदवित् - vEdavit

One who knows not only the veda-s, but the true meaning behind the veda-s, viz. the dharma.

vedavide namah.

Please see the explanation under nAma 130 for the interpretation of the guNa expressed by this nAma.

nAma 134. कविः - kavih

One who cognizes beyond ordinary perception.

kavaye namah.

krAnta-darSitvAt kavih - sarvadRk. One who sees beyond what is revealed only by the senses.is the best among the kavi-s.



SlOkam 15

लोकाध्यक्षस्सुराध्यक्षो धर्माध्यक्षः कृताकृतः ।

चतुरात्मा चतुर्व्यूहश्चतुर्दंष्ट्रश्चतुर्भुजः ॥ १५ ॥

lOkAdhyakshas surAdhyakshO dharmAdhyakshah krutAkrutah |

caturAtmA caturvyUhas caturdamshTras catur bhujah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 135. लोकाध्यक्षः - lOkAdhyakshah

nAma 136. सुराध्यक्षः - surAdhyakshah

nAma 137. धर्माध्यक्षः - dharmAdhyakshah

The Lord of the worlds, of the deva-s, and of dharm.

lokAdhyakshAya namah.

surAdhyakshAya namah

dharmAdhyakshAya namah.

adhyaksha means master or superintendent. Loka refers to people whose duty it is to practice dharm, sura-s refers to devas who are worshipped with the dharm, and dharm signifies the means by which this worship is performed. BhagavAn in the form of aniruddha is the presiding deity over all these, who closely observes all these and grants the fruits of the dharmic acts. He also ensures that the benefits are not obtained by those who do not observe the dharmic acts, and ensures that those who observe the dharmic acts do not go without the fruit.



An alternate interpretation is that loka refers to the people, sura-s are those who protect the people, and dharma is the means by which they protect them. BhagavAn is the controller and supervisor or master of all these. For instance, the deva-s control the natural elements and ensure that these perform in such a way that they benefit the people. Thus the rising of the sun, the rains, etc. are controlled. When the deva-s swerve from their path, BhagavAn takes over and ensures that the violations are set right. For instance, when indra got angry with the gokula-vAsi-s and tried to destroy gokulam with unending rain, Lord KRshNa bore the govardhana mountain and protected the people from indra's fury and brought indra under control.

nAma 138. कृताकृतः - krutAkrutah

- The grantor of fruits that are this this-worldly as well as those that are eternal.
- One who is both the cause and effect of all things.
- One who has a form which is nitya or permanent, as well as transient forms.

krutAkrutayE namah

Sri Sankara interprets kRta as effect (kArya rUpa) and akRta as cause (kAraNa rUpa), and thus he interprets this nAma as symbolizing that bhagavAn is both cause and effect of all things. kRtam is vyaktam (that is manifested), and akRtam is unmanifested or avyaktam. Or, the nAma can mean that bhagavAn appears with a form that is akRtam or nityam in nature, and also in forms which remain only for a limited time (kRtam).

A third interpretation is that He gives benefits which are this-worldly (kRtam), as well as eternal (akRtam), and so He is kRtAkRta.

nAma 139. चतुरात्मा - caturAtmA

One whose Self has a four-fold manifestation.





caturAtmane namah.

One explanation for this is the Self has control over the four-fold nature - the wakeful state, the state of dreams, dreamless deep sleep, and turlya state where even the breath is suspended. These involve the external senses, the mind, breath, and suspended breath. These are also the four stages of development which a worshipper who meditates upon the Lord goes through.

Sri Sankara interprets the nAma as signifying that bhagavAn expresses His energies in four forms in each of His acts of creation, protection, and dissolution. He quotes the following sloka in vishNu purANa -

brahmA dakshAdayah kAlas_tathaivAkhila jantavah |
vibhUtayo hareretA jagatah sRshti_hetavah ||
vishNur_manvAdayah kAlah sarva_bhUtAni ca dvija |
stither_nimitta_bhUtasya vishNoretA vibhUtayah ||
rudrah kAlotankAdyASca samastAScaiva jantavah |
caturdhA pralayAyaitA janArdana-vibhUtayah ||

The four energies of Hari for creation are - brahmA, daksha and others, time, and all creatures. The four energies of Hari for protection are - vishNu, manu and others, time, and all creatures. The four energies of JanArdana for dissolution are - rudra, time, the god of death, and all creatures. Thus He is caturAtma at all times.

nAma 140. चतुर्व्यूहः - caturvyUhah

One with four forms (the vyUha forms).

catur-vyUhAya namah.

This nAma is interpreted as signifying the four vyUha emanations (vAsudeva, samkarshaNa, pradyumana, and aniruddha). Sri Sankara give the following reference to support this interpretation. In my version of the vyAkhyAna, the





original source for this reference is not given, but the quote is attributed to vyAsa :

vyUhyAtmAnam caturdhA vai vAsudevAdi_mUrtibhih |

sRshtyAdl n prakarotyesha viSrutAtmA janArdanah ||

vishNu, of excellent fame, manifests Himself in four forms, vAsudeva, etc. (vAsudeva, samkarshaNa, pradyumna, aniruddha) and carried on creation etc.

vyUha refers to a form that has a purpose associated with it. pradyumna is for "padaippu" or creation; samkarshaNa is for samhAra or destruction; aniruddha is for protection; vAsudeva is the overall leader of these three forms. Pradyumna, the one in charge of "padaippu" or creation, is endowed with the leadership of aisvarya and vI rya. pra-dymna means one who has enormous vI rya in His responsibility of creation. aniruddha, in charge of protection, is endowed with immeasurable Sakti and tejas. a-niruddha means One who cannot be obstructed in His function of protection. SamkarshaNa is endowed with enormous -jnAnam and balam. Sam-karshaNa means one who attracts (note AkarshaNa - attraction) or draws everything towards Him and makes them draw into Him during the pralaya or great destruction. VAsudeva is the form endowed with all the six qualities and is the Supreme parabrahman.

nAma 141. चतुर्दंष्ट्रः - caturdamsTrah

He of four teeth.

catur-damshtAya namah.

damshtA refers to canine teeth. The reference here could be to the four full and strongly developed, powerful, beautiful canine teeth in His incarnation in nRsimhAvatAra. Sri Bhattar points out that catur-damshtatvam is a mahApurusha lakshNam. He gives reference to the description of Sri Rama by Hanuman to SI tA devi - catur-daSa sam-dvandvah catur-damshtarah catur-gatih - One who has the fourteen parts of the body such as the legs, the hands, etc. fully symmetric with no blemishes, One who has four beautiful





canine teeth, and One who has the beauty of the walks of elephant, tiger, lion, and bull. (VAImI ki RamayaNam Sundara kANdam - 35.19).

nAma 142. चतुर्भुजः - caturbhujah

One with four arms.

catur-bhujAya namah.

The four hands carry the conch, the discus, the mace, and the lotus respectively. SrI ChinmayAnanda gives a very nice explanation of how the four arms are used by the Lord in maintaining dharma. The conch calls man to the righteous path that directly leads to peace and perfection, the divine vishNu padam. Not very many of us listen to this inner voice of conscience, the sound of the pAncjanya conch, and so He gently wields the 'Mace' and we come to suffer small calamities and tragic jerks in our smooth existence. If the individual still does not listen to the call of the 'Conch', the 'Chakra' - the wheel of time, annihilates the entire being. This call and punishment are solely meant to take man to the Ultimate Goal, symbolized by the 'Lotus' in His hand.

SrI RAdhAkRshNa SAStri gives the explanation that the four hands signify that He gives the four purushArta-s (I assume dharma, artha, kAma, and mokha are the four being referred to here). Or the four arms represent the four tatva-s - satva, rajas, tama, and ahamkAra. "satvam rajas tama iti aha~nkAraScaturbhujah" (gopAlottaratAmini 55).

Yet another explanation is that the Self functions in a four-fold pattern involving mind, intellect, cit, and ego, and these are represented by the four arms containing the conch, the mace, the cakra, and the padma. The cit is represented by the Lotus or Padma, the intellect is the 'Conch', ego is the 'Mace', and mind is the 'Discus'.





SlOkam 16

भ्राजिष्णुर्भोजनं भोक्ता सहिष्णुर्जगदादिजः ।

अनघो विजयो जेता विश्वयोनिः पुनर्वसुः ॥ १६ ॥

bhrAjishhNur bhOjanam bhOktA sahisNur jagadAdijah |

anaghO vijayO jEtA visvayonih punarvasuh ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 143. भ्राजिष्णुः - bhrAjishNuh

One who is effulgent.

brAjishNave namah.

bhrAjata iti tacchi lo bhrAjishNuh - One who has the habit of being effulgent. The name is derived from the root bhrAjR and the pANini sutra 3.2.138 - **bhuvasca** - which states that the afix ishNuc in the sense of "the agent having such a habit etc." comes after the verbs such as bhU, bhrAjR etc. Sri Bhattar points out that it is the nature of bhagavAn to show Himself to His worshippers.

An author by name satyadevo vAsishTha, who has written a detailed vyAkhyAna for Sri vishNu shasranAma in samskRt in this century, points out that the radiance in the sun, the moon, etc. arise only because they derive it from the effulgence of vishNu.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri points out that we see objects because of the light that makes them visible, and we see the light only because it gets scattered by the objects. But bhagavAn is Pure Effulgence without any association with any object, and this is why the non-devotees don't see Him, though He makes Himself visible to His devotees.

The yajurvedic passages given to support the interpretation for this nAma are:





"brahma surya samam jyotih"; "suryo jyotir-jyotih surya" etc.

nAma 144. भोजनं - bhOjanam

One who is the object of enjoyment.

bhojanAya namah.

taih bhujyate - sukkena anubhuyate iti bhojanam -

bhagavAn is bhojanam because He is enjoyed with pleasure by His worshippers.

bhojanam also means literally food or the means of sustenance. Even though in nature one object becomes the means of sustenance of another object, He is the one who maintains this balance and sustains everything. The vedAntic interpretation for bhojanam is the collection of all objects of enjoyment by the sense-organs. He makes the objects of this world fit for enjoyment, and He also becomes the object of enjoyment Himself when His devotee overcomes the desire for the material objects of enjoyment and longs for Him.

nAma 145. भोक्ता - bhOktA

The Enjoyer.

bhoktre namah.

He Himself is the Enjoyer since He enjoys the things offered by His devotees like nectar.

In gl tA we have

patram pushpam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyA prayacchati |

tadaham bahktyupahRtam aSnAmi prayatAtmanah ||

(gl tA 9.16)

"If a devotee offers to me a mere leaf, flower, fruit, or water with sincere devotion and love, I accept it as invaluable treasure."





Or He is the bhoktA for all the sacrificial offerings irrespective of the deity to whom the offering is made -

aham hi sarva ya~jnAnAm bhokta

gI tA 9.14.

nAma 146. सहिष्णुः - sahisNuh

The Forgiver.

sahishNave namah.

The word is derived from sah - to put up with, forgive. Note the grammatical rule quoted for bhrAjishNu earlier - the affix ishNuc is added to indicate one having a habit etc. Thus it is His Nature to forgive. We have the yajurvedic mantra "saho'si saho mayi dhehi".

sah also means to suffer patiently. He is sahisNuh because He suffers patiently, in His perfect detachment, all that is happening around. He is just a mere witness. He continues to support this world without ever getting impatient - nAkshastapyate bhUribhArah - Rgvedic manta.

sahate also means conquers, and Sri Sankara uses this meaning and interprets this nAma as meaning that bhagavAn is sahisNuh because He conquers daitya-s such as hiraNyAksha.

In Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna, the vyuha forms are covered up to the above nAma. Starting with the next nAma, he interprets the guNa-s as reflecting those of the vibhava form of vishNu, the second of the trinities.

nAma 147. जगदादिजः - jagadAdija

He who was born at the beginning of the Universe.

jagadAdijAya namah.

jagat + Adi + jAtah = jagadAdijah.



Before the world got created, one who had the ability to create the world had to exist. Thus bhagavAn existed before the world was created. Sri chinmayAnanda points out that this is the manifestation of bhagavAn as HiraNyagarbha, the form where the world of all objects is submerged after pralaya and before the manifestation of the gross world emerges out. This is the manifestation of bhagavAn as the virAt Atma.

That vishNu was the first-born among the gods is supported by the following from mahAbhArata -

gatiSca nastvam pUrvajo jagatah prabhuh |

rakshArtham sarva-bhUtAnAm vishNustvam upajagmivAn ||

(MB Udyoga 12.11)

"Thou art our refuge; Thou art the first-born amongst the gods. Thou art the Lord of the Universe. Thou didst assume the role of vishNu for the protection of all the worlds."

nAma 148. अनघः - anaghah

One who is Sinless, Un-contaminated.

anaghAya namah.

aghah pApam na vidyate asmin iti anaghah. Though He resides in the midst of the samsAra in His incarnations, He is untainted by sins. Because He is unattached, He is not contaminated by the effects of any actions. Several passages in the sruti-s refer to this attribute - suddham apApaviddham - yajur 40.8, na puNya pApe mama (kaivalya 22), etc.

nAma 149. विजयः - vijayah

Victory Incarnate.

vijayAya namah.



vividham viSesheNa vA jayati iti vijayah - One who wins over everything in different and special ways. He is sat, cit, and Ananda rupa, and thus controls everything including the prakRti and jiva-s. Or He excels in everything - ~jnAna, vairAgya, aisvarya, etc.

Sri Bhattar points out that He is vijaya because He controls everything that happens in this world, including the creation and destruction, which are performed by Brahma and Rudra with His help and guidance - "tad_AdarSita panthAnau sRshti samhAra kAraKau - Guided by Him in the right way, Brahma and Rudra carry out the task of creation and destruction (MB moksha 169.19).

nAma 150. जेता - jEtA

The Conquerer.

jetre namah.

sarvam jagat sa jayati iti jetA. He is jetA because nothing ever can happen that is not His will. All the other gods act His will. One who has satyam as His sthira guNa never has any failure or defeat. He is satya kAma, satya samkalpa, etc.

nAma 151. विश्वयोनिः - visvayOnih

The Cause of the Universe.

viSva-yonaye namah.

viSvasya - sakalasya yonih - kAraNam viSva-yonih.

Another interpretation is that He is viSva-yonih because He has the world as His Cause, i.e., He manifests Himself in various incarnations because of the condition of this world.





nAma 152. पुनर्वसुः - punarvasuh

One who lives again and again as the antarAtmA of all His creations.

punarvasave namah.

He is the antarAtmA of all the other gods whom He creates for different functions, beginning with rudra and brahma. In moksha dharma in mahAbhArata we have indra saying to rudra -

tavAntarAtmA mama ca ye cAnye dehi-samjnitAh -

He is the Inner Soul of yourself and myself as well as those who are called the Released Souls" - MB moksha 179.4.

It can also mean that He is punarvasu because He recreates the world with the sun, moon, etc., the same way all over again after each pralaya -

sUrya candramasau dhAtA yathA pUrvam akalpayat |
divam ca pRthivI m cAnthariksham atho svah ||

(Rg 10/190/3)





SlOkam 17

उपेन्द्रो वामनः प्रांशु रमोघश्शुचिरूर्जितः ।

अतीन्द्रस्सङ्ग्रहस्सर्गो धृतात्मा नियमो यमः ॥ १७ ॥

upEndrO vAmanah prAmshuh amoghassucirUrjitah |
atI ndrassangrahas sargo dhrutAtmA niyamO yamah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 153. उपेन्द्रः - upEndrah

- a) One who appeared as the younger brother of indra to help him.
- b) One who is superior to indra.

upendrAya namah.

a) upagatah indram - One who assisted indra. Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri gives the following instance in this context. PrahlAda's grandson Bali defeated Indra by doing penances according to SukrAcArya's advice. Indra's mother aditi prayed to God to get Indra's position back.

Since Bali had attained Indra's position through penance etc., there was no way of getting back the position easily. So bhagavAn appeared as the younger brother of indra by being born as the son of aditi, and restoring the position of indra by asking for three feet of land from Bali in his yAga Sala.

b) indrasya upari indrah - One who is superior to indra. upa also means above or superior.

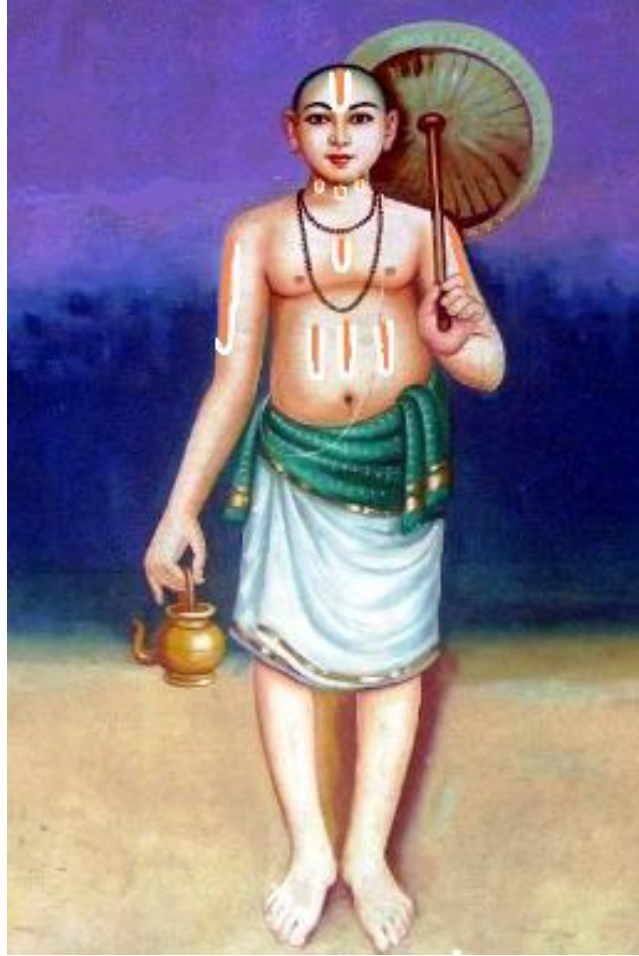
Sri rAdhAKRshNa Sastri gives the example of Lord KRshNa subduing indra's self-assumed superiority complex in gokulam when indra tried to flood and destroy the place for not offering prayers to him.



nAma 154. वामनः - vAmanah

One with the Dwarf form.

vAmanAya namah.



vAmanah

vAmayati tyAjayati madam balim - One who expelled the pride out of Bali. Vam literally means to vomit out, and vAm could mean one who made Bali literally vomit out his pride. LingAyatasurin gives the interpretation vAmo valgutvam asya asti iti vAmanah - One who has a very charming short form. Or it can be also be interpreted as vAmo vatutvam asya asti iti vAmanah - One who has a short form of a gurukula student, which is how mahAvishNu appeared in front of Bali to ask for the three feet of earth from him. The rupa soundaryam



(valgutvam) of the vAmana incarnation is beautifully described in Srimad bhAgavatam - e.g.,

yajamAnah pramudito darSanI yam manoramam|

rUpAnurUpAvayavam tasmA Asanam Aharat||

Bali, the yajamAna of the yAgaSala, saw the beautiful appearance of the brahmachAri in the dwarf form and offered the seat to him with a completely captivated heart (BhAgavatam 8-18-26).

Another interpretation - sarvANi vAmAni nayati iti vAmanah - One who bestows all the desires of the devotees, or He produces joy in those who see Him, by His effulgence. In chAndogyopanishad we have "esha u eva vAmanIh esha hi sarvANi vAmAni nayati (chAndogyopanishad 4.25).

nAma 155. प्रांशुः - prAmsuh

The Tall.

prAmSave namah.

prASnute prakarsheNa Urdhvam iti prAmSuh -

In the vAmana incarnation, bhagavAn very quickly grew from His dwarf form into a form which covered the three worlds under His two feet. As soon as Bali poured the water to accompany his gift of three feet of land into the dwarf hands, the dwarf was no longer a dwarf. The Lord manifested His universal form; the earth was His feet, the sky His head, and the sun and the moon His eyes. The vyAkhyAna kartA-s give the reference, from HarivamSa, to the beauty of His growth from the dwarf form, in relation to fixed objects, the Sun and the Moon. First, He assumed the tall form where the Sun and the Moon were His two eyes. Then as He measured the earth, they were at the level of His bosom. As He measured the space, the Sun was at the level of His navel, and as He lifted His feet to measure the Heaven, the Sun and Moon were just below His knees.





tasya vikramato bhUmim candrAdityau stanAntare |
nabhah prakramANasya nAbhideSe vyavasthithau ||

(HarivamSa 31.89)

nAma 156. अमोघः - amOghah

One whose acts are never purposeless.

amoghAya namah.

na mogham ceshTitam yasya sah amoghah. When bhagavAn asked for three feet of earth from bali, it helped indra; when Bali could not give the third foot of earth, it helped subdue Bali and make him a great devotee on the spot; subduing Bali led to Bali getting the status equal to indra in a trice, and led to all the gods partaking in the offerings made in the sacrifice. Thus every act of His has a purpose.

nAma 157. शुचिः - suchih

Pure.

Sucaye namah.

Sucyata iti Suchih - One who purifies is Suchih. BhagavAn is Pure because He is the ParamAtmA who is uncontaminated by actions and their effects. He is Suchih because One who contemplates on Him becomes pure, and thus association with Him makes one pure. Whatever He does is uncontaminated by anything other than dharma, and so His purity never diminishes. When He helped indra by subduing Bali, one could say He was biased towards the deva-s; not so, since He made Himself the door-keeper of Bali and thus Bali benefited several-fold more than indra did in the process. He is pavitrANAm pavitram, or purer than the purest. The several references from sruti attest to His purity - **Suddham apApa viddham - (I SAvasya - 8); asparSaSca mahAn Suchih** etc.





SrI satyadevo vAsishTha takes this interpretation one step further by pointing out that everything bhagavAn does is resplendent with the beauty that speaks of His purity. All one has to do to realize this is to look at the beauty of His creations such as the flowers, the leaves, the waters of the rivers, etc. So He is all around us displaying His innate quality of purity constantly. He points out that thus guNa of bhagavAn should constantly remind His devotees to be always pure in their actions, words, and deeds as a means to attain Him.

nAma 158. ऊर्जितः - UrjitaH

One who is endowed with immense strength.

UrjitAya namah.

UrjA means balam or strength. This is one of the shadguNa-s of bhagavAn (~jnAna, bala, etc.). This strength is displayed whenever He has had to take care of the evil demons. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that He is Urjita not only because of His immense strength, but also because whatever strength each being in His creation has, is because He is the source. He gives the following vedic quotes to substantiate this interpretation -

UrjA detAm avasyojasA tvAm pibA somamadAya kam Satakrato (Rg. 8.36.3)

UrjA pinvasva samishodidehi na (Rg 3.3.7)

UrgasyAngirasyUrNamradA Urjam mayi dehi (yajur 4.15)

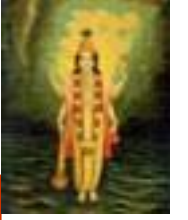
balamasi balam mayi dehi (yajur 19.9)

Urjo balam sa ojo ma Agan (atharva 18.4.53)

Ojo'si saho'si balamasi bhrAjo'si

As is evident, through many of mantra-s, the devotee is asking for balam from bhagavAn i.e, He is the source of balam or strength in all His creations.





nAma 159. अतीन्द्रः - atIndrah

One who is superior to indra.

atIndrAya namah.

We saw how He surpasses indra by His lordship and glorious acts. Indra is the king of gods, and bhagavAn exceeds him in wisdom, greatness, etc. Sri chinmayAnanda points out that in vedAnta indra stands for mind-intellect, and the paramAtmA or the Pure Self is superior to mind since it transcends the mind.

nAma 160. सङ्ग्रहः sangrahaḥ

- a) He who is easily reached.
- b) He who has everyone under His control.

samgrahAya namah.

The meaning given in the dictionary by Sir William-Monier is "holding together", "drawing together", etc.

- a) Sri Bhattar gives the interpretation "atha bhaktaih ayatnena samgRhayata iti samgrahah" - One who is reached by His devotees without any effort (other than pure devotion).
- b) Sri Sankara gives the interpretation "sarveshAm samhRtau pratisamhArAt samgrahah" - One who withdraws everything into Him during pralaya.
- c) Sri chinmayAnanda gives the interpretation that bhagavAn is samgraha because he holds the entire world of beings and things together. Sri satya vAsishTha looks at the nAma as sama + graha, or holding everything together in one form, viz. by being the Atma in everything.





nAma 161. सर्गः - sargah

The creator of Himself.

sargAya namah.

sRjati iti sargah - One who creates. The word sarga is derived from the root sRj - to create. He is sarga since He created the whole world out of Himself. Sarga refers to primary creation as opposed to pralaya or dissolution, and sthiti or maintenance.

nAma 162. धृतात्मा - dhrtAtmA

The supporter of all the jivAtmA-s.

dhRtAtmane namah.

dhRtah AtmA yena sah dhRtAtmA - One who supports all the jIvAtmA-s, or One who supports (conducts) Himself uninfluenced by any change (birth, death, likes, dislikes, etc.).

nAma 163. नियमः - niyamah

The Controller.

niyamAya namah.

niyamayati iti niyamah - One who assigns and directs the different functions to the different beings. The root yam has two meanings: yam uparame - to check, and yam pariveshaNe - to surround. One who is the Creator of all beings is also naturally the Controller of all those beings. It is He who orders all the mighty forces of nature and prescribes for each the laws of their conduct, the ways of their behavior and the methods of their functions. The Sun, Moon, Air, Waters, Death, etc., are all appointed and controlled by the Lord.





nAma 164. यमः - yamah

The Ruler.

yamAya namah.

yacchati iti yamah or yamayati iti yamah - One who rules. He rules all our selves from within. He also rules all the beings of the earth from within the sphere of the Sun. We have the passage from bRhadAraNya upanishad - yah sarvANi bhUtAni antaro yamayati (3.7.15). Other passages from the sruti-s are "yah pRthivIm antaro yamayati - He who rules the earth from within" - BRhadAraNya 3.7.3, yah AtmAnam antaro yamayati - He who rules the self from within", etc.





SIOkam 18

वेद्यो वैद्यस्सदायोगी वीरहा माधवो मधुः ।

अतीन्द्रियो महामायो महोत्साहो महाबलः ॥ १८ ॥

vEdyO vaidyas sadAyogI vI rahA mAdhavO madhuh |

atIndriyO mahAmAyO mahOtsAhO mahAbalah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 165. वेद्यः - vEdyah

- a) He who can be realized.
- b) That which should be known or realized.

vedyAya namah.

veditum Sakyah vedyah,

vedanArhatvAt vedyah, or

veditum yogya iti vedyah.

SrI chinmayAnanda interprets the word to mean "That which should be known - as the Ultimate Truth; having known which, everything else becomes known". This is supported by the following from the gl tA - "vedaiSca sarvairahameva vedyah - I am the One who is to be known through all the veda-s" - gl tA 15.15, and vedair_ane-kair-ahmeva vedyah - kaivalya 22.

nAma 166. वैद्यः - vaidyah

The knower of vidyA or knowledge.

vaidyAya namah.



The word vaidya is related to the word vidyA. One who right from the beginning of the world knew all the vidyA-s that went into the creation of this Universe is vaidya. It is not only that He is the knower, but no one else is the knower of creating all the wondrous and manifold objects in His creation. This is supported by "viSvAni deva vayunAni vidvAn" - yajur 7.43. He is the sarva-vidyA-maya vaidya. Also note "I svarah sarva-vidyAnAm"- taittiriya AraNyaka 10.21.

The knowledge that we see displayed even in the insects, birds, etc., should be a constant reminder of the vaidya or All-knower that is bhagavAn, and should lead us to the constant awareness that it is His feet that we should worship.

Sri Bhattar points out that He knows the vidyA of releasing His devotees from the cycle of rebirth, and so He is vaidya.

In the traditional meaning of vaidya referring to a doctor, Sri chinmayAnanda points out that He is vaidya since He alone can doctor to the world's suffering from ego and ego-centric misconceptions. In Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna we find a supporting reference -

"meru mandara mAtro'pi pApasya karmaNah |
keSavam vaidyam AsAdya durvyAdhiriva naSyati ||

(vishNu dharmam 69.110)

One might have accumulated sins the size of the meru mountain; however if one worships keSava, the sins disappear just as the worst diseases disappear when treated by a good vaidya or doctor".

nAma 167. सदायोगी - sadAyOgi

- One who is always awake with respect to His devotees.
- One who unites this Universe as the sarva-vyApi
- One who always follows the dhArmic way.



d) One who is in constant yogic meditation

e) One who always displays the samatva-bhAva, i.e., treats everyone equally.

sadA-yogine namah.

One explanation for this nAma is that bhagavAn is always attainable, and so He is sada-yogl. Sri Bhattar interprets the nAma to mean that He is awake at all times with respect to His devotees, and He is always awake as the antaryAmi in all of us.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives three different interpretations for this nAma - satah Ayogl, sadA yogl, and sadA Ayogl. Satah means equally, and AyuJ means to unite or to join. The roots from which from the nAma can be derived are also many - yugi varjane - to give up; yuj samAdhau - to concentrate the mind; yuj yoge - to unite; yuj samyamane - to join;

He is a sadA-yogi because He has always given up everything except the good and the just, the dharmic way. He is also a sadA-yogl because He unites this world into one through His sarva-vyApti, His pervasion into everything that exists - sadaiva yojayati samyamayati visvAn lokAn sa sadA-yogl. He is also a sada-yogl because He is constantly in yogic meditation, which is His nature. Yoga here can be interpreted as samatva-bhAva. SadA yogah asya asti iti tam sadA-yoginam, sadA yoga Silam svabhAva-dharmANam vA.

The vyAkhyAna in dharma cakram (whose author is not identified) points out that people live one of three ways of life - a rogi, a bhogi, or a yogi. Of these, the life of a yogi (who spends his life by diverting his senses away from sense-enjoyment and towards the parama-purusha) is the one that leads to peace of mind and bodily health. The yogic state of mind is naturally attained by one who devotes one's mind to the worship of the Lord, the sadA-yogi.

nAma 168. वीरहा vIrahA

The slayer of strong men of wicked nature.



vIraghne namah.

We may recollect "paritrRNaya sAdhUnAm vinASaya ca dushkRtAm" - 'For the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked'. If the quality of being a vIra is used to commit adharma, bhagavAn destroys those vIra-s or rAkshasa-s.

Sri Bhattar interprets the vIra-s here as referring to people who are "kutarka-Sura-s" or those who put up false arguments to prevent people from meditating on Him. He refers us to the sloka-s in bhagavad gl tA in Chapter 16 starting from sloka 16-8 and ending in 16-19, where bhagavAn gives a description of the kinds of behaviors that these kutarka-vAdi-s demonstrate - claiming that God does not exist, or claiming that they are the God, etc.



mAdhavan - Sri Malayappa swAmy with nAchchiyArs - Thirupathi

nAma 169. माधवः - mAdhvah

The propounder of the knowledge of the Supreme Being.



mAdhavAya namah.

The detailed interpretations for this nAma have been given earlier under nAma 73. Please refer to that description.

nAma 170. मधुः - madhuh

One who is like honey to His devotees.

madhave namah.

He is madhu because He creates Nectarine Bliss in the hearts of His devotees. He causes great satisfaction, like honey. We have from bRhadAraNya upanishad - ayamAtmA sarveshAm bhUtAnAm madhu - 2.5.14. We also have "thEnil iniya pirAne" as He is referenced by PeriyAzhvAr in his PoochUttal.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha indicates that madhu also means knowledge (derived from man- ~jnAne to know), and He is madhu because He knows everything by His pervading everything - ~jnAna dharmeNa vyApnuvan sarvam viSvam manyate jAnAti, tasmAt sa madhuh. We have the yajurvedic mantra - tadantarsya sarvasya tadu sarvasyAsya bAhyatah - He is inside everything, and He is also outside of everything, and by virtue of this, He is ~jnAna mayam or Knower of everything.

The commentator in dharma cakram points out that madhu or honey is unique among all the edibles that when consumed, all of it is digested into the system with no waste products. He also points out that madhu is unique in that there is no ill-effect that results from its consumption, unlike some of the other edibles where an excessive consumption will lead to harmful effects. In our context, bhagavAn is the knowledge that is madhu, from which only good can result.

SrI Bhattar interprets the next several nAmAs as descriptive of the six celestial qualities of bhagavAn - ~jnAna, bala, aiSvarya, vI rya, Sakti, and tejas.





nAma 171. अतीन्द्रियः - atIndriyah

He who is beyond the range of the sense organs.

atIndriyAya namah.

Only those objects that have a fixed shape, color, or other characteristics will be recognizable by the indriya-s or sense organs. He is beyond these sense-organs, and cannot be realized through these or through sheer reasoning. The only way to realize Him is to experience Him through pure devotion. The two mantra-s of ISAvAsya upanishad (anejadekam., and tadejati tannaijati..) remind us of this quality of bhagavAn in simple words.

In kaThopanisahd we have -

indriyebhyah parAhyarthA ...avyaktAt purushah parah |
aSabdam-asparSam-arUpam-avyayamtathArasam nityam-agandhavacca yat |

(kaTho 1.3.10 etc.)

(He is soundless, untouched, formless, immutable, and so without taste, eternal, smell-less.)

Sri chinmayAnanda points out that it is not just He is beyond the reach of the sense-organs, but that the sense-organs don't exist without Him, and so cannot sense anything without His power. So He is the very subject of the sense-organs, and not the object of the sense-organs (the eye cannot see itself, but only its reflection in a mirror!).

He is also not seen by the indriya-s because He is not anywhere outside where the senses can sense Him, but is inside each of us in the cavity of our hearts where the senses cannot reach, the size of a thumb - angusTha mAtrena.

nAma 172. महामायः - mahAmAyah

One who is possessed of wonderful power of enchantment.





mahA-mAyAya namah.

Sri Bhattar points out that this nAma signifies that He conceals Himself from those who are not devoted to Him through His power of enchantment. This is natural for one who is not within the reach of the senses-organs as we saw in the previous nAma. Lord KRshNa says in the gl tA - mama mAyA duratyayA - My mAyA is very difficult to overcome - gl tA 7.14). mAyA here is not to be interpreted to as magic or illusion or untruth, but as something wonderful and unusual. (sl tA devi is referred to as devamAyA - janakasya kule jAtA devamAyeva nirmItA). The mAyA referred to here is that bhagavAn wonderfully conceals Himself from those who do not seek Him.

Other references to the sruti-s are - ati-mohakarI mAyA mama (Sarabha 24), vidyAt mAyinam tu maheSvaram (SvetASvatAra 4.10).

nAma 173. महोत्साहः - mahOtsAhah

He of great enthusiasm.

mahotsAhAya namah.

Sri Bhattar points out that this nAma particularly indicates that unlike the I svara of the sAnkhyas system who is possessed of knowledge but is a non-doer of acts and is indifferent, Sri mahA vishNu is enthusiastic in performing acts which signify His lordship, such as the varieties of His creation, their sustenance etc. The mahotsAha is a guNa that bhagavAn has as an aiSvarya, with no dependence on anything else for support. Because of this, He is unceasingly creating, maintaining and withdrawing His creations, and managing the affairs of the Universe. Sri chinmayAnanda points out that this world will not exist without the endless enthusiasm of His Mighty Power. Just as the ocean, with its endless waves is the "sleepless agitator", so also bhagavAn is the Enthusiastic Accomplisher.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives a different interpretation to this nAma. He looks at this word as mahAn + ut+ sAhah - mahAntam uccaistamam sAhah,



sahate, sAhayati, sahati vA sa mahotsAhah - One who has immense ability to endure. Here sAhah has the same meaning as saha - sahati. He gives reference to the Rg vedic mantra nAkshastapyate bhUribhArah - 1.164.13 to support this interpretation. He supports the Sun, the Moon, etc., tirelessly, and He is also the self in every being that has been created, and it is His mahotsAha that is manifested in His act. His guNa of endurance is also noted through the yajurvedic mantra "saho'si saho mayi dehi (yajur 19/9)".

The word utsAhah traditionally means enthusiasm. The commentator in dharma cakram points out that of the three qualities, the rajas, tamas, and satva bhAva-s, actions that are done with enthusiasm and that benefit the rest of mankind are those that are done by those with the satva disposition. The actions by these are the ones that continue successfully, with full benefits to His subjects. It is good to remind ourselves in this context that He is pure Satva, and one way of offering worship to Him is to follow this model and lead a sAtvic life ourselves.

nAma 174. महाबलः - mahAbalah

One with immeasurable strength - The Omnipotent.

mahAbalAya namah.

Sri Sankara's vyAkhyAna is

"balinAmapi balavatvAt mahAbalah" - Being stronger than the strongest, He is mahAbalah".

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAStri gives several examples of this guNa of bhagavAn. RAvaNa went to the pAtAla loka to win over bali. BhagavAn who had established Himself as the gatekeeper of bali temporarily made Himself invisible. RAvaNa tried to move the kundalam of hiraNyakaSipu which was lying at the doorstep as it has fallen from hiraNyakaSipu's ears at the time of his being slain by Lord nRsimha. RAvaNa's hands got caught under the kundalam. BhagavAn appeared on the scene, and kicked rAvaNa without effort and rAvaNa fell far



far away.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha starts from the root bal - prANane to live or to breathe, and gives the interpretation that bhagavAn is mahAbalah because He makes the world live or supports the world. He points out that there are different kinds of balam, e.g., vidyA balam, senA balam, dhana balam, anna balam, etc., and bhagavAn is the One who is the bestower of all the balams (means of support) to the different devotees, and so He is mahA-balah.



SIOkam 19

महाबुद्धिर्महावीर्यो महाशक्तिर्महाद्युतिः ।

अनिर्देश्यवपुः श्रीमान् अमेयात्मा महाद्रिघृत् ॥ १९ ॥

mahAbuddhir mahAvI ryO mahAshaktir mahAdyutih |

anirdEsyavapuh srI mAn amEyAtmA mahAdridhrut ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 175. महाबुद्धिः - mahAa-buddih

He of infinite knowledge.

mahA-buddhaye namah.

SrI Bhattar points out that He is mahA-buddhi because His knowledge does not depend on His sense organs or any external help. He sees and hears and senses all at the same time with any of His organs or with no need for any of the organs. This is supported by several passages from the sruti-s - viSvataScakshuruta viSvatomukhah - He has eyes on all sides and faces on all sides (taittiriya nArAyaNa upanishad 1.12); paSyat_yacakshuh sa SRNoti akarNah - He sees without eyes and hears without ears (SvetASva 3.19); sarvato'kshi Siromukham - He has everywhere eyes, heads, and mouths (gl tA 13.13). We also have the venerable AcArya nAthamuni's words - yo vetti yagapat sarvam pratyaksheNa sadA svatah - Who sees directly by perception and of His own accord all things simultaneously (nyAyatatva).

The dhAtu word from which the name is derived is budh ~jnAne to know, to understand. BhagavAn is the buddhi behind the functioning of all His creations, and so He is the mahA-buddhi. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that the behavior of many objects such as even the shedding of the leaves by the trees during the winter months and the regeneration during the summer months etc.,



is indicative of knowledge that He has invested in them. The establishment of the stars and planets in their respective positions and orbits is a totally different dimension of the same mahA-buddhi of the Lord. The magic of creation of the multitude of beings and their being held together as a functional entity is beyond the knowledge of anyone else but Him. The author also points out cases such as a "lajjAvanti" plant which survives and grows only if a woman waters the plant, and dies if a man pours the water to the plant, which are all examples of the wonders of the ~jnAna that is the mahA-buddhi.

In a publication titled dharma cakram published by Sri rAmakRshNa tapovanam in India, a writer has given the additional example of a crow's behavior when threatened by an enemy as an illustration of the knowledge that He has invested in His creations. When a crow is chased by a small child, it just displays minimal effort to get away. If a grown-up person chases it with a stick, it takes just a little bit more effort to run. If a person with a gun appears, the crow will be nowhere to be seen. Who but the mahA-buddhi could have given the crow this level of buddhi, which in addition gets transmitted from parent to offspring in an unending chain?

Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri points out that buddhi is the most important of the four antah:karaNa-s. buddhi chooses between the options provided by the manas, taking into account the pictures of previous experiences provided by the cittam, before the ahamkAram takes over and executes the action. If the buddhi makes a poor choice, then it becomes alpa-buddhi; if the buddhi always chooses noble choices, then it is the mahA-buddhi.

nAma 176. महावीर्यः - mahA-vI ryah

He of great virility.

mahA-vIryAya namah.

He is mahA-vIrya because He remains unchanged unlike everything else which changes with time (e.g., milk changing to curd). It is but a tiny fraction of this



quality of His that is reflected in the fact that that the Yogins are of steady mind and do not get distracted. Just as flowers give out their fragrance to all their surroundings with no effort on their part, bhagavAn performs all His acts with no effort on His part, and this is an indication of His vl rya.

SrI chinmayAnanda points out that vl rya is the essence of all dynamism or creative urges, and He is mahA-vl rya because He is the driving force from whom alone all the dynamism for creation can manifest.

SrI rAdhAkRshNa Sastri explains that vl ryam is the quality of achieving one's objective no matter how difficult it is. bhagavAn's first accomplishment, the creation of this Universe from the prakRti or primordial matter, is a result of His vl rya.

In the vyAkhyAna in dharma cakram it is pointed out that one with the vl rya or creative energy should also be one who has complete control of the indriya-s in order for this creative energy to be beneficial to every one else. From this point, the Lord is the only one who can be called the mahA-vl rya.

nAma 177. महाशक्तिः - mahA-saktih

Of immense power.

mahA-Saktaye namah.

SrI Bhattar points out that this nAma emphasizes that bhagavAn is not just the sentient cause of this world, but is also the material cause of this world; i.e., He is not only the brain behind the creation, but He is also the one whose immense power caused the physical creation of this world from the prakRti.

SrI Bhattar indicates that this is unlike the view held by the pasupata school that holds that Isvara is only the sentient cause and not the material cause. He points out that the constant change going on in pradhAna or primordial matter, milk, curd, etc., every moment, is but the result of a small fraction of this Sakti of bhagavAn. Unfortunately I am unfamiliar with the details of the point made here about the pasupata school of thought , and would like to invite



additional comments/elaborations from the readers. The word can be derived from Sak - marshane to endure, to be able, or Sak Saktau to be able, to endure, to be powerful. Thus Sri satyadevo vAsishTha interprets the meaning to be similar to be mahA-bala, mahotsAhah etc.

Sri Sankara interprets Sakti as sAmarthyam or skill, and Sri chinamayAnanda follows up on this and indicates that He is mahA-Sakti because He is the cause of the interplay of the three Sakti-s, the kriyA Sakti or the power-of-action, the kAma-Sakti or the power-of-desire, and the ~jnAna Sakti or the power-of-knowledge, which in turn is the cause of this Universe.

As pointed out under the previous nAma, He uses the mighty power for the good of the world, and every instance of this Might should remind us of Him.

nAma 178. महाद्युतिः - mahA-dyutih

He of great splendor.

mahA-dyutaye namah.

The derivation of this nAma is from the dhAtu dyuta dl ptau to shine. dyotate iti dyutih - One who is shining is dyutih, dyotayitA vA dyutih - One who makes things shine is dyutih. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the following yajurvedic mantras to support the point that all that shines in this world is because of His effulgence -

yaste divi sUrye mahimA sambabhUva |

tasmai te mahimne prajApataye devebhyah svAhA ||

yaste nakshatreshu candramasi mahimA sambabhUva |

tasmai te mahimne prjApataye devebhyah svAhA ||

(yajur 23-2, 23-4)

Sri Bhattar explains that this nAma indicates that bhagavAn neither depends on nor needs any external help for any of His actions, and the great splendor



(tejas) in His appearance reveals this. This tejas is capable of removing both the outer and the inner darkness in us. The tejas of the Sun and the shining of the precious jewels are but a tiny part of the tejas of the Lord. This tejas of the Lord is so pleasing to His devotees, and so frightening to His enemies (we may recall the description of the nAma nArasimha-vapu earlier, where we emphasized the same point about the nRsimha avatAram).

The sruti references that support this are:

svayam jyotih - He is pure Effulgence Himself without the need for external means to illuminate Him (bRhadAraNya upanishad 4.3.9),

jyotishAm jyotih - The Light among lights (muNdakopanishad 2.2.9), etc.

The dharma cakram writer points out that those who worship the Lord are automatically blessed by the Lord with a part of this dyuti (The face is the index of the mind - agattin azhagu mugattil teriyum is the Tamil saying).

Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri points out that there are 43 nAmas in sahasranAmam that start with mahA. Of these, the above six nAmas refer to bhagavAn's qualities of overlordship, strength, knowledge, virility, power, and effulgence. The combination of these six guNas is what makes bhagavAn the mahA-mAya or the One who performs the wonderful acts which are His sport.

The six great qualities of bhagavAn that have been referred to in the previous nAma-s 173-178 are also referenced in many sruti-s: (173 - mahotsAhah-mahA-balah- mahA-buddhih176 - mahA-vIryah177 - mahA-Saktih- mahA-dyutih)

parA asya Saktih vividhaiva SrUyate svabhAviki ~jnAna bala kriyA ca

(SvetAsvatara U. 6-8)

He has varieties of Sakti-s in par excellence as part of His Nature. His superior knowledge, superior might, and His power of creation etc., are some examples.

~jnAna Sakti bala aiSvarya vIrya tejAmsi aSeshatah |

bhagavacchabda-vAcyAni vinA heyaih guNadibhih || (vishNupurANam 6-5-79)



The word bhagaVan is associated with the six superior qualities of knowledge, strength, lordship or non-dependence on anything else, virility, power, and effulgence, with no association whatever with any negative connotations.

tejo bala aiSvarya mahA avabodha suvI rya SaktyAdi guNaika rASih|

(vishNu purANam 6-5-85)

The Lord is the abode for good qualities such as tejas, balam, aiSvaryam, great knowledge, abundant vI rya, Sakti etc.

nAma 179. अनिर्देश्यवपुः - anirdEshya-vapuh

He who possesses an indescribable body.

anirdeSya-vapushe namah.

Something that can be described as this or that, or can be pointed to as this or that, is nirdeSa - idam tat ityAdi rUpeNa vi-jnApanam, ~jnApyasya prakASanam vA nirdeSah. AnirdeSa is something that cannot be described as above. vapu means SarIra or body. vapu also can be derived from the dhAtu vap - bljasantAne chedane ca - to sow, to scatter, etc. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha uses this latter approach and gives a meaning for anirdeSyavapu as One who cannot be easily described and who is the sower of the seed for this Universe. He indicates that the word bAp, bApu etc., - father in Hindi is derived from a colloquial derivative of vapu.

All beings who have a body as we know it have the body which is formed from the panca-bhuta-s, mahat and ahamkAram. BhagavAn's body is different - it is formed from the six maha-guNa-s that we just learned about. He becomes whatever He wants to become. He is pure effulgence, pure knowledge, pure power, pure lordship incarnate, etc. In vishNu purANa, we have "rUpa varNAdi nirdeSa viSeshaNa vivarjitah - Regarding His form, color, etc., there is nothing that can be compared to them" - (1.2.10). Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri remarks in his commentary that the mahA-guNas cannot be visualized by the meager



knowledge that we possess, and it is only by the inner experience that He can be realized.

SrI chinmayAnanda points out that He is the knowledge through which we can describe everything else, but He himself cannot be described. (Just as the eye can see others, but the eye cannot be used to see itself).

nAma 180. श्रीमान् - srImAn

Possessed of beauty.

SrImate namah.



*SrImAn - ThiruveLLarai PerumAl with nAchchiyArs
(Courtesy : www.srirangapankajam.com)*

This nAma occurred earlier as nAma 22, and will re-occur as nAma 222 later. NAma 22 occurred succeeding the nAma nArasimha-vapuh, which was nAma 21, and was interpreted in that context (viz., the nRsimha incarnation was of



exceptional beauty). The nAmaS immediately preceding nAma 222 are interpreted by Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar in the context of the matsya - avatAra, and so they interpret nAma 222 as referring to the beauty of the matsya-avatAra. For the current nAma, since this immediately succeeds the description of the body of the Lord (anirdeSya vapu), they interpret this in this context, and give the meaning that here it refers to the enormously beautiful ornaments that decorate the body of bhagavAn (Sri Bhattar), or they refer to the beauty associated with the six great qualities (Sri Sankara). Note that even though the same nAma, Sri mAn, occurs three times, both Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar interpret them differently each time depending on the context.

Sri mAn also refers to Sriyah pati, or the Lord of Sri or mahA-lakshmi. BhagavAn's beauty is natural to Him because He has Sri in his vaksha-sthala. The dharma-cakram author interprets this nAma to mean that the prakRti and purusha are inseparable, just as Sri and the Lord are inseparable, and are part of the same para-brahmam.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the root as "Sri -sevAyAm" - One who is fit to be served. Sri also means SobhA or beauty or "kAnti". He points out that the beauty that is seen all around us in the trees, the birds, the rivers, the flowers, the Sun, the Moon, the stars, etc., should remind us constantly of bhagavAn, the Sri mAn whose Sri is shining in everything. Sri also means wealth. The wealth that humans have is transient, and can disappear any time. BhagavAn is Sri maAn whose wealth is nitya or permanent.

nAma 181. अमेयात्मा - amEyAtmA

He of an incomprehensible nature.

ameyAtmane namah.

Sri Bhattar explains that based on the diverse qualities which are in abundance as described in the previous nAma-s, He is ameyAtmA.





Sri Sankara interprets the meaning of AtmA here as buddhi or intelligence, and He is ameyAtmA because He has remarkable intelligence which is beyond measure.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha starts from the root or dhAtu from which this nAma is derived - mA mAnE to measure, to compare with. MAtum arhah meyah; na mAtum arhah ameyah. Here AtmA refers to the svarUpam. Since He in the inner soul of everything, it is not possible to describe Him from outside, just as an ocean cannot be precisely defined when you are in the middle of the ocean.

nAma 182. महाद्रिधृत् - mahAdri-dhrut

The bearer of the great mountain.

mahAdri-dhRte namah.

There are two instances of bhagavAn bearing the mountain. One was the instance of bearing the mandara mountain during the time of churning of the Milk Ocean, when bhagavAn appeared in the form of the Great Tortoise to bear the churning stick (which was the mandara mountain) on His back. The other is the instance when Lord KRshNa bore the govardhana mountain in gokulam to protect the cows.

Sri chinamayAnanda points out that bhagavAn also supports the mind-intellect of the sAdhaka while he is churning, through SravaNa (study) and manana (reflection), his own milk-like pure heart of devotion in order to gain the amRtam of immortality.

Some versions of sahasranAmam have this nAmam as mahAdridhRk instead of mahAdri-dhRt. Sri rAdhAKRshNa Sastri points out the difference between the two as follows: mahAdri-dhRk - One who is capable of bearing a huge mountain (mahAdraye didhRshNoti); mahAdri-dhRt - One who bears a huge mountain (mahAdrim dharati). My knowledge of samskRt grammar is not good enough to explain this distinction clearly. I would request anyone who can





explain the difference between the two versions based on etymological considerations to contribute to clarifying this difference in meaning.



SIOkam 20

महेष्वासो महीभर्ता श्रीनिवासस्सतां गतिः ।

अनिरुद्धस्सुरानन्दो गोविन्दो गोविदां पतिः ॥ २० ॥

mahEshvAsO mahI bhartA srI nivAsas satAmgatih |

aniruddhah surAnandO gOvindO gOvidAm patih ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 183. महेष्वासः - mahEshvAsah

a) The discharger of great arrows

b) The wielder of the mighty bow

maheshvAsAya namah.

mahAn - manohArI - enchanting;

ishUNAm - arrows;

Asah - discharger.

SrI Bhattar gives the examples of Lord Rama discharging the arrows to establish a bridge across the sethu river and at the time of destroying the ten-headed RAvaNa.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that ishvAsa can mean the bow (that which throws or discharges the arrows), and one who has the great dhanus is maheshvAsa - mahAn ishvAsah asya asti iti maheshvAsah.

The dharma cakram author points out that even though modern science provides a lot of facilities like being able to build bridges to cross great rivers in times of war in a short time nowadays, the result is more war and more insecurity and more evils. Not so with the Lord's arrows, which always achieve their objective without fail (rAma bANam vI N pogAdu is a saying in Tamil -



Rama's arrows never go to waste), and bring good to mankind.

nAma 184. महीभर्ता – mahI bhartA

The bearer of the earth.

mahI-bhartre namah.

SrI Bhattar interprets this nAma as referring to bhagavAn bearing the earth constantly as the Adi kUrma. SrI SrI nivAsa rAghavAchAryAr has pointed out in his nRsimha priyA articles that the following mantra in the nitya Ahnika karma - (PraNavam) **akhila jagadAdhArAya kUrma-rUpiNe nArAyaNaya namah** - is a reference to this act of SrIman nArAyaNa.

BhartA literally means husband or supporter. mahI means earth. mahI-bhartA means the Husband of Mother Earth. We have the description of how the Lord, as the Great Boar (varAha) uplifted the earth from the "waters of Deluge", and is still supporting the earth. The author in dharma cakram surmises that the gravitational force which keeps everything in this universe in its place is just a demonstration of the Sakti or power of this mahI -bhartA.

nAma 185. श्रीनिवासः - srI nivAsah

In whom Lakshmi resides.

SrInivAsAya namah.

SrI refers to Lakshmi. NivAsam is the place or abode. Sri mahA-lakshmi emerged from the ocean as one of the nectars as it was churned. All the devas were watching and waiting, and She chose the Lord as She emerged. BhagavAn greeted Her with sweet words and offered Her the place on His vaksha-sthalam. This is one of His leela-s.

SrI chinmayAnanda points out that SrI connotes "all Glory and power, faculties and strength, to be good and to perform creative acts of righteousness". She never resides permanently in any bosom, and even great





saints and sages are known to have compromised the perfections in them in recorded history. The only place where imperfections never enter to molest the serene essence, is the seat of Eternal Perfection, which is the bosom of nArAyaNa. This is a very elegant way of interpreting and understanding the significance of the statement that Sri is always in the vaksha-sthalam of the Lord.

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*SrInivAsan - MalayappaswAmy in Muthangi SEva
with nAchchiyArs in Thirumala-Thirupathi*





SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that SrI also means beauty (SobhA), fame (vibhUti), wealth (dhana). One who is the residence of all these is SrI -nivAsa.

The statement that SrI resides always with mahA-vishNu in his vaksha-sthAlam emphasizes the concept that lakshmi and nArAyaNa should be viewed as One, just as the fire and the heat associated with it are not two separate things. SrI is the brightness, the success, the wealth, the beauty, associated with nArAyaNa.

nAma 186. सतां गतिः - satAm gatih

The Ultimate Goal for all spiritual seekers.

satAm-gataye namah.

sat refers to all spiritual seekers and all those who are virtuous. SrI chinmayAnanda points out that this name implies that He is not only the final goal for these, but also the very direction, path, and progress as well. BhagavAn is the goal for the devotees because they do not want anything except Him once they become His devotees.

nAma 187. अनिरुद्धः - aniruddhah

One who cannot be obstructed or resisted by anyone.

aniruddhAya namah.

Examples of this guNa of bhagavAn are seen all around us all the time. Nothing can stop the rising and setting of the sun, the absorption of sun's energy by the different things, etc. The laws of Nature are irresistible. In SrI chinmayAnanda's words relating to this nAma, "Time and tide wait for none". BhagavAn has been victorious and unobstructed in all of His incarnations. SrI Bhattar gives the reference to maula smahitA to support the interpretation





for this nAma - aparimita cheshTo bhagavAn aniruddhah - Unlimited are the exploits of bhagavAn aniruddha".

The writer in dharma cakram gives a very obvious example of the unobstructed nature of bhagavAn's wishes. Kamsa tries many things to get rid of child KRshNa right from the time of His birth, and in fact He had planned to get rid of the child long before the child was to be born. We all know that nothing worked, and the child kRshNa became the boy kRshNa and got rid of kamsa as He had planned. This nAma not only says that no one can obstruct bhagavAn helping His devotees, but it also says that no one can save His enemies.

nAma 188. सुरानन्दः - surAnandah

One who gives delight to the gods.

surAnandAya namah.

surAn Anandayati iti surAnandah. The word sura is composed of su - good, and rA - to give. So bhagavAn is One who brings happiness to those who bring good to the world (sura-s). He has assigned them the different functions on these lines. He gives delight to the gods by helping them in times of distress. One instance of this is when the Milk-Ocean was churned and the Lord gave the amRtam to the sura-s. The instance that Sri Bhattar alludes to is the hamsa incarnation which is extensively referred to in the divya prabandham. This is covered in several places in the divya prabandham, and in addition there is a whole chapter dedicated to this incarnation in Srlmad-bhAgavatam. The following are references in divya prabandham:

mun iv-Ezhu ulagu uNarvinRi iruL miga umbargaL tozhudEtta annamAgi anRu
aru-maRai payandavanE enakku aruL puri nI yE...

(periya tirumozhi 5.3.8)

"When all the seven worlds were immersed in darkness because of all kinds of conflicting and contradictory beliefs, brahma and sanaka-sanandanAdi deva-s prayed to Lord nArAyaNa, He appeared in the form of a hamsa (swan) and gave





them the benefit of the knowledge of the path of righteousness."

The significance of hamsa here is that it is capable of separating the milk from the water; so also, bhagavAn identified the good from the bad for the benefit of the sura-s.

"tunni maNNum viNNAdum tOnRAdu iruLai mUdiya nAL
annamAgi aru maraigal aruLicceyda amalanidam.... "

(periya tirumozhi 5.1.9)

mannu mA-nilamum malaigalum kadalum vAnamum tAnavar-ulagum tunnu mA-
irulAi tulangoLi Surungi tollai-nAnmaRaigaLum maRaiya pinnum vAnavarkkum
munivarkkum nalgi piRangiruL niRam keDa orunAL annamAi a~ngu arumaRai
payndAn aranga-mA-nagar amrndAnE.

(periya tirumozhi 5.7.3)

"tunniya pEriruL Suzhndu ulagai mUDa manniya nAnmaRai muRRum maRaindiDa
pin ivvulagil pEriruL ni ~nga anRu annamadAnE! AccOvaccO arumaRai tandAnE!
AccOvaccO!"

(periyAzhvAr tirumozhi 1.9.10)

In SriMad-bhAgavatam, chapter 13 of the 11th skandam is devoted to hamsa avatAram. There bhagavAn describes how brahma meditated upon Him for guidance in answering the question from sanaka-sanandanA-s on the relationship between buddhi, AtmA, guNa-s, etc., and how He appeared in the form of a swan incarnation and gave the upadeSa to them.

nAma 189. गोविन्दः - gOvindah

- One who is praised by the gods (for His help).
- One who dug out the Earth from the depths of the Ocean.
- The protector of cows.



d) One who confers the veda-s

govindAya namah.



gOvindan - MannArgudi rAjAgOpAlan

go in samskRt means "Earth", "cows", "speech", or "veda-s" - gaur-vANI , dharA, dhenurvA. From this we derive gavAm, gAm, etc. vid - IAbhe to get, to find, to feel is the root from which vinda is derived.

a) **gavAm vindah govindah** - gavAm - praise, vindah - recipient. He is govinda because He is the recipient of praise by the gods for the help He renders as outlined in the previous nAma.

b) **Another interpretation is gAm avindat** - One who retrieved the Earth from the depths of the Ocean. The following is from Santi parvam in mahAbhAratam

**nashTAm vai dharaNI m purvam avindam vai guhAgatAm |
govinda iti tenAham devair-vAgbir-abhishTutah||**

(Santi - 330.5)

"I first rescued the earth which was carried away and hidden in depths of the Ocean (by an asura); hence I am praised by the appellation Govinda by gods and



scriptures".

The significance of this is pointed out by the dharma cakram writer. BhagavAn is the One who truly understands the world and all its subjects.

c) gAvo vedavANyo yam vindanti labhante, yatra vA avatisThante sa govindo bhagavAn vishNuh - One who is reached by vedic chanting, or One who is the abode of the veda-s, is govinda or vishNu. In harivamSa we have the following -

gaureshA tu yato vANI tAm ca vindayate bhavAn |
govindastu tato deva! munibhih kathyate bhavAn! ||

(harivamSa 3.88.50)

gau means words. "You pervade all words giving them power. Sages, therefore, call you govinda."

d) The protector of the cows - again supported from harivamSa -

aham kilendro devAnAm tvam gavAm indratAm gatah |
govinda iti lokAstvAm stoshyanti bhuvI SASvatam ||

(harivamSa 2.19.45)

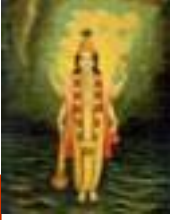
"I am indra, leader of deva-s. You have attained the leadership of the cows. So in this world men praise You always addressing you as govinda". He is the protector of the cows and played the part of gopAla in gokulam.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that the leadership of cows also suggests the importance of milk, ghee, etc., in worship, yaj~na etc., and how these also play a key role in the nourishment of the world.

An author by name ananta kRshNa Sastri, who has translated SrI Sankara's vishNu sahasranAma vyAkhyAnam, gives 10 meanings for the combination go + vid :

1. go-svargam - He transcends Heaven.
2. arrows - He knows all the weapons.
3. cattle - He is the leader of cows.
4. Speech - He is to be known by the veda-s.





5. Thunderbolt - He has the vajra marks on His feet.
6. Quarters - He is known in all quarters.
7. Eyes - He is the seer in every person.
8. The Sun - He is in the orb of the sun.
9. Earth - He recovered the Earth from the Ocean.
10. Waters - His seat is in the waters.

nAma 190. गोविदां पतिः - gOvidAm patih

The protector of those who know the veda-s.

govidAm-pataye namah.

Here go means veda-s. vid is one who knows. pati is the leader or protector. The significance to be recognized here is that He is the source of all knowledge, and it is by His grace that knowledge is attained.

Recall from the previous nAma that the word go in samskRt has several meanings, including speech, earth, cows, etc. This opens up the beauty of other interpretations for the current nAma. BhagavAn is also the master of speech of all other creations such as birds, etc., the leader of those who know the principle (tatvam) of this Universe, etc.

I am indebted to Sri M. Srinivasan for helping me with identifying these references.





SIOkam 21

मरीचिर्दमनो हंसः सुपर्णो भुजगोत्तमः ।

हिरण्यनाभस्सुतपाः पद्मनाभः प्रजापतिः ॥ २१ ॥

marI cirdamanO hamsah suparNO bhujagOttamah |

hiraNyanAbhassutapAh padmanAbhah prajApatih ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 191. मरीचिः - marI cih

Ray of light.

marIcaye namah.

The word marIci means a ray of light. Sri Bhattar interprets this name as indicating that bhagavAn reveals Himself to His devotees through the eye of their devotion even though they can't see Him through their natural eye. The author in dharma cakram indicates that this guNa of bhagavAn should remind us that we should aim for the ray of light that will help us meditate on Him. This we can achieve by first controlling our indriya-s, which then converts the body's energies into mental energy. Then by control of the mind, this energy is converted into the light that gives the clarity of mind that can help us meditate on Him.

A different interpretation is given by Sri satyadevo vAsishTha for this nAma. The word marIci is derived from mR prANatyAge to die, to perish. He interprets marIci as one who destroys. Since it is one of bhagavAn's functions to destroy the beings that He creates, He is marIci. To support this, he gives the examples from bhagavad-gI tA -

jAtasya hi dhruvo mRtyur-dhruvam janma mRtasya ca (gI ta 2.25)

mRtyuh prajAnAm adhipatih (atharva 5.24.13), etc.





nAma 192. दमनः - damanah

- a) Dispeller (of the samsAra bhAram)
- b) Subduer - One who controls and punishes those who swerve from their prescribed path.
- c) He Who controls everything by pervading everything.

damanAya namah

The word is derived from the dhAtu - dam upaSame = to tame. **damayati iti damanah** - One who dispels.

a) Continuing his interpretation of the previous nAma (One with great radiance), Sri Bhattar interprets this nAma as indicating that He guides His devotees overcome the sufferings of samsAra or the material world through His guiding Light - **kAnti mandAKinI bhiih bhava-tApam daayati iti damanah** Sri kRshNa datta bhAradvAj and Sri baladeva vidyA bhUshaN give similar interpretations. Sri baladeva vidyA bhUshaN explains the nAma as "**damayati vicheda tApam sva-dhyAtRRNAm kAnti kantall bhiih iti damanah**" - He Who dispels the sufferings of those who meditate on Him through His kAnti. Sri kRshNa datta bhAradvAj gives the interpretation: **dAmyati upaSamayati kAnti kiraNaih upAsI nAnAm manas-tApam iti damanah** - He Who removes the sorrow in the minds of His devotees through His when they meditate on Him.

b) Sri Sankara interprets the nAma as "The Subduer" - One Who controls and punishes those that swerve from their assigned duties (**damayitum Seelam yasya sa damanah**). This could be in the form of a king while the people are in their mortal bodies, as yama after they die, etc. Sri cinmayAnanda explains that the damana aspect of bhagavAn is responsible for controlling the rAkshasic impulses within every one of us. In the form of pain and agitation, sorrow and death, it is He who controls all the negative tendencies in everyone's heart. He also has controlled the vicious against the good in the form of His ten incarnations.





c) Sri vAsishTha interprets the nAma as "One Who controls everything in this world by pervading everything and keeping things in order" - damayati - upaSamayati yathA sthAnam prApayati, damana dharmeNa viSvam sa-carAcaram vyApnoti, iti damanah.

d) Sri satya sandha tI rtha gives several interpretations for the nAma:

i) damanAsura samhAratvAt damanah - He Who destroyed the asura by name damana.

ii) damana priyatvAt da-manah - He Who likes taming or subduing the wicked.

iii) damo yeshAm asti iti damAh, tAn nayati iti dama-nah - He Who is the Supreme among those who have control of the mind and the indriya-s (dama-nah).

iv) dam abhI shTa dAtR mano yasya sa iti vA da-manah - He Who has the mind to bestow whatever is desired on His devotees (da-manah).

The author in dharma cakram points out that when one does not lead a life based on strict sAttvic principles, including the food habits, etc., one gets diseases and other mental pains. These are all acts of bhagavAn to discipline the person with the intent of helping the person learn and realize the right path. This is His act of damana, or controlling, punishing, guiding, etc.

The reader is also referred to nAma 864 (Sloka 92) - damayitA, which is derived from the root as the current nAma, damanah.

nAma 193. हंसः - hamsah

One who is like the swan.

hamsAya namah.

Hamsa is capable of separating milk from water and drinking only the milk and leaving the water behind. Hamsa is also noted for its beauty, especially for its walk. BhagavAn is hamsa in that He is everything that is good and nothing that



is not good. He is also hamsa for His beauty in thought, word, and deed.

We had made extensive reference to the hamsa incarnation of bhagavAn in the explanation for the nAma surAnanda. Thus the current nAma can also be viewed as a reference to the hamsa avatAra of bhagavAn.

Another interpretation, given by Sri Sankara, is that hamsah indicates that bhagavAn kills (han) the fear of samsAra in those who realize that aham sah - I am He. This (I am He) is traditionally quoted in discussions supporting the advaita philosophy. In some of his upanyAsa-s, Sri kRshNa Premi describes the following upa-katha involving a disciple who went alternately to an advaita and a visishTAdvaita teacher, who taught him alternately their philosophy - so'ham, dAso'ham, sadA so'ham, and dAsadAso'ham. Notice the play of words here, adding dA to the first one, sa to the next one, and dA again to the third word to get the fourth.

Yet another interpretation is hanti gacchati sarva SarIreshu iti vA hamsah - He moves in all beings and bodies and so He is called hamsa.

nAma 194. सुपर्णः - suparNah

a) (literally) One possessed of charming feathers - see below.

b) One who can lead men to the other shore across the ocean of samsAra.

suparNAya namah.

a) In Sri mad-bhAgavatam we have - siddheSvarANAm kapilah suparNo'ham patatriNAm - Among the siddha-s, I am Kapila, and among birds I am GaruDa (11.16.15). In Bhagavad-gItA, we have mRgANAm ca mRgandro'ham vainateyaSca pakshiNAM - Among beasts, I am the lion, their king, and among birds, I am GaruDa, the son of VinatA (10.29). Thus, suparNa is interpreted as referring to His being the Best of the best in all that exist.

b) parNa means wings. Sobhana parNatvAt suparNah - suparNa means One with auspicious and beautiful wings. He is suparNa because He carries His



devotees to the other shore of the ocean of samsAra.

c) In the upanishad-s, we have reference to two beautiful birds sitting on the same tree - signifying the jIvAtmA and the ParamAtmA dwelling in the same body. One (jIvAtmA) eats the fruits of actions, and the other (ParamAtmA) just gazes on (sAkshI). VishNu is this all-experiencing Principle of Consciousness.

"dvA suparNA sayujA sakhAyA samAnam vRksham parishvajAte
tayoranyah pippalam svAdvanti, anaSnan anyo abhicAkaSI ti

(mundakopanishad - 3.1)

A pair of white-winged birds extremely friendly to each other sit on one and the same tree; one eats the fruits, the other eats not and gazes on".

SrI rAdhAkRshNa Sastri refers to one as the great enjoyer (pErinbam), and the other as the Great Knower (pEraRivu).

d) The nAma can also relate back to the previous nAma - The hamsa incarnation with beautiful wings.

nAma 195. भुजगोत्तमः - bhujagOttamah

The Master of the Serpent AdiSesha.

bhujagottamAya namah.

bhujaga refers to the species which navigate using their shoulders or arms - bhujena gacchanti, rather than through their legs. Here bhujaga refers to AdiSesha. uttama can refer to 'one who is above'. Here it refers to bhagavAn who is reclining on top of the AdiSesha. He is the SeshI or the Lord of the Sesha. He is reclining on ananta the Serpent as the couch. Or the name could also refer to bhujagAnAm uttamah - One who is the best among the serpents. i.e., it can refer to ananta - see bhagavad-gItA 10-29 - anantaScAsmi nAgAnAm.

Even though I am finding the interpretations of SrI satyadevo vAsishTha to





be on the side of being unconventional, I am including them since he supports his interpretations with extensive support from grammar, quotes from sruti-s etc. Here he starts with the dhAtu bhuj kautilye to bend, to curve. He points out that bhagavAn is bhujagottama because He is the best of all that bend and move. This includes air, birds, etc. Wherever anything of this category can reach, no matter how fast they fly or move, bhagavAn is there before them. Even the man-made machines that fly cannot go anywhere including other planets faster than Him, since He is there before them. Not only that, even the ability for those that fly etc. are given only by the Grace of the Lord.

nAma 196. हिरण्यनाभः - hiraNyanAbhah

One who supports in His navel the creator, hiraNyagarbha.

hiraNya-nAbhAya namah.

Literally the word means "One who has a beautiful navel with a golden hue". Here it refers to the navel that is great by having created the catur-mukha-brahmA who is also well-versed in the catur-veda-s. brahmA gets his greatness because he creates all the beings thus giving them the opportunity to reveal their greatness. This great brahmA was borne out of the navel of vishNu, and thus the greatness of the navel that bore the great brahmA is evident. Just as a nation that creates great people becomes known as a great nation, so is the analogy here, to quote the dharma cakram writer.

nAma 197. सुतपाः - sutapAh

a) One who is possessed of supreme knowledge.

b) One with consistent creative thinking.

sutapAse namah.

Sri Bhattar interprets tapas as knowledge, and gives the first interpretation above.





Sri Sankara uses the following from mahAbhArata - **mansaScendriyANAm ca hyaikAgRyam paramam tapah** - The concentration of mind and senses is called supreme tapas - (MB 12.242.4).

Sri chinmayAnanda gives the following support from the upanishad - **sa tapah taptvA idametadasRjat** (He thought, and through thought He created all this).

The author in dharma cakram points out that the strength derived from tapas is more powerful than any other strength, and gives the example of how viSvAmitra's army was powerless against vasishTha's tapo-Sakti. It was through tapas that viSvAmitra ultimately attained brahma-j~nAna, and it was through tapas that dhruva attained the immortal position. Lord vishNu is tapas-I ncarnate (sutapAh), and thus guides His devotees in the path of tapas.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha interprets tap to mean the ability to bear (kleS kA sahnA in Hindi). The example of a mother bearing the strain of an unborn child for 9 months just so she can bring out the child to this world is but a reflection of bhagavAn's su-tapa or His bearing the tejas of the likes of Sun so that it can bring out the good for the beings of this world, without burning them with its heat etc. So bhagavAn is the mahA-tapasvI .

nAma 198. पद्मनाभः - padmanAbhah

- a) One who has the lotus emanating from his navel (carrying brahma)
- b) One who resides in the center of everyone's heart

padma nAbhAya namah.

This nAma had occurred earlier as nAma 48. There the interpretation was that the lotus (the cause of the Universe) emanates from His navel. Another explanation given by Sri Sankara for the current nAma is that bhagavAn is in the centre of everyone's hRdaya kamalam or heart (nAbhI means also the central part, and padmam in this context is heart).

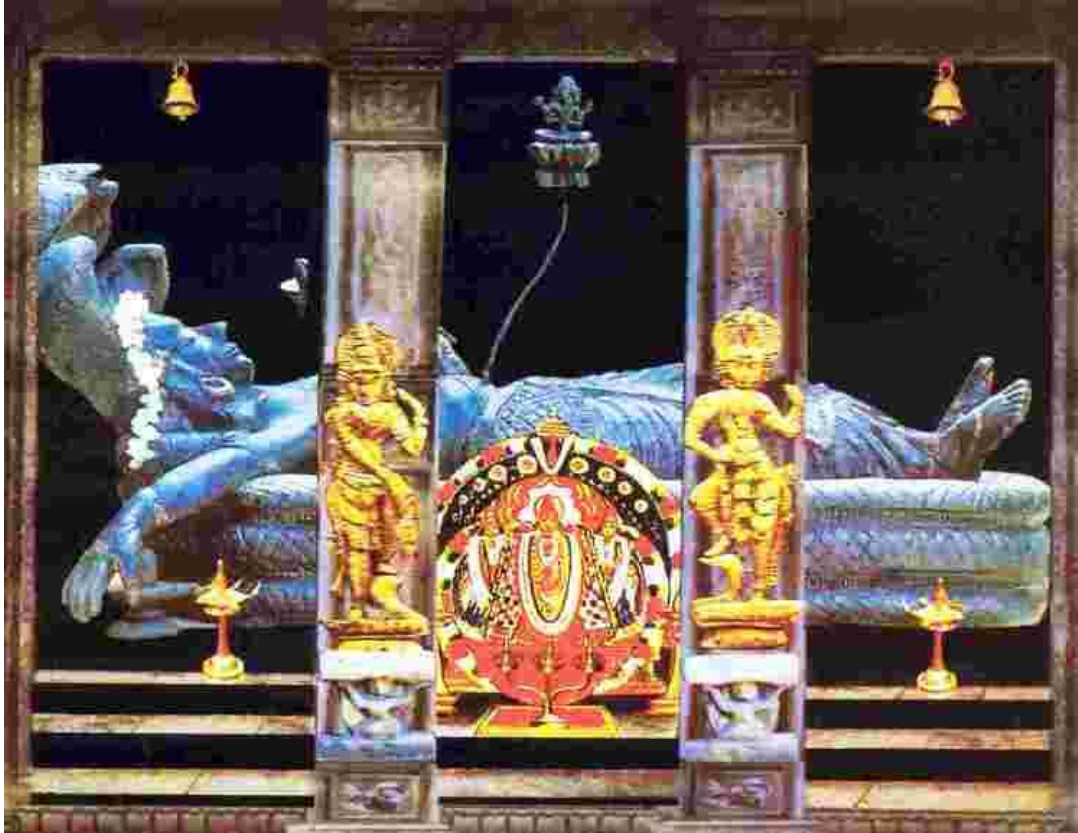
The author in dharma cakram enjoys this nAma in various other ways. When lotus (padmam) blossoms, it attracts the bees and other insects towards it; so





also, bhagavAn (padma-nAbhi) attracts all the jeevans to Him. Lotus is the most beautiful and fragrant of flowers; so also our padma-nAbha is the embodiment of beauty. Lord rAmA's beauty has been described by Sri Kamban - tAL kandAr tALE kandAr. Unlike the bodily beauty which brings down people to a lower level, the beauty of padma-nAbha can only elevate people to a higher level.

sadagopan.org



*padmanAbhAn - Thiruananthapuram
(Courtesy: www.stephen-knapp.com)*

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives additional insight into this nAma from yet another perspective. Padmam also means knowledge - padyate j~nAyate anena padmam j~nAnam. One who is the Center or reservoir of Knowledge, or One who controls and rules over Knowledge is padmanAbha (the author uses the term j~nAna-bandhanah as the equivalent of padma-nAbha based on this explanation).





nAma 199. प्रजापतिः - prajApatih

The Lord of beings.

prajApataye namah.

tat padmodbhava-prabhRtInAm prajAnAm patih - The Lord of all beings including brahma born of that lotus. This pertains to the creation and destruction that take place periodically. Pati also means father, and since all creatures have emerged from Him, He is prajApati. He is the Leader who appears whenever needed to establish dharma.



SIOkam 22

अमृत्युस्सर्वदृक् सिंहः सन्धाता सन्धिमान् स्थिरः ।

अजो दुर्मर्षणश्शास्ता विश्रुतात्मा सुरारिहा ॥ २२ ॥

amrutyussarvadruk simhah sandhAtA sandhiAn sthirah |

ajO durmarshaNas sAstA visrutAtmA suraarihA ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 200. अमृत्युः - amrutyuh

One who is beyond death or decay.

amRtyave namah.

mRtyuh yasya na asti iti amRtyuh. Birth, growth, decay, disease, and death, are the five modifications through which every finite object must pass. Everything that is born is bound to die. Since He is not born, He is beyond decay, death, or other modifications.

The author in dharma cakram points out that this nAma should remind us of the indestructibility or deathlessness of the jivAtmA, and should remind us of the need to mediate on Him without associating ourselves with this perishable body.

nAma 201. सर्वदृक् - sarvadruk

All-seeing.

sarva-dRSe namah.

He is the Seer and Knower of everything at all times in all beings. He is the witness of all, and sees those who are well-disposed or hostile or indifferent to Him as the Ruler of all and rewards them according to their deeds. The



author in dharma cakram points out the concept that is simple but worth repeating - that this nAma should remind us that it is important to be pure in thought, word, and deed, since He is ever watchful of these in all beings at all times. It is easy to swerve from His path without any human being being aware of it, but we should be aware that He is the All-seeing.

nAma 202. सिंहः - simhah

- a) The Lion
- b) Destroyer

simhAya namah.

Sri Bhattar interprets the nAma as one who has assumed the body of man and lion.

Sri Sankara gives the meaning that He is the Destroyer (Lion) of sins. He gives the following etymological derivation "hinasti iti simhah" - hinasti smaraNa mAtreNa samasta pApAn iti simhah. According to this interpretation, the word himsa changes to simha by transposition of letters according to the grammatical rule "pRshodarAdI ni yatopadishTam" (PANini 6.3.109).

Sri chinmayAnanda points out that even taking the literal meaning "Lion" for simha, He is the Lion at the mention of whose name all the animal passions flee from the jungle of the mind.

In the gl tA we have "mRgANAm ca mRgendro'ham - Among the animals, I am the king of animals - The Lion" - gl tA 10.30.

In dharma cakram, the writer says that meditating on this nAma with its meaning should give us the vlrya to destroy the evil in our thoughts, words, and deeds. It is only a strong personality which can help us overcome the negative forces around us and help us realize Him. It is necessary to be good and to be strong (nallavanAgavum vallavanAgavum as stated in the tamizh language).





nAma 203. सन्धाता - sandhAtA

- a) One who unites His devotees with Him
- b) One who unites the beings with the fruits of their actions

sandhAtre namah.

sandhatta iti sandhAtA - One who unites.

The first meaning is given by Sri Bhattar, giving the example of prahlAda. The second meaning is given by Sri Sankara. The nirukti gives the description - prahlAdAdyaih sandhAtA samSlesha-karaNAcca sah - One who makes the likes of prahlAda join Him.

nAma 204. सन्धिमान् - sandhimAn

One who is always united with His devotees.

sandhimate namah.

sandhi is union. Sri Bhattar gives the explanation that this name indicates that He is always united with His devotees, and so He is sandhimAn. Again, quoting the nirukti, prahlAdAdyaih nityasandhih yasya syAt sandhimAn smRtah - One who is in permanent union with the likes of prahlAda.

nAma 205. स्थिरः - sthirah

One who is firm in His relation to His devotees.

sthirAya namah.

Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that He is sthirah since He is firmly attached to His devotees in spite of any wrongs by them - apacAre'pi acAlyatvAt sandhAne sthira ucyate. Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that He is sthira in the sense that He is Constant, being always the same, free from birth,





decay, etc. - sadaika rUpatvAt sthirah.

nAma 206. अजः - ajah

- a) Unborn
- b) Remover of obstacles
- c) One who moves in the hearts of the devotees
- d) One who removes the ignorance from the hearts of His devotees
- e) One who is the root of all sound (akshara "a")

ajAya namah.

We encountered this nAma as nAma 96 earlier. It will recur also as nAma 524. Please see the explanations under nAma 96.

nAma 207. दुर्मर्षणः - durmarshaNah

The Unassailable.

durmarshaNAya namah.

dushkaram marshaNam asya iti durmarshaNah - One who cannot be overcome by His enemies. Sri chinmayAnanda gives a very interesting perspective for this nAma. We may swerve from His path, and satisfy our sensory urges, but after being born over and over, we ultimately have no choice except to follow His path. In the lesser levels of evolution, we may deny ourselves the peace and joy of living the spiritual values, but in the end we will be seeking the feet of vishNu for real happiness and true achievement. Thus, His is the final victory.

The root from which this nAma is derived is mRsh - sahane to bear. Literally this means One who is difficult to bear (for His enemies). Sri satyadevo vAsishTha starts with this, and interprets the nAma to mean that bhagavAn is



durmarshaNa because His tejas cannot be confronted in His forms such as the Sun. He also points out that this principle is demonstrated by bhagavAn in everything in this world - the moon cannot stand the tejas of the sun, the brightness of the stars is diminished by the presence of the moon, the power of agni is subdued by that of water, and water disappears in the presence of agni.

Two other explanations for which I could not corroborate the meanings from the dictionary etc. are included as well. One of these is by Sri satyadevo vAsishTha. He gives the alternate interpretation that durmarshNa also means one who cannot be easily understood, based on the alternate meaning for marshitum = ~jNAtum - duhkkena marshitum Sakyah durmarshaNah.

The other interpretation is by the dharma cakram writer who gives the meaning that He is durmarshaNah because He destroys the evil asura-s (I assume this derivation is based on based mR to kill), and protects the deva-s. Meditating on this nAma with its meaning in mind will help in driving away the evil thoughts from the devotee's mind, and help to develop the good thoughts that will lead to realization of Him. VAImI ki who was ignorant in the beginning, meditated on rAma nAma, and this led him in course of time to the realization of Him.

nAma 208. शास्ता - sAstA

The Teacher.

sAstre namah.

The word is derived from SAsu - anuSishTau to teach, to govern, to correct, to advise. SAsti viSvam iti SAstA - One who teaches the veda-s to the world and governs is SAstA. (The words Sastra, SikshA etc. are derived from the same root).

He is constantly teaching us through our elders, through sruti-s, smRti-s, watching us constantly by being the observer in us, etc. Sri Bhattar gives the



meaning that He righteously punishes (teaches a lesson to?) those who are hindrance to His devotees, and so He is SAstA.

nAma 209. विश्रुतात्मा - visrutAtmA

- a) One whose exploits are praised with wonder.
- b) One who is called by special names (such as Truth, Knowledge, etc).
- c) One whose praise is sung in various forms.
- d) One whose AtmA is of a special Nature.

The interpretations except the last one result based on the different ways in which the vyAkhyAna kartA-s have interpreted the "vi" in viSrutAtmA. Sri Bhattar gives the interpretation vismayena - with wonder, Sri Sankara has interpreted it as viSesheNa - specially, and Sri satyadevo vAsishTha has given the meaning vividhah - through many forms.

Sru SravaNe to hear is the second part, and AtmA is the third part in the above nAma. Sri Bhattar adds that this praise in wonder is by all, at all times, and at all places. Sri Sankara points out that He is characterized through special terms like truth, wisdom, etc., and specially glorified in Sruti-s. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha points out that He is known through different forms like Sun, Moon, etc. He gives the following corroboration from Sruti -

tadevAgnis-tadAdityas-tadvAyus-tadu candramAh |

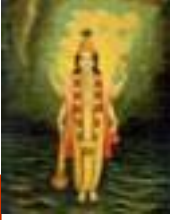
tadeva Sukram tad brahma tA Apah sa prajApatih || (yajur 32-1)

He is also viSrutAtmA since he is sung through various means such as gAnam, arcanam, etc., and through sAma veda, yajurveda, etc.

Interpretation (d) is based on viSesheNa Srutah (~jnAtah) AtmA yena sa viSrutAtmA -

One who is known to be different from the jIvAtmA, One who is sarva~jna, sarvaSakta, sarva-niyantA.





His AtmA is pure shAdguNya paripUrNa form, unassociated with an external form, unimpacted by the effects of karma, etc.

nAma 210. सुरारिहा - surArihA

The slayer of the enemies of the gods.

surArighne namah.

The nAma consists of the three words sura, ari, and hA, where sura refers to gods, ari is the enemy, and hA is the destroyer. Sri Bhattar reminds us of bhagavAn's destruction of hiraNyakaSipu in this context. Sri chinmayAnanda points out that meditating on this nAma's meaning leads to the destruction of the enemies of our mind's aspiration to evolve, the enemies being "the sensuous claims of the flesh, the mild assertions of the ego, the nocturnal devils of desires and passions". One who drives away all the above inimical negative tendencies is surAruihA.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha has included the Rg vedic mantra 1.36.15 starting with "pAhi no agne rakshasah" in his vyAkhyAna, and says that it is his own personal experience that chanting this mantra helps in warding off all evils or evil-doers. I have not included the full mantra because I am not sure about the correct pronunciation etc. If anyone has the original mantra, please share it.

All the nAma-s in this Slokam have been interpreted by Sri Bhattar as relating to the description of the guNa-s associated with the nRsimha avatAra.





SIOkam 23

गुरुर्गुरुतमो धाम सत्यस्सत्यपराक्रमः ।

निमिषोऽनिमिषस्त्रग्वी वाचस्पतिरुदारधीः ॥ २३ ॥

gururgurutamO dhAma satyas satyaparAkramah |

nimishOsnimishas sragvI vAcaspatirudAradhI h ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 211. गुरुर्गुरुतमः - gurur-guru-tamah

The foremost among the preceptors.

gurutamAya gurave namah.

guru means 'spiritual preceptor'. Sri Bhattar interprets the following phrase 'guru-tamah' as an adjective for guru, i.e., the guru who is the best of all guru-s. Sri Sankara views this as two nama-s, guru and guru-tama. He is the foremost of preceptors since he is the one who gave the veda-s to brahma, who then is the source of the veda-s to the rest of the world. yo brahmANam vidadhAti pUrvam yo vai vedAnSca prahiNoti tasmai- He who brought brahma into existence and imparted the veda to him (SvetASvatara 6.18). We also have "guruh ka iti | guruh sAkshAd-AdinArAyaNah" - The Ultimate guru is AdinArAyaNa (tripAdvibhUti mahAnArAyaNopanishat - 8.15).

In Sri SankarAcArya guru pramparA, the first guru is nArAyaNa - ArAyaNam padmabhuvam vasisTham Saktim ca tatputra parASaram ca vyAsam SukamSri SankarAcAryam. We all know that Sri man nArayANa is the first and foremost in the Sri vaishNava guru paramparA.

In dharam cakram, the writer says that He is guru-tama because you don't have to even go and look for Him. He pervades everything and is everywhere, and all we need to get His teaching is to feel the need for it. All that is needed





is the thirst for His mercy in order for us to progress in getting true knowledge instead of living the life of a stone or tree.

nAma 212. धाम - dhAma

- a) The Place of Residence.
- b) The Supreme Light.
- c) The Abode of all desired things.

dhAmne namah.

We encountered the word dhAma when we looked at the nAma tri-kakud-dhAma (nAma 62). Some of the same thoughts presented there apply here. Sri Bhattar interprets the nAma-s starting with the previous one as referring to the matsya incarnation. Because of my a~jnAnam, I was not able to understand the connection with matsya avatAra for the previous nAma. For the current one, he points out that bhagavAn is dhAma because He is like the helmsman who steers the boat carrying the seeds of all the transitory moving and non-moving objects at the time of pralaya.

Sri Sankara interprets the nAma as being the Supreme Leading Light. Sri RAmAnuja in his gl tA bhAshya for slokam 10.12 (param brahma param dhAma), chooses the meaning "Supreme Light" in that context for the word dhAma - dhAma Sabdo jyotirvacanah - param jyotih.

The writer in dharma cakram elaborates further on the term "Supreme Light". The eye sees with the light from the Sun. But neither the Sun's light nor the eye can see the Ultimate. For that you need the light called bhagavAn's Grace, the Inner Light. This is what mahA vishNu is, viz. dhAma the Supreme Light, which can reveal what no other light can. It is the eye of intense desire to reach Him that can see this light, and no other eye can. Other interpretations given include "He is the Abode of all desired objects", "He is the Abode of all desires", "He is the Abode for all karma-s", etc. Sri chinmayAnanda, in addition to the interpretation "Supreme Light", gives





the alternate interpretation that He is dhAma because He is the Ultimate Goal (dhAma = peak).

nAma 213. सत्यः - satyah

The Good.

satyAya namah.

This naAma has occurred previously as nAma 107, and will re-occur as nAma 873. Please refer to the explanation for nAma 107.

In the current context of matsya avatAra, Sri Bhattar points out that He is satya because He was good to sat-purusha-s such as Manu who sought His help at that time.

At the time I submitted the explanation for nAma 107, I did not have Sri satyadevo vAsishTha's vyAkhyAna. Now I am adding some extracts from this source. Under nAma 107, one explanation given was - satya is One who is 'excellent' in sat, based on the pANini sUtra 4.4.98. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha refers us to the Slokam in bhagavad gl tA (17.26 and 17.27) for a definition of 'sat' in Lord KRshNa's words.

sad bhAve sAdhu bhAve ca sadyetata prayujyate |

praSaste karmaNi tathA sac-chabdah pArtha ucyate ||

ya~jne tapasi dAne ca sthithi sadye cocyate |

karma caiva tadarthi yam sadyevAbhidI yate ||

(gl tA 17.26 and 27)

The word 'sat' thus refers to existence, goodness, good acts, firmness in sacrifice, austerities, and gifts, and any acts for such purposes. One who is excellent in all these, or One who is excellent to (i.e., supports) those who do acts along these lines, is satya.





nAma 214. सत्यपराक्रमः - satay-parAkramah

One of unflinching valor.

satayaparAkramAya namah.

Sri Bhattar, continuing on his interpretation of this sequence of nAma-s in terms of maysa avatAra, gives the example of bhagavAn performing truthfully the courageous acts towards Manu and others. The writer in dharma cakram points out that there can be two kinds of valor, one which is used for the good of the people, such as that of Sri Rama, and the other that is used for demonstrating power and for hurting others, such as RAvaNa's. Meditating on mahA vishNu gives us the ability to develop the valor of the former kind.

nAma 215. निमिषः - nimishah

One whose eyes are closed (towards the enemies of His devotees).

nimishAya namah.

na Ikshate iti nimishah. His Graceful Sight does not fall on those who are opposed to Him or His devotees. Sri Sankara gives the meaning that His eyes are closed while He is in yoga-nidra. Sri RAdhAkRshNa Sastri points out that He is nimisha (with closed eyes) because He does not need His eyes to see, His ears to hear etc. The dharma cakram writer points out that He of closed eyes is seeing all because He is everywhere, in every one of us, all the time, and is watching all that happens everywhere even without eyes. Those who can contemplate on the yoga-nidra of vishNu can close their eyes and meditate, and over a period of time, will be able to divert their minds towards Him in that state (normally, whether our eyes are open or closed, they wander in worldly thoughts!).





nAma 216. अनिमिषः - animishah

One with eyes closed.

animishAya namah.

SrI Bhattar interprets the nAma in terms of the matsya incarnation. In His celestial Fish incarnation, He never closes His eyes and is ever-watchful of His devotees (Fish do not have eyelids, and so never close their eyes). SrI Sankara gives two additional explanations - He is ever awake because of His wisdom, or He is Atma svarUpa, and AtmA never sleeps.

The dharma cakram author gives the significance of this nAma as indicating that one who contemplates on this nAma will be always spiritually awake, and bad thoughts and the worldly distractions won't enter his mind. One is reminded of tiruppANazhAr's concluding pASuram in amalanAdipirAn "en amudinaik kanDa kaNgaL maRRonRinaik kANAvE". While the AzhAr sang this when he was witnessing the beauty of the Lord in the temple, the statement aptly applies to the inner eyes as well.

nAma 217. स्त्रग्वी - sragvi

Adorned with the garland (vajrayanti).

sragviNe namah.

srag means garland. According to PANini's ashTAdhyAyI 5.2.121 - as mAyA medhA srajo vinih - the affix **vin** coming after sraj indicates 'association with'. So here the meaning is 'One who is associated with the garland always - referring to the vajrayanti garland of vishNu. Prof. A. srinivAsa rAghavan points out that the vajrayanti is composed of the five precious gems - pearl, ruby, emerald, sapphire, and diamond. SrI Sankara refers to the vajrayanti as referring to the garland made of the tanmAtrA-s or the rudiments of the five basic elements (taste, sight, sound, smell, and sensation) of the pa~nca bhuta-



s. Sri rAdhAkRshNa Sastri gives the reference to vishNu purANa -

pa~nca svarUpA yA mAIA vaijayantI gadA bhRtah |

sA bhUta hetu sangAtA bhUta mAIA ca vai dvijah || (1.2.72)

The writer in dharma cakram suggests that we should divert all our tan-mAtra-s to the service of vishNu (he gives the example of ANdAL who decorated herself with the flower garland just to make sure it was good enough for Lord RanganAtha).

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha derives the meaning starting from sRj to create or set forth. Since all creations such as the stars, Sun, etc., are Hiscreations, He is sragvI. In a garland, there may be different kinds of flowers, but they lose their identity as soon as they are part of the garland. So also, all these different creations are together the sragvI or bhagavAn vishNu. Or, just as it is common practice to identify an important person in our society by putting a garland around the neck, bhagavAn is distinguished by this unique garland to indicate His Lordship and superiority.

nAma 218. वाचस्पतिः - vAcaspatih

The Lord of Speech.

vAcaspataye namah.

Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that He is vAcaspati because it was He who propounded the knowledge of the veda-s through Sri mad matsya purANa. It is the power of expression in the matsya purANa that reveals the guNa of vAcaspati in Him.

Sri Sankara interprets this nAma and the next one - udrAradhIh, as one nAma, vAcaspatirudAradhIh, meaning "The Lord of vidyA, being of magnificent intellect. All the other interpretations I am using, except that of Sri satyadevo vAsishTha, follow this same line. The latter gives the vyAkhyAna for these as separate nAma-s, but lists the nAma as one, and points out that this combining is done only to make sure the count of the nAma-s is exactly 1000.



SrI Bhattar does not have the problem since there are other places where the others consider two separate names whereas he combines them into one (e.g., gurur-guru-tama, the first nAma in the current posting).

According to satya bhAshyam (the name that SrI satyadevo vAsishTha has given to his vyAkhyAnam), the term vAcaspati signifies that bhagavAn protects, or is the Master of, vidyA or veda.

nAma 219. उदारधीः - udAradhI h

One with vast knowledge.

udAra-dhiye namah.

dhi here means buddhi or intellect. **UdAra** means generous, noble, illustrious, etc. One who has a generous disposition towards His devotees, or one who has an illustrious or special intellect that can capture all things at all times, is udAradhI h. SrI chinmayAnanda gives the interpretation that bhagavAn has a large-hearted tolerance to appreciate the weakness of His devotees' heart, and a great sympathy and infinite kindness towards sinners in general. He has enough paternal kindness to overlook our trespasses, unlike the laws of physical nature which are blind and uncompromising.



SIOkam 24

अग्रणीग्रामिणीः श्रीमान् न्यायो नेता समीरणः ।

सहस्रमूर्धा विश्वात्मा सहस्राक्षस्सहस्रपात् ॥ २४ ॥

agraNeer grAmaNeeh srI imAn nyAyO nEtA samI raNah |

sahasramUrdhA visvAtmA sahasrAkshassahasrapAt ||

nAma 220. अग्रणीः - agraNeeh

One who leads forward.

agraNye namah.

agre nayati iti agraNI h - One who leads forward is agraNI h. SrI Sankara and SrI Bhattar interpret the 'leading forward' as referring to bhagavAn's guNa of leading His devotees to moksha.

The writer in dharma cakram gives an elaborate account of the kind of people whom He will lead to moksha. The example compares people to four stages of fish in a river in which a fisherman casts his net. The nitya sUri-s are like the fish which do not get caught in the net - i.e., they do not fall for the bait, and remain safely outside. The mukta jiva-s are those who get caught in the net, but with their best effort, succeed in getting out. The mumukshu-s are like the fish which keep trying to get out, even though they have not succeeded in escaping. The baddha jiva-s are like the fish who enjoy the bait the fisherman has provided, and remain happily in the net and become the food for the fisherman. SrI vishNu's guNa of agraNI applies to those who are the mumukshu-s, who constantly want to get out of this ocean of samsAra by devoting themselves to the worship of Him. They are like the fish that has been taken out of water and that is desperately trying to get into the water, or like the man who has been thrown into water and drowning and who is desperately interested in getting a breath of air. It is this kind of intensity in



seeking Him that will qualify a person for the agraNI 's dayA.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that this attribute of SrI vishNu in 'moving everything forward' is constantly demonstrated in everyone's life - i.e., we only keep moving forward, and can never go backwards in time, and time lost is lost forever. Not only we are moving forward, but we are moving forward according to His will. This is true of the Sun, the moon, etc.

nAma 221. ग्रामणीः - grAmaNeeh

Leader of the hosts of angels.

grAmaNye namah.

grAmam samAjam nayati iti grAmanI h - One who leads the group (of devotees). SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that grAma refers to any collection, e.g., of several houses (a village), of several indiryA-s (the body), of several musical instruments (sapta svarAs-trayo grAmA - in nAradIya SikshA), or the collection of all created beings. The writer in dharma cakram interprets this nAma in the context of the devotees who have unconditionally entrusted themselves in His care that are led by Him to moksha. He gives the example of one who is lost in a forest (of samsAra). If this person goes and seeks help for getting out of this forest from others (such as his relatives, his friends, etc.), who are also lost in this forest, this request for help is going to be futile. But if they seek the help of vishNu who alone can lead us from the bondage of samsAra, then and only then will they be able to get out of this forest. It is this category of people who are led by this guNa of bhagavAn denoted by the nAma grAmaNI .

nAma 222. श्रीमान् - srI mAn

- a) One who is endowed with wealth.
- b) One who is full of all glories.





- c) One who is radiant.
- d) The Lord of MahAlakshmi
- e) One who has MahAlakshmi in his vaksha-sthala.
- f) One who is endowed with all the powers.

SrImate namah.

This nAma occurred previously as nAma-s 22 and 180. Under these names, the translator of Sri Sankara's bhAshyam had added his own personal comments, which I had incorrectly attributed to Sri Sankara. So I am revising the write-up for Sri mAn to correct this error as below.

Under nAma 22, I had incorrectly indicated that both Sri Sankara and Sri Bhattar interpret the nAma as referring to the beauty of nRsimha avatAra. Sri Bhattar does interpret nAma 22 as referring to the beauty of nRsimha incarnation. Sri Sankara interprets nAma 22 as 'One who has lakshmi on His vaksha-sthala'. A translator of Sankara bhAshyam, Sri ananta-kRshNa SAstri, has added his own note that vishNu is Sri mAn because there is no diminution in His beauty even though He has the form of a man-lion. Probably this note was added based on Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna. I had incorrectly attributed the translator's note to Sri Sankara.

For nAma 180, Sri Bhattar interprets Sri mAn as referring to the beauty of the Lord decorated with celestial ornaments, and Sri Sankara interprets Sri mAn as referring to the Lord's prosperity (Sri), and the translator's note adds that this refers to the six kinds of prosperity (shADgunya paripUrNatva).

For the current nAma (222), Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that bhagavAn is endowed with Sri or wealth. He makes reference to the "Lotus-eyed matsya mUrthi - **matsyah kamala locanah**", and indicates that based on this, the matsya mUrthi form is none other than Sri mAn who is the paramAtmA. Sri Sankara interprets Sri as kAnti or radiance in this instance, and gives the interpretation that here Sri mAn refers to the Lord who is more radiant or resplendent than anything else that exists. Here again, the translator has





added a note that though He incarnated as a fish, His splendor was supreme in that form. Here again, the translator's note is probably based on Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna.

SrI cinmayAnanda interprets SrI as Mother lakshmi, who is the total manifested power potential and stands for all powers or all glories. VishNu is SrI mAn because He has all these powers in Him or is courted by all glories.

SrImAn also refers to Sriyah pati, or the Lord of Sri or mahA-lakshmi. BhagavAn's beauty is natural to Him because He has SrI in his vaksha-sthala. The dharma-cakram author interprets this nAma to mean that the prakRti and purusha are inseparable, just as SrI and the Lord are inseparable, and are part of the same para-brahmam.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives the root as "Sri-sevAyAm" - One who is fit to be served. SrI also means SobhA or beauty or "kAnti". He points out that the beauty that is seen all around us in the trees, the birds, the rivers, the flowers, the Sun, the Moon, the stars, etc., should remind us constantly of bhagavAn, the SrImAn whose SrI is shining in everything. SrI also means wealth. The wealth that humans have is transient, and can disappear any time. BhagavAn is SrI mAn whose wealth is nitya or permanent.

nAma 223. न्यायः - nyAyah

a) The Just.

b) Logical arguments (tarka) and lines of contemplation (yukti) that help us in arriving at the absolute experience.

nyAyAya namah

SrI Bhattar interprets this nAma as referring to the Lord's guNa of ensuring that He does whatever is appropriate for His devotees, and ensures that nothing faulty or unwelcome happens to them. SrI Sankara gives the interpretation that He is nyAyA because He is both the tarka (logical contemplation) and yukti (the lines of contemplation) running through all



sources of knowledge (pramANAnugrAhakah). The sense here as expressed by Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri is that He is nyAya because He is the only one who can give what is good for His devotees in a rational and consistent form that cannot be refuted through counter-arguments (probably through the veda-s?).

The writer in dharma cakram elaborates on this further, and points out that there are three types of tarka (lines of argument) - vAda, vitanDA, and jalpa. Of these, vAda is done with the purpose of understanding and arriving at the truth, and is undertaken with humility and sincerity. VitanDA is the argument which is meant to just confuse the opponent, and is undertaken with a haughty disposition and with ahankAra. Jalpa is the line of argument where the power or position is used to subdue, frighten, insult and threaten the opponent. Of these, vAda is the most appropriate way of argument, and will lead to enhancing understanding. Devotees who worship mahA-vishNu are blessed by Him with the ability to analyze and understand the truth through the just means, and they are saved from destructive thoughts and are led towards self-realization. The example of Lord KRshNa's instructions to arjuna is given to illustrate the instance that bhagavAn leads His devotees to the thought process involving nyAya yukti, whereby arjuna's thoughts become clear, his attachments are removed, and he acts on the right and just course of action.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha, in addition to the above explanation, derives his interpretation based on nIyate prApyate iti nyAyah - One who ensures that everything in this world is on its right track and reaches its destination is nyAyah. The yantra that is this Universe, with its Sun, moon, stars, etc., is functioning under the guidance of the nyAya that is vishNu. So also the indriya-s in our bodies are directed by the SarI ra-nyAya that is vishNu. The word 'niyati', which means 'rule', is related to the word nyAya (nI yate).

nAma 224. नेता - nEta

- One who fulfills the requests of His devotees.
- One who manages or regulates the affairs of the cosmos.



netre namah.

- a) niyuktam karoti iti netA (Sri Bhattar), or
- b) jagad-yantra nirvAhakah netA (Sri Sankara).

The dharma cakram writer gives the analogy of objects attached to a rotating wheel. The objects rotate because of the movement of the wheel. We are all moving around because of His Will which is analogous to the rotating wheel. However, we keep believing that it is we who are responsible for our motion, and forget that it is He who is moving us as He wishes. Those who understand this get out of the false belief that we are the ones who are achieving everything around us. arjuna the jivAtmA was sitting in the chariot or the body, and Lord kRshNa was driving both the chariot and arjuna. The chariot did not have any feeling of responsibility for its motion, but arjuna believed that his actions were caused by his will. The Lord did not take up weapons, but was witness to what was happening. Similarly, in our case bhagavAn is in each of us watching and witnessing our actions. This nAma indicates that He is the Controlling Force behind everything in this Universe.

nAma 225. समीरणः - samI raNah

- a) One who performs acts which are delectable.
- b) One who controls all movements (e.g., breath) in beings.

samIraNaya namah.

This nAma is derived from the root Ir- to move (IraNa). Sri Bhattar associates this movement with that part of the matsya incarnation where bhagavAn dove deep into the Ocean to retrieve the veda-s from the nether-world from the asura named hayagrIva. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri associates the motion implied by IraNa with the act of bhagavAn leading the boat with the seeds of creation during the pralaya in His matsya incarnation. The following is from Sri mad bhAgavatam skandam 8, chapter 24, Slokam 33 -





trilokyAm II yamAnAyAm samvartAmbasi vai tadA |
apsthAsyati nauh kAcit viSAIA tvAm mayA I ritA ||

"When all the three worlds disappear under the Ocean, a large boat will be steered by Me towards you" - note the use of the word I ritA here.

Sri Sankara associates the motion or movement with the breath in living beings. He is samIraNa because He controls the functioning of the body through the breath. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha takes this concept of control further, and points out that this control by bhagavAn is seen even in the fact that man has had 32 teeth ever since creation, and will continue to have this till the end of the kalpa, man gets the teeth twice in his life, and this is as it has been since creation, and will continue till the end of kalpa, etc., and so will the rising and setting of the Sun and the moon and the movement of the planets etc.

nAma 226. सहस्रमूर्धा - sahasramUrdha

The thousand-headed

sahasra-mUrdhne namah

nAma 228. सहस्राक्षः - sahasrAkshah

The thousand-eyed

sahasrAkshAya namah

nAma 229. सहस्रपात् - sahasrapAt

The thousand-footed.

sahasra-pade namah

Sri Bhattar interprets these three names together, and points out that the





reference to head, eyes, and feet really includes all organs of knowledge and action, and the reference to a thousand signifies 'innumerable'. What is referred to here is that bhagavAn is endowed with infinite capacity to know and act, which are the functions of these organs. Reference is made to the following sruti-s:

sahasra SI rshA purushah sahasrAkshah sahasra-pAt- (purusha sUktam)

sarvatah pANi pAdam tat sarvato'kshi Siro-mukham (gl tA 13.13)

viSvataScakshuruta viSvatomukho viSvato bAhuruta viSvatspAt
(taittiriya AraNyaka 10.1)

aneka vaktra nayanam anekAdbhuta darSanam (gl tA 11-10)

rupam mahat-te bahu-vaktra-netram.....bahu-bAhUru pAdam (gl tA 11-23)

SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that reference is made to the head first in the above sequence of nAma-s because head is the first one that forms when a child is formed in the mother's womb, and head is the part of the child that appears first when the child is born. Also, reference is made to head, eyes, and feet because of their importance in exercising the j~nAna and kriyA Sakti-s.

These three nAma-s also remind us that He is everywhere, in everything, all-powerful, always observing everything in every one of us, etc. Many heads can also refer to His unlimited intellect (SrI satyadevo vAsishTha). We are all part of His body, and thus all our heads are His heads, and so also He is sahasramurdhA. By the fact that He is the antaryAmi in all of us, and is always observing all that we do and think from within each of us, He is sahasrAkshah. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha adds that "One who is of many legs" also suggests that He has made his creations such that they can get around by many means e.g., as two legged humans, as four-legged animals, as the hundred-legged centipedes, as multi-legged millipedes, as no-legged serpents, as birds getting around by flying, as fish by swimming, etc. In this sense, sahasrapAt really reveals that He is ananta j~nAnavAn, or of Infinite Intellect, in having created



and supported this kind of immeasurable diversity. Note the similarity in the vedic chanting "sahasra SI rshA purushah sahasrAkshah sahasrapAt", including the sequence which is the same as in SrI vishNu sahasra nAma.

Sri cinmayAnanda points out that the "many heads", "many eyes", and "many legs" together indicate that the One Infinite Consciousness expresses everywhere in all forms and at all times through all these equipments of thinking (head), perception (eyes), and action (legs).

nAma 227. विश्वात्मा - visvAtmA

The very soul of the Universe; the very inner Essence in all living creatures.

viSvAtmane namah.

viSvasya AtmA viSvAtmA.

He is viSvAtmA because He pervades the entire Universe by His knowledge and strength.

In gl tA, Lord KRshNa says:

"ahamAtmA gudAkeSa! Sarva bhuta.... "

"Arjuna! I am the AtmA that resides in the heart of all beings" (gl tA 10.20).

The writer in dharma cakram points out that the true significance in this nAma lies in our realizing the unity among all the living beings, rather than seeing the difference in our outer appearance or the difference in our thoughts etc. By seeing the difference in our external appearance or in our thoughts, only kAma, krodha, lobha, moha, matha, and mAtsarya grow and develop in us. Only when we learn to see the unity behind our inner selves, we will qualify to receive His dayA.

This is what sage yAg~nyavalkya taught to maitreyi viz. that when one loves one's wife, it is not her shape that should be loved, but it is the AtmA in her that should be loved, etc. (na vA are jAyAyai kAmAya jAyA priyA bhavati, Atmanastu kAmAya jAyA priyA bhavati etc.). That is the true meaning of love.



SlOkam 25

आवर्तनो निवृत्तात्मा संवृतस्संप्रमर्दनः ।

अहस्संवर्तको वह्निरनिलो धरणीधरः ॥ २५ ॥

AvartanO nivrutAtmA samvrutas sampramardanah |

ahassamvartakO vahniraniLO dharaNeedharah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 230. आवर्तनः - Avartanah

He who turns the wheel of worldly life or samsAra.

AvartanAya namah.

samsAra-cakram Avartayitum Silam asya iti Avartanah. Avartanam means repetition. BhagavAn is Avartana since He is the Unseen Dynamism behind the ever-whirling wheel of time and the associated endless cycle of birth and death. This is the cycle of night and day, life and death, joy and sorrow, creation and destruction, which are all His play - His mAyA. In gl tA, bhagavAn says that He reveals the way to overcome this mAyA to those who surrender to Him -

daivI hyeshA guNa-mayI mama mAyA duratyayA |

mAmeva ye prapadyante mAyAm etAm taranti te || (gl tA 7.14)

nAma 231. निवृत्तात्मा - nivrutAttmA

- He whose nature rises above other things.
- He whose mind is turned away from worldly desires.
- He who is the AtmA of those who practice nivRtti dharma.





d) He who is beyond the bonds of samsAra.

nivRttAtmane namah.

This nAma occurs later as nAma-s 454, 604, and 780. This is another case where when the same nAma occurs more than once, the interpreters have given different interpretations for each occurrence. It is a characteristic of a composition of quality that there is no redundancy in expression of thoughts.

a) For the first interpretation, Sri Bhattar gives the following references:

1. tripAdUrdhva udait-purushah - The Purusha stands eminent in the parama-pada which has thrice the glory of the material world" - purusha sUkta 4.
2. parAt-param yan-mahato mahAntam - He is greater than the greatest, more exalted than the most exalted. - taitti. nArAyanIya 1.5.

b) parama vairAgya khyApanaAya vishayebhyah pratyAhRta-manAh nivRttAtmA - To indicate His profound non-attachment to material objects, He has His mind withdrawn from them. About His meditation it is said - antarnivishTa bhAvam ca - He who has His thoughts concentrated on Himself. Also, Atma-dhyAna parAyaNAya -To Him who has His thoughts concentrated within Himself"; "hRd -admArpitamAnasam" - "Him with His mind fixed on the lotus-heart", etc.

c) One who is the AtmA of those who practice the nivRtti dharma. (There are two kinds of dharma - the pravRtti dharma and the nivRtti dharma. pravRtti dharma takes us to the world of the pitR-s where we enjoy the fruits of our karma, and come back to this world with the balance of karma-s to our credit; niv*ttidharma is that which leads one to moksha).

d) samsAra bandhAn nivRtta AtmA svarUpam asya iti nivRttAtmA. nivRtta means that which has retreated totally, abstaining from worldly acts, etc. 09

Sri cinmayAnanda points out that in the example of the two birds sitting on the same tree that is referred to in the munDakopanishad which has been referred to earlier in our write-up, the nivRttAtmA is the one who is looking on





without eating the fruits of the tree.

The writer in dharma cakram points out that the significance of this nAma is to realize that we should live a life with detachment in material objects in order to realize the Truth, and meditating on this nAma of mahA vishNu will help us live that kind of life. Meditating on the Lord who has no attachments will lead us to live a life without attachment. He gives the life of Lord Rama as an example of the life of nivRttAtmA.

Some interpreters have identified the nAma itself as vimuktAtmA or anivRttAtmA in one or more of the occurrences of this nAma later. We will look at the interpretations of these under the later occurrences.

nAma 232. संवृतः - samvrutah

He who remains hidden.

samvRtAya namah.

samvRtatvAt samvRtah. The root is vRn~j AvaraNe to cover. He remains hidden from the unenlightened in whom the tamo-guNa dominates - tamsah parastAt. It is devotion to Him alone that can reveal Him to us. The dharma cakram writer quotes nammAzhvAr's pASuram "mayarvaRa madi-nilam aruLinan evan avan" - (We should worship the One) who can bless us with the j~nAna and bhakti that can remove the ignorance, doubts, and viparI ta j~nAnam - counter-productive intellect?. Just as the sun creates the cloud which keeps the sun covered from us, the a~jnAnam is covering us. Just as the sun's lustre is untouched by the cloud, His lustre is untouched by our a~jnAna. It is his dayA alone which can remove this a~jnAna, and it is devotion to Him alone that can help in this.

nAma 233. संप्रमर्दनः - sampramadarnah

The dispeller (of the darkness).



sampra-mardanAya namah.

The nirukti author summarizes Sri Bhattar's vyAkhyAna by the following words- **tamaso vidyayA samyak mardanAt sampramardanah** - He is sampramardana because He dispels the enveloping darkness by the light of His knowledge. Sri aNNangarAcArya gives the meaning that He dispels the mAyA in His devotees.

Sri Sankara interprets the nAma based on mardana - to destroy, and gives the meaning that He is sampramardana because of His act of destruction in the forms of rudra, yama, etc. - **samyak pramardayati rudra-kAlAdyAbhih vibhUtibhih iti sampramardanah** (see the similarity to pradardanah earlier). Recall that Sri Bhattar's interpretation is that mardana refers to destruction of the darkness or mAyA. Sri cinmayAnanda interprets mardana as referring to the act of destruction of the evil-minded and sensuous and extrovert - rAkshasa-s.

The dharma cakram author interprets mardana in the context of the act of bhagavAn in helping us to destroy the pride and aham-kAra in us and to unite with Him. Life consists of destroying certain things and preserving certain things. A good life is that where we understand what is to be preserved and preserve those values, and destroy those that need to be destroyed. It is thus that Lord rAma had His kodanDam when He went to the forest - to help preserve the Rshi-s and to help destroy the rAkshasa-s. Chanting the name of rAma was sufficient to turn vAlmIki from the ignorant person that he was to the great sage vAlmIki. The nAma sampramardana should lead to understand the value of destroying the evil qualities in us and to develop the good qualities that will help us in realizing Him, which is naturally accomplished when we meditate on the guNa of bhagavAn expressed by this nAma.

nAma 234. अहस्संवर्तकः - ahas-samvarthakah

The regulator of the day (time); The Sun.



ahah-samvartakAya namah.

samyak ahnAm pravartanAt ahah-samvartakah - He who regulates well the succession of day and night. He is the cause for the revolution of the day and other divisions of time. The division of time into past, present, and future provides the knowledge of objects as old or young. It brings about the separation or union of prakRti and purusha (Matter and Soul). It is also the cause of the six kinds of transmutations of prakRti (viz. birth, growth, change, existence, decay, and final death).

SrI cinmayAnanda gives reference to the following Sloka from gl tA -

yadAditya gatam tejo jagad bhAsayate'khilam |

yac-candramasi yaccAgnau tat-tejo viddhi mAmakam ||

(gl tA 15.12)

"Understand that I am the Light of the Sun that illumines all earth; and the tejas in the moon and fire are all mine only". The one who dynamises the day and gives life to all and lends energy to them to act, etc. is vishNu in the form of the Sun.

The writer in dharma cakram points out that just as we can see an object close to us easily once there is light even though we can't locate it in the absence of light, bhagavAn is the generator of light that helps us realize the knowledge of the Self, and in this sense also bhagavAn is ahah-samvartakah (the generator of day). Just as the Sun causes all beings to wake up when it rises, mahA-vishNu causes our desire to attain this knowledge of the Self to wake up in us. Just as the fall of the rays of the Sun causes the life forms to become rejuvenated, the thought of vishNu rejuvenates the jIvAtmA in us and makes it shine. Just as the fall of the rays of the Sun on objects purifies them by destroying the disease-causing germs etc., the thought of bhagavAn kills the evil thoughts in us and purifies our thoughts. So vishNu is the Sun for our inner self just as He is the Sun for the external world.



nAma 235. वह्निः - vahnih

The Bearer or The Carrier; The Fire.

vahnaye namah.

The root from which this nAma is derived is vah - to carry. Sri Bhattar interprets the nAma as referring to the act of bhagavAn in supporting the Universe in the form of space. Sri aNNangarAcArya gives the meaning that He is the bearer (supporter) of everyone. Vahni also refers to fire, since fire is the carrier of the oblations offered in homa etc. Sri Sankara interprets the nAma in this context - **devebhyo havyam vaha nah prajAnan** - One who, as fire, carries the oblations to the gods, or **havir-vahanAt vahnih**.

nAma 236. अनिलः - anilah

- a) The Giver of life-breath; The Air.
- b) One who needs no goading to Help His devotees.
- c) The Beginningless.
- d) One who has no binding, unaffected by virtue and vice.
- e) One who is beyond dissolution.
- f) One who is omniscient - All-Knowing.
- g) Easily accessible to His devotees.
- h) One who has no fixed residence.
- i) One who is not supported (by Earth etc).
- j) One who does not hide anywhere i.e., who is present everywhere
- k) One who is always awake.

anilAya namah.

This nAma occurs again as nAma 818.



tadevAgnih tad-vAyuH - He is agni Himself and He is vAyu - (taittiriya AraN.10), supports the interpretation of this and the previous nAma-s as agni andvAyu respectively.

ananAt - ujjIvanAt anilah - Bestows the life-breath on all.
Ko hyevAnyAt kah prANyAt - Whoever can breathe and whoever can live if the AkASa (i.e., paramAtmA) were not there? - (taittiriya nArAyaNa 7);
prAnAt vAyur_ajAyata - The wind was born out of His breath (purusha sUktam 14).

In the occurrence of the nAma as nAma 818, Sri Bhattar derives the meaning based on ila - to urge, and so the meaning given is - One who does not need to be goaded by any one to serve His devotees. Ilati preraNam karoti iti ilah, tadrahitatvAt anilah - One who does not need a proposer or inducer.
tadapyaprArthitam dhyAto dadAti madhusUdanah - When meditated upon, bhagavAn madhusudana bestows His blessings on His devotee without the need for anyone else urging Him - vishNu dharma 74.42.

Sri Sankara and other interpreters give several alternate interpretations in addition to above two-

anAditvAt aniti yo'asu anilah (c above) - Beginningless,

anAdAnAt anilah - One who has no binding,

ilati svapiti iti ilah, tad-viparI tah anilah - One who is ever awakened (f)

nilater-gahanArthAt ka-pratyayAntAt agahanah - anilah - One who is not difficult to access for His devotees (g)

anilayah anilah (h) - One who has no fixed abode.

An interpretation for the occurrence of this word in amarakoSa is na vidyate nilah nilayam sthAnam yasya.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri adds that ila is Earth, and since He existed before the Earth existed, He is not supported by the Earth etc., and so He is anila (i). An alternate interpretation is na nilliyate iti anilah - He is Omnipresent, indestructible, in the form of anila - vAyu (j).



Yet another interpretation is an **AdAnAt anilah** - One who has no binding (d).

The dharma cakram writer gives us a view of how important the meditation on this guNa of bhagavAn is for our life. Without food we can go on for many days; without water we can survive for a few days; but without air, but a few minutes. That is how important air is for our living; so is the meditation on vishNu for our spiritual life. He quotes mahAtmA gAndhi in this context - that he can survive without food for several days (and hasn't he proved it several times!), but he cannot live without prayer for even a day. Another view presented relates to arjuna's words to Lord kRshNa that mind wavers like wind and he can't get it under control. BhagavAn, like vAyu, is spread everywhere, and it is difficult to get a grasp of Him just as we can't get the mind under control or keep the air static in one place without a sealed container. But just as man has learned to control and contain air, he can learn to control his mind by constant meditation on vishNu. The uncontrolled mind is like a storm, and it can be trained to be calm by meditation on vishNu.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives the interpretation starting from ila - to sleep. Thus one meaning given is One who never sleeps, or One who is always awake - **jAgRvim vibhum** - Rg veda. This is reflected in His forms as the Sun, the rest of the planets, the oceans, the wind, etc. In addition to this interpretation he also gives the interpretations a) and h).

I was amazed to find that this seemingly simple nAma of two syllables has this many interpretations.

nAma 237. धरणीधरः - dharaNeedharah

The bearer of the Earth.

dharaNI-dharAya namah.

dharaNI m dhatta iti dharaNI -dharah - One who bears the Earth. SrI Bhattar takes this simple interpretation one level further, and gives the significance that He bears those who bear others, e.g., He bears AdiSesha, bhUmi, etc. SrI



Bhattar gives the following supporting quotes

1. sa dAdhAra pRthivI m dyAm utemAm - He bore the Earth and all the Heaven -yajur 13.4
2. uddhRtA'si varAheNa - Thou (O Mother Earth) hast been lifted up by varAha -taitt. AraN. 10.8

"pRthivI m ca antariksham ca dyAm caiva purushottamah |
manasiava visRshTAtmA nayati AtmavaSam vaSI ||

'Purushottama, by His will, created Earth, the Interspace and Heaven; being the Supreme Ruler, He keeps them all under His control.'

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives references to several other nAma-s which express the above idea - mahl -bharta (184), mahl -dharah (319, 371), triloka-dhRt (757),dharA-dharah (762). In addition, some vyAkhyAna-karta-s have interpreted nAma240 (which we will cover next week) as viSva-dhRk - One who rules over the worlds, similar in purport to the current nAma.

The writer in dharma cakram brings the significance of this nAma to a level of understanding that is easier to comprehend. When we say bhagavAn is the bearer of the Earth, what we mean is that directly or indirectly He is supporting all the life forms by providing food and shelter to all, irrespective of whether we are devoted to Him or not, all the good and the bad. Either we survive by drawing on the vegetables and other food that we directly get from the earth, or some beings survive by preying on other life forms which in turn live by drawing on the direct produce from the earth. So this nAma signifies that He supports us physically in the form of the earth, and also sustains us all through the food from the earth.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha adds that a mother bears and protects the children, the husband protects the wife, and He protects everyone, and so the dharaNi-dharatva guNa of bhagavAn is all around us.



SIOkam 26

सुप्रसादः प्रसन्नात्मा विश्वसृग्विश्वभृग्विभुः ।

सत्कर्ता सत्कृतस्साधुर्जह्नुर्नारायणो नरः ॥ २६ ॥

suprasAdah prasannAtmA vishvasrug visvabhugvibhuh |

satkartA satkrutas sAdhu: jahnurnArAyaNO narah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 238. सुप्रसादः - suprasAdah

The Giver of good favors.

suprasAdAya namah.

Sobhanah prasAdha dAtRtvAt suprasAdah - For those who surrender to Him He confers all that is good. In fact He goes further and confers the good to those who are His enemies as well, as in the cases of rAvaNa, SiSupAla, duryodhana, etc., by conferring moksha on them ultimately. In other words, whatever bhagavAn confers, it is for the good of the recipient. This concept is repeatedly pointed by svAmi deSikan in the dayA-Satakam when he describes the dayA aspects of the different incarnations. Thus for instance, in the paraSu-rAma incarnation, when He destroyed the evil kshatriya kings, He really got rid of their sins, and sent them to moksha. In the kalki incarnation, when He will destroy those at the end of the kali-yuga who are soaked in sin, it is only to wash them of their sins and re-establish adharma-oriented kRta yuga where their jIva-s can flourish again that this act of His is undertaken. The writer in dharma cakram points out that there are those of us who will do good to those who are bad to us, in addition to those who follow the rule of an eye for an eye, and worse still, there are those who do bad to those who are good to them. Sri mahA-vishNu is one who does always what is good for everyone irrespective of how they are towards Him. Meditation on Lord vishNu with this



guNa implied by this nAma will give us the right frame of mind to follow the sAttvic path.

nAma 239. प्रसन्नात्मा - prasannAtmA

He with a clear mind; Of delightful nature.

prasannAtmane namah.

He is of delightful nature because He has no desires and no wants since He has realized all desires - avApta-sarva-kamatvAt. Or because He is extremely merciful by nature - karuNArDra-svabhAvAt. Or He is prasannAtmA because His mind is not contaminated by passion (rajas) and inertia (tamas). Sri P.B. aNNangarAcArya svAmi points out that He has a clear mind because He is unaffected by likes and dislikes.

Sri cinmayAnanda gives the interpretation that He is All-Blissful because He is not affected by sorrows resulting from association with matter and its imperfections (guNa-s). He is of a clear mind, without being affected by the tamasic and rajasic guNa-s.

The dharma cakram writer gives the example of the three brothers, rAvaNa, kumbhakarNa, and vibhIshaNa, respectively dominated by rajasic, tAmasic, and sattvic guNa-s. rAvaNa was indulging in non-righteous acts under the influence of kAma, and brought self-destruction as a result. Kumbha-karNa was inactive under the influence of tamas. VibhIshaNa on the other hand had the clarity of mind aided by his sattvic guNa. He could save Sri lankA from destruction and could attain the grace of the Lord because of his clear thinking.

Meditating on the nAma prasannAtmA will lead to the clarity of mind that bhIshma could command, when he advised duryodhana prior to the start of the mahAbhArata war that they won't win a war fought on immoral and unethical grounds, and the support of the Lord will be on the side of dharma. prasannatA results out of the dominance of sattva guNa.





nAma 240. विश्वसृक् - visvasrug

The Creator of the Universe.

viSva-sRje namah.

viSvam sRjati yo sa viSva-sRt. He created this Universe out of kindness unmindful of its merits and deficiencies. In SankarapATham, this nAma is given as viSva-dhRg - The Overseer of the cosmos. Prof. Sri nivAsa rAghavan points in his writings in Sri nRsimha priyA that other pATha-s are viSva-sRshT and viSva-sRg. In the context of the interpretation based on viSva-dhRg - the overseer or ruler of the cosmos, the dharma cakram commentator rhetorically asks the question - Do we rule our mind, or does our mind rule us? If we learn to rule over our mind, then we can rule our family, our nation, etc., and also know the Ruler of everything. And we get this conditioning of our mind through meditation on the Lord who isviSva-dhRg.

Sri satyadevo vAsisshTha gives the meaning based on the rootdhRsh prAgalbhye to be bold, confident, proud, or brave. He isviSva-dRk because He has created this world with skill (cAturya), proudly, boldly. Everything He has created, including the different seasons, the flowers, the different forms of life, etc., are constantly displaying His brilliance in the different ways they reproduce themselves, the different forms in which they appear, etc.

nAma 241. विश्वभुग्विभुः - visvabhugvibhuh

He who pervades all things and protects them.

viSvabhug-vibhave namah.

vyApya bhunakti - pAlayati iti viSvabhug-vibhuh. Sri Bhattar interprets this phrase as one nAma, whereas Sri Sankara interprets it as consisting of two nAma-s, viSva-bhuk and vibhuh. The interpretation for viSva-bhuk is given as viSvam bhu-nkte -The Enjoyer of the Cosmos, or ViSvam bhunakti - The





Protector. The dharma cakram writer points out that He is the Protector for the Universe in its expressed form with all its created beings or in its unexpressed or pralaya form as well. This compares with the situation of mortals like us who cannot do any good in protecting this world either in our wakeful state or in our sleep state. Sri cinmayAnanda gives the interpretation that He enjoys or swallows (bhuk) all experiences (viSva). The Supreme Consciousness, apparently conditioned by the mind and intellect, is the experiencer of joys and sorrows. Or, the term can mean "One who absorbs all names and forms unto Himself at the time of pralaya". Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the reference to tiattirIya AraNyaka 10.91 - prabhuh prINAti viSva-bhuk. Sri satyadevovAsishTha gives an alternate interpretation based on bhuj kautilye to bend, to curve, and says that the nAma can mean that He established the world by bending or extending it in all eight directions. Since Sri Sankara interprets vibhuh as a separate name, he gives the meaning - One with multi-form - **vividham bhavati iti vibhuh**. He became many from HiraNyagarbha downwards. Vividham bhAvayati is another interpretation, again referring to the multi-forms. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the meaning that He is vibhu because He fills everything everywhere - mahAntam vibhum AtmAnam - kaThopanishad 2.22. The dharma cakram writer elaborates on the multi-form by giving reference to LordkRshNa's words in the gl tA in Chapter 10 starting with Slokam 21 and going up to Slokam 38, where bhagavAn gives several examples of His vibhUti-s, and then says in Slokam 40 that there is really no limit to His vibhUti-s.

nAma 242. सत्कर्ता - satkartA

He who honors the good.

satkartre namah.

satkaroti pUjayati iti satkartA - One who adores those who are good and wise. SatkAram is worship. Sri rAma was known as **sajjanaprati pUjakah** - He who worships those in return who are good to Him. Sri radAdhAkRshNa SAstri





gives the reference to rAmAyaNa - bahu-SrutAnAm vRddhAnAm brAhmaNAnAm upAsitA (2-2-33) - He worships those who are learned, old in age, and brAhmaNas. The writer in dharma cakram points out the example of Lord rAma praising hanumAn as soon as He saw him. The Lord rejoices to find those who are in this category. The lesson we should take from this nAma is that we should do acts that will make us fit for this kind of recognition. Acts that fall in this category are those that give peace of mind and inner happiness to the doer. By corollary, we should desist from acts which lead to a feeling of self-centered accomplishment, pride, etc. Our acts should be directed to His service, and not for the satisfaction of the human ego.

nAma 243. सत्कृतः - satkrutah

He who is worshipped by the sAdhus (even by those who deserve to be worshipped).

satkRtAya namah.

The word satkRta means pUjita - One who is worshipped. He is the Object of worship for everyone. The nirukti summarizes SrI Bhattar's vyAkhyAna for this nAma as arcAdibhih sajjanaih yah pUjitahsatkRtah smRtah. Prof. SrI nivAsa rAghavAcArya svAmi in his commentary in nRsimha priyA points out that when the ekAntins who worship only mahA vishNu make their offerings to Him, no matter how small the offering is, He considers it big by considering it as worthy of His Supreme Status, and receives through His head what is offered at His feet, and receives it personally and not through other intermediary gods. As if this is not enough, He then feels that whatever He does to His devotees is inadequate in return (recall Lord kRshNa's feeling of being indebted to draupati for ever when she cried out for help and He helped but not by coming in person right away). The dharma cakram writer points out that as a means of developing this devotion to Him, our vedas ask us to worship our mother, our father, our teacher - mAtR devo bhava, pitRdevo bhava, AcArya devo bhava.





nAma 244. साधुः - sAdhuh

One who carries out (whatever His devotees say).

sAdhave namah.

sAdhayati iti sAdhuh - One who carries out, or sAdhnoti itisAdhuh - One who makes it possible to carry out, through various means that He has provided for the benefit of the beings that He has created. Going as a messenger, acting as a charioteer, etc. are examples of His carrying out His undertaking. Even though Lord kRshNa was Himself a king like duryodhana, He did not mind doing the work of a messenger, and did not mind doing the work of a charioteer which is like that of a servant to arjuna. Thus, sADhu here refers to His act of carrying out whatever He has to do to take care of His devotees. He takes several incarnations in which He suffers and gets insulted by the likes of duryodhana, SiSupAla, rAvaNa etc., and appears as a fish, a boar, etc., and undergoes suffering and misery as in the case of the rAma incarnation, all because He is a sADhu, who carries out what He has to in order to help His devotees. The nAma sADhu has also been interpreted as One who is righteous, i.e., conducts Himself according to the code laid in the Vedas. And because He follows the righteous path always, He accomplishes whatever He undertakes always. The lesson to take here is (dharma cakram) that we should always follow the righteous path in everything we do, and this will not only endear us to Lord vishNu, but also lead to success in our just endeavors.

nAma 245. जह्नुः - jahnuh

The Concealer (of His greatness from the non-devotees).

jahnave namah.

This nAma is derived from the root hA-tyAge to forsake. abhakteshu Atma - mAhAtmyam apahnute iti jahnuh. jahAti avidushah jahnuhis another derivation





for the same meaning - He leads those devoid of devotion away from the Supreme. Sri Bhattar gives the following quote from udyoga parva:

"cakram tad-vAsudevasya mAyayA vartate vibhoh |
sApahnuvam pANdaveshu ceshTate rAhasattamah ||'

(udyogaparva 6.7.2)

"That discus of the Omni-present vAsudeva acts by His will for the benefit of the pANdavas being invisible (to the eyes of others), O Great King!".

Sri Sankara gives an additional interpretation that He is jahnu because He is the disintegrator of the Universe at the time of pralaya - janAn samhAra-samaye apahnute apanayati iti jahnuh. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the incidence of Sage Jahnu who hid the Ganges when bhagl rata brought Ganges (jAhanavI) to the Earth. Similarly bhagavAn hides the Universe during pralaya into Himself, and so He is jahnu. In dharma cakram, we find a description of how His act of hiding some things from us is really devoted to helping us in our day-to-day life until we can really realize Him. Thus it is for our benefit that we forget some of our bad experiences of the past, and do not know some of the future incidences in our life ahead of time. In fact, this process of things being hidden intermittently is the law of life, as for instance the child being hidden in the mother's womb before being born, the seed being hidden underground before it sprouts, the time of our body's demise being hidden from us till the incident happens, the outcome of a contest between two competing teams being hidden from them till the incident concludes, and the same way, the jiva-s being hidden in Him before the world is re-created after pralaya. This nAma should help us forget the wrong-doings of others, and remember only the good things in life. This training will help us realize Him in the process, and then He does not have to use His act of hiding anything from us. Sri satyadevo vAsisshTha also starts with the root hA tyAge to give up, and interprets the nAma to mean that He is jahnu because He is devoid of the defects such as kAma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, and mAtsarya, and is Suddha svarUpa. Ganges is jAhnavI because Ganges washes away the sins.





nAma 246. नारायणः - nArAyaNah

The Supporter of the hosts of souls.

nArAyaNAya namah.

All the previous nAma-s referred to nArAyaNa through His other incarnations or through His many guNa-s. Now Sri vyAsa gives the name that only refers to mahA-vishNu, and that is not used to refer to any other gods (such as the nAma-s rudra, Siva etc., which also occur in the Vishnu sshastranAma to refer to mahAvishNu). Sri Bhattar points out that this nAma is spoken of in every upanishad, and the veda itself gives the derivation of the name nArAyaNa thus-

yacca ki~ncit jagat sarvam dRsyate SrUyatepi vA |

antar-bahiSca tat-sarvam vyApya nArAyaNah sthitah ||

"Whatever object there is in the Universe that is seen or heard, nArAyaNa remains pervading all that, both inside and outside". Sri Bhattar gives several references to bring out the greatness of this nAma.

"nArAyaNAya vidmahe vAsudevAya dhI mahi |

tanno vishNuh pracodayAt ||"

(taitti. nArAya. 6.1.28)

"nArAyaNa param brhma tattvam nArAyaNah parah |

nArAyaNa paro jyotir-AtmA nArAyaNah parah ||"

(taitt. NArAya. 6.11)

"eko ha vai nArAyaNa AsI t| na brhamA na I SAnah na Apah naagnishomi yau na eme dyAvA pRthvI na nakshatrANina sUryah na candramAh|"

(mahopanishad)

etc. Sri Sankara gives the following interpretation: nara refers to Atman; nAra refers to ether and the other effects produced from it; He, as their





cause, pervades them and they are thus His abode (ayana). Hence He is named nArAyaNa. He gives the following quote from mahAbhArata supporting this interpretation:

"narAjjAtAni tattvAni nArANI ti tato vidhuh |
tAnyeva cAyanam tasya tena nArAyaNah smRtah ||"

(anu.Parva. 13.1.2)

"The tattva-s are called nAra since they are sprung from nara (Atman); He is called nArAyaNa as they are His abode". Another interpretation he gives is "narANAm jIvAnAm ayanatvAt pralaya iti vA -Whom the jIva-s approach and enter (He is the abode of the beings during pralaya). This is supported by 'yatpryantyabhisamviSanti' - Whom they approach and enter - taittiriya upanishad 3.1. Or He is nArAyaNa since He is the seat of the nAra-s or the tattva-s - nArANAm ayanam yasmAttasmAn - nArAyaNah smRtah-brahmavaivarta purANa. (Note that this third interpretation is that He is their seat, whereas the first interpretation was that they are His seat). Manu-smRti gives the following definition -

"Apo nArAh iti proktAh Apo vai narasUnavah |
tA yadasyAyanam pUrvam tasmAn-nArAyaNah smRtah ||"

(manu-smRti 1.10)

"nAra refers to waters (the panca-bhUta-s before they inter-mixed and became visible through forms etc.) which He created. As they are His original abode (i.e., during pralaya), He is called nArAyaNa". Sri satyadevo vAsishTha draws the parallel between the world being born out of the waters in which nArAyaNa is floating, and the child that is born out of the mother's womb after being supported by the waters in the mother's body. In narasimha purANa, we have the following -

"nArAyaNaya nama ityayameva satyah
samsAra ghora visha samharaNaya mantrah |





SRNvantu bhavyamatayo yatayo'starAgA
uccaistarAmupadiSAmyaham Urdhva-bAhuh ||

(narasimha purANa 18.31)

"This is the real mantra that destroys the deadly poison of samsAra - nArAyaNaya namah. This I proclaim loudly with uplifted hands; let the ascetics, with passions curbed and intellects clear, listen to me".



*Sri man nArAyaNan - melkote
(Courtesy: www.pbse.com/svami)*



SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri reminds us that the mantra-devatA that we worship through the gAyatri mantra is SrI man nArAyaNa - dhyeyah sadAsavitRmandala madhyavartI nArAyaNah. The dharma cakram writer refers us to divya-prabandham - "nalam tarum Sollai nAn kaNdu koNdEn nArAyaNAenum nAmam" to remind us of the greatness of this nAma japam. It is very important to note SrI Bhattar's concluding statement of his vyAkhyAnam on this nAma. He points out that the secret of this sacred mantra should only be properly learned by approaching an AcArya, and not by reading the explanations like the one presented. His words are that he does not want to say anything more on this nAma because its greatness can only be learned from an AcArya, and is thus a matter that should be seen by four eyes (the two eyes of the disciple and the two eyes of the AcArya) and not by six eyes viz. he does not want to add his two eyes further. So no amount of explanation on paper can bring out the greatness of this nAma.

nAma 247. नरः - narah

- He who is imperishable.
- The Leader.

narAya namah.

SrI Bhattar gives the meaning that nara refers to one with imperishable possessions, both sentient and non-sentient (both of which are eternal by nature). SrI Sankara gives the meaning "Leader" to nara, and gives the quote from vyAsa (the source is not identified in my book) - nayati itinarah proktah paramAtmA sanAtanah - Because He directs everything, the eternal paramAtman is called nara. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha also starts with the root as nR nayeto lead, and gives the meaning as nayati - One who leads, or nRNati - One who takes things away. He is nara since He takes this Universe from kalpa to kalpa through many kalpa-s. nara also refers to water or fluid, since this takes things from one place to another as it flows. That there was only water



everywhere before sRshTi took place is supported by the following vedic quote - tama AsI t tamasAgUDhamagre'prakRtam salilam sarvamA idam (Rg 10.129.3). The dharma cakram writer points out that just as a mother leads a child with the child's welfare in mind, and does not mind disciplining the child for its own good when the child goes and eats dirt, or the teacher tries to discipline a student who is not learning the knowledge from the teacher, so also nara, viz. mahAvishNu, leads us all for our good even if He has to mete out some punishment occasionally to get our ways straightened out.



SIOkam 27

असङ्ख्येयोऽप्रमेयात्मा विशिष्टशिष्टकृच्छुचिः ।

सिद्धार्थस्सिद्धसङ्कल्पः सिद्धिदस्सिद्धिसाधनः ॥ २७ ॥

asankhyEyOṣpramEyAtmA visishTas sishTakruc chucih |

siddhArthas siddhasankalpah siddhidas siddhisAdhanah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 248. असंख्येयः - asankhyEyah

One whose attributes, names, forms, etc. are I nnumerable.

asankhyeyAyanamah.

sankhyA is number. asankhyeya is One who cannot be quantified. In gl tA, arjuna describes Lord kRshNa as such -

aneka-bAhUdara vaktra netram paSyAmi tvAmsarvato'nanta rUpam |

nAntam na madhyam punas-tavAdim paSyAmi viSveSvaraviSvarUpa ||

(gl tA 11.16)

"O Lord of the Universe! I see you with numberless arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes, of boundless forms on every side, and I do not see the end or the middle or the beginning". He is of infinite knowledge, infinite bliss, infinite manifestations, immeasurable strength, etc.

nAma 249. अप्रमेयात्मा - apramEyAtmA

One who cannot be known through knowledge, direct or indirect.

aprameyAyanamah.



Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the interpretation "pramANaih pramAtum aSakyah aprameyah". prameya is anything that can be known through intellect. aprameya is one whose nature cannot be grasped by any of the existing means of knowledge. We get an impression of an object by seeing it with our eyes, and it is this vision of the color, shape, or other attributes, or the smell etc., that gives us a feel for an object. BhagavAn is beyond our senses. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the quote from yajurveda - na tasya pratimA asti yasyanAma mahad-yaSah - yajur. 31.3. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out the similarity between this nAma and the nAma-s aprameyah (46) and ameyAtmA (103,181).

nAma 250. विशिष्टः - visishTah

He who is Superior.

viSishTAyanamah.

Sri Bhattar interprets this nAma as signifying that He is Superior because He does not have to depend on anything else and He excels in everything. Sri Sankara gives the meaning that He transcends everything. The dharma cakram writer points out that superiority in life is not achieved by just wealth, power and fame, but true superiority results only when we develop bhakti to the Lord. The other superiorities do not give us the purity of mind.

nAma 251. शिष्टकृत् - sishTakrut

He who makes His devotees eminent.

SishTa-kRte namah.

Because of association with Him, He makes His devotees also superior.

An alternate interpretation given is that SishTa means discipline, good manners. In this sense, the previous nAma would mean that He isviSishTa because He is of Supreme discipline, and the current nAma would mean that He





helps His devotees acquire this discipline through the mental strength, etc., needed for this. SishTa also means Law, rules, or commands. The interpretation then becomes He is One who makes the Law, One who commands, or One who protects (through the laws). The greatest and most significant of these commands is Love, through which mahA-vishNu rules over us all, and this is the lesson to be derived from this nAma (dharma cakram).

nAma 252. शुचिः - suchih

Pure.

Sucaye namah.

This nAma occurred earlier (157). His purity is such that association with Him makes these devotees pure also. He is pure by body, mind, action, and all, and this is what makes Him viSishTa and SishTa-kRt. One commentator points out that He makes us shine consistent with our devotion. (dharma cakram) - Just as we clean our body to avoid diseases of the body, we can develop cleanliness in our words through the chanting of bhagavan-nAma, and we can develop and improve the cleanliness of our thoughts through the control of the five senses, which are the means by which we get our input to our thoughts from the external world. Worshipping the Lord in the temple, listening to the sound of the bell during the worship, observing the karpUra Arati, listening to the nAmasankIrtana, listening to the bhajans, offering fragrant flowers to the Lord, observing the beauty of His decorated mUruti, smelling the divine fragrance of His presence in the temple, etc., are the different ways that the five indriya-s are exposed to opportunities for cleansing ourselves through these indriya-s. Simultaneously, we should do everything to constantly divert the mind from thoughts that are not conducive to the service of SriIman nArAyaNa. Deep meditation on the Lord is one way to train our mind. The constant training of our body, mind, word, and deed towards Him is the lesson we should take from this nAma.





nAma 253. सिद्धार्थः - siddhArthah

One who is in possession of all desirable things.

siddhArthAya namah.

He already possesses all that is desirable in Him naturally and effortlessly. Sri Sankara gives the passage "satyakAmahsatya-sankalpah" in chAdogya upanishad (8.1) in support of this and the next nAma. Sri cinmayAnanda points out that this name signifies that bhagavAn has already the four purushArtha-s (dharma, artha, kAma, and moksha) that are the object of attainment for mortals. He has attained (siddha) all that is to be attained (artha).

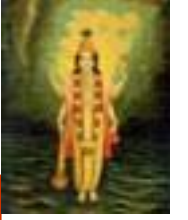
nAma 254. सिद्धसङ्कल्पः - siddhasankalpah

One whose wishes are always fulfilled.

siddha-sankalpAya namah.

One whose wishes are fulfilled at the very instance He wishes. Sankalpa means intellectual willing and wishing. One who gains all that He wishes for, or One who immediately gains what He wills is called siddha-sankalpah. The reference in chAndogya upanishad (see previous nAma) conveys the same idea. Examples in dharma cakram for His being asiddha sankalpah are the decision to make sugrIva and vibhIshaNa the kings of their respective kingdoms, the destruction of vAli, the sankalpam to fulfill daSaratha's promise to kaikeyi, etc. The devotion to mahA-vishNu makes the devotees equally capable of fulfilling their sankalpa-s with His help. Thus, bhIshma made Lord kRshNa carry arms in the battle of mahA-bhArata (thereby Lord kRshNa proved that He is the servant of His devotee, and will fulfill whatever they wish, even if it involved His breaking His vow not to carry arms), and hanumAn fulfilled his sankalpa to find sltA pirAtti. The way we become siddha sankalpa-sis to entrust ourselves completely in His care, and He takes care of the rest for us,





since whatever we wish will then be for the cause of dharma.

nAma 255. सिद्धिदः - siddhidah

The bestower of siddhi-s or super-human powers.

siddhi-dAya namah.

There are eight siddhi-s or powers that can be acquired by yogi-s who meditate on Him. These are aNimA (the ability to assume the size of an atom), mahimA (the ability to assume a very huge size), laghimA (to make the body weightless like a cotton ball), garimA (to assume heavy weight like an iron mass), prApti (to obtain anything desired), prAkAmyam (to attain any desired bhoga), ISitvam (to be able to assume rulership or Lordship over anything or anyone), and vaSitvam (to get anyone to be under one's control). Sri Sankara interprets the nAma to mean that He provides benefits or fulfillment according to our action.

nAma 256. सिद्धिसाधनः - siddhisAdhanah

One who makes the means for siddhi as pleasant as the fruit itself.

siddhi-sAdhanAya namah.

siddheh sAdhakatvAt siddhi-sAdhanah. He is the promoter of achievements. He is the very secret force which enables the seeker to diligently continue all efforts of his seeking. He is the sAdhana or means for all siddhi or fulfillment, in particular the moksha siddhi, which no one else can help achieve except Sri man nArAyaNa.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that the sequence "siddhArtahsiddha-sankalpah siddhi-dah siddhi-sAdhanah" is a great mantra by itself, and chanting it will be very beneficial for fulfillment of our endeavors without interruption when we undertake a good deed and work towards attaining the desired goal. The dharma cakram writer points out that the goal that is





attained by chanting this mantra is the cleansing of our minds from worldly thoughts, lust, etc., and concentrating the mind towards thoughts about Him. By chanting this mantra, He ensures that we attain our goal.



SIOkam 28

वृषाही वृषभो विष्णु वृषपर्वा वृषोदरः ।

वर्धनो वर्धमानश्च विविक्तश्रुतिसागरः ॥ २८ ॥

vrushAhi vrushabhO vishNuh vrushaparvA vrushOdarah |

vardhanO vardhamAnasca viviktas srutisAgarah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 257. वृषाही - vrushAhi

- One who shines in the form of dharma.
- One who makes His devotees shine like day because of their dharma.
- One who makes the day auspicious when the devotee approaches Him.
- One who reveals dharma.
- One who is the devatA for the vRshAha sacrifice.
- One who has the brightness of agni etc., or is the cause of the brightness of all objects

vRshAhiNe namah.

This nAma is interpreted differently by different vyAkhyAna-kartAs. The nAma is composed of two words, vRsha meaning dharma, and aha meaning day. One interpretation is that He shines bright like day because of His dharma. Or He makes those who adhere to dharma shine like day. Both these are given by SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri.

SrI Bhattar's interpretation is that He is vRshAhi because the day on which a devotee approaches the Lord, is a day of auspiciousness -dharma, i.e., He has the day which is made auspicious because of approaching Him.



SrI Sankara's interpretation for this is **vRshah dharmah tadeva Ahah** - One who reveals dharma. An alternate interpretation he gives is that **vRshAha** refers to a ten or twelve-day sacrifice, and He is **vRshAhl** because He is the performer or enjoyer as the **devatA** for the sacrifice.

SrI satyadevo **vAsishTha** gives the meaning "fire" or "agni" to the term **vRsha** based on **vRsho agnih samidhyate** (Rg veda 3.27.14), and uses **ahah** to mean brightness or **prakASa**, and so gives the meaning that **bhagavAn** has the brightness of agni and so is called **vRshAhl**. He then generalizes this and says that **vRshAhl** really refers to One who has the brightness of anything that is bright, such as the Sun etc., or in other words, their brightness is because of Him. So is the brightness resulting from knowledge, brightness of life because of the **jl vAtmA**, etc., which get their brightness from Him. He is the only one who has **svayam-prakASa**.

nAma 258. वृषभः - vrushabhah

- a) He who showers (His grace).
- b) He who shines because of His dharma.

vRshabhAya namah.

varshati esha bhaktebhyah kAmAn iti vRshabhah. He gives blessing to His devotees and protects them from the fire of **samsAra**. He is also **vRshbha** because He showers all that is desired by His devotees, e.g., glowing health, burning devotion, etc. **vRshAtmanA bhAti** - One who shines in the form of dharma, is the explanation given by SrI **rAdhAkRshNa SAstri**. (dharma cakram): **BhagavAn** gives whatever is aspired by the beings, according to their efforts. Of these, the real wish should be to realize Him. All other wishes, while they will also be fulfilled by Him for those wish these lesser desires, will only result in sorrow after the interim pleasure is over. The desire should be "**acyutAlamarar ERE! Ayar tam kozhundE! ennum iccuvai tavira yAn pOy indiralOkam ALum acuvai perinum vEndEn**".





nAma 259. विष्णुः - vishNuh

One who pervades everything.

vishNave namah.

This nAma occurred as nAma 2, and will re-occur as nAma 663. The root from which this nAma is derived is vish - to pervade. Sri BhaTTar gives the meaning that this pervasion is in the sense of association such as between fire and smoke. Wherever there is smoke there is fire, but when there is fire, smoke is not necessarily present (e.g., in the case of a red-hot piece of iron). So also, bhagavAn is there in association with His bhakta-s always, and renders all kinds of help to His devotees as needed. It was mentioned in the introductory article to this series that the vyAkhyAna kartA-s give different interpretations to the same nAma depending on the context. Since we are now dealing with the sequence of nAma-s which describe the Lord's guNa of helping His devotees in fulfilling their desired wishes, this new interpretation is given.

nAma 260. वृषपर्वा - vrushaparvA

He who has provided the steps of dharma to reach Him.

vRsha-parvaNe namah.

vRsha is dharma as has been noted before. ParvA refers to steps. Sri BhaTTar's interpretation is that He is vRsha-parvA because He has revealed the steps of varNASrama dharma as the means to attain Him. Other vyAkhyAna kartA-s have included various steps such as j~nAna, bhakti, etc. as the steps that He has established. These include SravaNam, mananam, kIrtanam, sat-sangham, SraddhA, etc. These are like the steps of a ladder to reach Him.





nAma 261. वृषोदरः - vrushOdarah

One who has dharma as His mid-region or belly.

vRshodharAya namah.

Different interpretations are given for this nAma. One is that He is the receiver of all the offerings through yag-na etc., and so He is the one with the udara that receives all offerings of dharma. The other is that creations of those who observe dharma such as Brahma originate from His belly. The third is that this is where He keeps all the beings at the time of pralaya, and this is where everything originates at the time of re-creation. In this context, the meaning "shower" is used for the word vRsha. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha continues to interpret all the previous nAma-s and the current one using the meaning "agni" for the word "vRsha". Thus, He is the One who has agni in His stomach. This is known even for humans that we have the "agni" (the acid) that digests our food, there is agni in the centre of the earth, in the centre of the sun, the Oceans, etc. These are reflections of the principle of bhagavAn as vRshodara.

nAma 262. वर्धनः - vardhanah

He who nourishes.

vardhanAya namah.

vardhayati iti vardhanah. One who augments, increases, or nourishes. Following up on the interpretation of the previous nAma, Sri Bhattar interprets this nAma as One who keep the beings in His womb like a mother and nourishes them. Sri P. B. aNNa~ngar AcArya svAmi gives the meaning that he is vardhana because he 'grows' those who have resorted to Him more and more (towards the spiritual path?). Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the example of the offer of one handful of 'aval' - a form of compacted rice, by His friend kucela, which was augmented so much in return that kucela became richer than





kubera. So is the offer of patram, phalam, pushpam, toyam, etc. that we make to Him. Thus He is vardhana because an offer of the size of an atom to Him with devotion results in a mountain of return and protects His devotees like a mother. The dharma cakram writer points out that while everyone takes all the efforts to grow his body and his wealth, the real effort should be in growing the j-nAna and bhakti, and He helps those who are devoted to Him in this area, and so He is vardhana.

nAma 263. वर्धमान - varadhamAnah

He who grows.

vardhamAnAya namah.

In the previous nAma we saw that He makes things grow. In this nAma, it is indicated that He Himself grows as a result or simultaneously. Sri BhaTTar interprets vardhamAnah as one who grows happy as He sees His devotees grow. Or He keeps growing in spite of His bestowing all that anyone asks for. Sri cinmayAnanda points out that this name is indicative of the vAmana incarnation in which He continued to grow to cover the three worlds. Sri Sankara's interpretation is "prapa~ncarUpeNa vadhate iti vardhamAnah - One who grows or multiplies Himself in the form of the Universe". Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri indicates that the 'ca' at the end of vardhamAnah is because He grows at the same fast rate at which the Universe is growing.

nAma 264. विविक्तः - viviktah

He who is unique.

viviktAya namah.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the root vij - pRthakbhAve to separate or to distinguish as the etymological basis for this nAma. He gives a simple example of a machinist who makes machines but is separate from it. So also bhagavAn





creates all the beings and keeps them in shape and in action, but is unique and separate from them. He gives the example of two birds in a tree, one enjoying the fruits and the other watching and observing, which we have referred to before (dvA suparNAsayujA sakhAyA etc. - Rg veda 1.164.20). This author (SrI vAsishTha) has composed one Slokam of his own as the explanation for each Slokam of sahasranAma, and I am just sharing one example here:

"sRTvA jagat sarva-vidham vidhAtA svayam vivikto hyajaro'marah sah|
sahasra-SI rshA sa sahasra-dRshTih sa sarva-bandhuh sa pRthak ca dRSyAt||

BhagavAn is unique in many ways. He is untouched by the effects of action unlike His creations (nirlipta). He is unique because His activities are extraordinary and superior to those of others in the world (SrI BhaTTar). Or it may mean that He remains unique and distinct even though He pervades the Universe as described in previous nAma-s (SrI Sankara). He is also unique because He is beyond our ability to be recognized by our intellect and logical analysis alone (SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri; also recall the ISAvAsyaupanishad Slokam 4 - anejadekam manaso javI yo ...). The dharam cakram writer points out that this quality of being outside of, and unaffected by, our surroundings, is the true basis of accomplishing our mission in life viz. realizing the paramAtmA. If we do not get swayed by the pa-nca indriya-s, then in spite of living in the midst of all the noise and pleasures around us, we will be able to have control of our mind and divert it to the service of mahA vishNu. This is the significance and lesson to take from this nAma.

nAma 265. श्रुतिसागरः - srutisAkarah

He who is the sea where all veda-s take us.

Sruti-sAgarAya namah.

Srutayah sAgara iva atra nidhI yante iti SrutisAgarah. Just as the ocean is the final destination for all the rivers, so also all the veda-s lead us to Him, and He is thus Ocean for the Sruti-s (Sruti-sAgarah). SrI BhaTTar refers us to





SrImad bhAgavatam (2.5.15)- nArAyaNa parA vedAh - The veda-s only speak of nArAyaNa, and to the gl tA 15.15 - vedaiSca sarvaih ahameva vedyah - "I am the only one that is to be realized through all the veda-s".





SIOkam 29

सुभुजो दुर्धरो वाग्मी महेन्द्रो वसुदो वसुः ।

नैकरूपो बृहद्रूपश्शिपिविष्टः प्रकाशनः ॥ २९ ॥

subhujO durdharO vAgmI mahEndrO vasudO vasuh |

naikarUpO bruhadrUpas sipivishTah prakAsanah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 266. सुभुजः - subhujah

One with majestic arms.

su-bhujAya namah

SobhanA bhujAh asya iti subhujah. Sri BhaTTar interprets the majesty and strength of His arms to always shoulder the burden of those that seek refuge in Him. Sri Sankara extends this to refer to the protection of the whole world. Sri cinmayAnanda refers to the beauty of the arms that always protect and bless (abhaya and vara-da). Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri describes the beauty of the arms that are always ready with the Ayudha-s for the protection of the devotees lest there is any delay when the need arises to use them.

pAtu praNata rakshAyAm vilambam asahanniva, sadA pa-ncAyudhl m bibhrat sa nah Sri ra-nga nAyakah.

The writer in dharma cakram points out that the term subhujah refers to the hands of mahAvishNu that carry the Sa~nkha, cakra, gadA and padma. The Sankha reminds us of the praNava mantra. The cakra both protects those that follow the path of dharma and destroys those who follow the path of adharm. The gadA functions to discipline the evil, and the padma shows His sweet disposition towards those who seek Him.





nAma 267. दुर्धरः - durdharah

- a) The irresistible.
- b) One who is difficult to comprehend
- c) One who is difficult to hold in concentration
- d) One who cannot be supported by anyone or anything else

durdharAua namah.

Recall that Sri BhaTTar has interpreted the previous nAma in terms of the strength of His arms. He continues with that thought, and interprets the current nAma as indicating that the strength is such that it is irresistible like the force of the gushing waters of a great ocean against a dam made of play sand. Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that He is difficult to be held, e.g., the yogi-s find it difficult to hold him in their thoughts during their meditation. An alternate interpretation given by him is that nothing else can support Him who supported everything else. Sri cinmayAnanda interprets the nAma as one who is difficult to comprehend even by the great yogi-s. The dharma cakram writer points out that we should develop a clean mind in order to be able to retain Him in our mind. For this, recourse to such things as nAma pArAyaNam are of help. Once the mind becomes clean, thoughts of mahA vishNu occupy our mind, and bad thoughts do not occupy our mind.

nAma 268. वाग्मी - vAgmi

- a) He who has words which are praise-worthy.
- b) He who has powerful words.
- c) He from whom the veda-s originated.

vAgmine namah.

veda-s are but the words of bhagavAn. He also was powerful in persuading





arjuna through His words (gl tA) in the battlefield when arjuna had laid down his arms. He is vAgmI also because His words are sweet and kind - buddhimAn madhurAbhAshI pUrvabhAshI pryam vadah - rAma is wise and speaks sweet words; He is the first to speak and also speaks kind words - ayodhyA kANdam 1.13. A very good summary of the power of His words is quoted in dharma cakram from the gl tA, reflecting arjuna's state of mind after listening to Lord kr*shNa's words -

nashTo mohah smr*tir-labdhA taaaat-prsAdAn mayA acyuta |

sthito'smi gata-sandehah karishye vacanam tava || (18-73)

"acyuta! By your Grace (gl topadeSam) my ignorance has now gone; I have regained my memory, and now I am steady and free from doubt and am ready to act according to Your instructions"

nAma 269. **महेन्द्रः** - mahEndrah

- a) He of great wealth.
- b) The God of Indra and other gods.

mahendrAya namah.

The root from which this nAma is derived is idi - paramaiSvarye - to own great wealth. Since He thus pervades everything in many different ways, He is the Lord of everything. He is also mahendra because He is the Lord of Indra, who is the representation of strength, which is one of the six qualities of SrIman nArAyaNa. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives a second interpretation based indhI - dIptau to shine, to kindle. Thus He is mahendra since He is the one who kindles the light in every being or is the light in all beings.

nAma 270. **वसुदः** - vasudah

The Giver of wealth.





vasudAya namah.

vasu - dhanam dadAti iti vasu-dah. One who bestows His wealth to the devotees without their asking for it. He can give the lordship of the three worlds to a devotee, or He can also give the lesser riches to those who want it. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha points out that this act of bhagavAn giving wealth to everyone is behind the act of anyone giving anything to anyone. For instance, when one does vastra-dAnam, or anna-dAnam, or imparts knowledge to another, or any other act of giving, it is a demonstration of the guNa of Giver of mahA vishNu.

nAma 271. वसुः - vasuh

He who is Himself the wealth sought by those who have realized the Truth.

vasave namah.

This nAma occurred earlier as nAma 105, and will re-occur as nAma 701. Please refer to the previous write-up as well. vAsudevah sarvam iti sa mahAtmA sudurlabhah - Rare indeed is the great soul who has realized that the ultimate object to be attained is vAsudeva, and the means for attaining this wealth is also vAsudeva (gl tA 7.19). From the next nAma, Sri BhaTTar interprets the nAma-s as illustrations of the cosmic form or the viSva-rUpa of the Lord.

nAma 272. नैकरूपः - naikarUpah

He of Infinite forms (as seen in viSvarUpa).

naikarUpAya namah.

In gl tA we have paSyAmi tvAm sarvatah ananta rUpam - I see You everywhere with Your endless forms - 11.16. Sri cinmayAnanda gives the following quote -

"jalam vishNuh sthalam vishNuh vishNur_AkASam ucyate |
sthAvaram ja~ngamam vishNuh sarvam vishNu-mayam jagat ||"





Sri rAdhAkr*shNa SAstri expresses his anubhavam of this nAma by pointing out that this guNa of assuming multiple forms is consistent with (almost necessitated by) His role is the Giver of wealth to everyone. For giving wealth to everyone, He needed to be in multiple forms and at multiple places at the same time.

nAma 273. बृहद्रूपः - bruhadrUpah

He of an immense form.

br*had-rUpAya namah.

br*hat means mahat or big. Sri T. S. Kr*shNamUrti has translated this as 'mysterious'. He is of an immense form. Sri Sankara has given the example of the varAha incarnation where He carried the submerged Earth with a form which was big enough to ensure that the Earth did not submerge again as it was carried. The trivikrama incarnation is another example where His form covered all the three worlds and the skies. Sri cinmayAnanda gives the purusha sUktam passage - **atyatishThat daSA-ngulam** - He is not only of the total size and dimension of the Universe but He stands beyond it by ten digits. The dharma cakram author points out that to "see" this br*had-rUpam, the mortal eyes are not sufficient, and it is thus that we do not just see Him but have to experience Him. The more we see this immensity of His Nature and His sarva vyApatitvam, the more we will get out of this "small" world or our bodies and our small pleasures.

nAma 274. शिपिविष्टः - sipivishTah

He who pervades the rays.

Sipi-vishTAya namah.

The word Sipi has two meanings - rays and animals. Thus there are two interpretations. The first is that He is Sipi-vishTa because He is in the forms



of rays for example the Sun's rays, the rays emanating from the fire, etc. Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam is Sipayah - raSmayah, tAn sampravishTah - vyAptavAn iti SipivishTah. He quotes Yaska from nirukata to support this - Sipayo raSmayah ucyante, taih AvishTah. In the nirukti which is a summary of Sri BhaTTar's interpretations by an unknown author, we have

Sipayo raSmayah proktAh vyApya teshvapi vartanAt |

SipivishTah samAkhyAtah sUryendy-agnAdi rUpavat ||

In mahAbhArata we have

Sipi-vhshTeti yaccAsya pl tam romam ca yad-bhavet |

tenApi vishTam yat ki-ncit Sipi-vishTam hi tat-smr*tam ||

(Santi parva 343-41)

"He has tawny hairs on His body; with that body He has pervaded all other things. So He is known as Sipi-vishTa." In udyoga parva we have roma kupeshu ca tathA sUryasyeva marIcayah - He who enters into the pores of the body like the rays of the sun. lingAyatasUrin in his vyAkhyAna for amarakoSa has given the following - Sipishu paSushu janeshu vishTo vyApta iti SipivishTah - One who has pervaded all animals and humans is SipivishTah.

nAma 275. प्रकाशनः - prakAsanah

a) One who shows Himself to His devotees.

b) One who illumines everything.

prakASanAya namah.

Sri BhaTTar interprets the nAma to mean that BhagavAn shows His celestial form to arjuna and others who long to see it. Sri Sankara's interpretation is that He is prakASana because He illumines everything - prakASayati iti prakASanah. The dharam cakram writer points out that the illumination He provides is the path that leads to His realization.



SlOkam 30

ओजस्तेजोद्युतिधरः प्रकाशात्मा प्रतापनः ।

ऋद्धस्स्पष्टाक्षरो मन्त्रश्चन्द्रांशुर्भास्करद्युतिः ॥ ३० ॥

OjastEjO dyutidharah prakAsAtmA pratApanah |

riddhas spashTaaksharO mantras candrAamsur bhAaskaradyutih ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 276. ओजस्तेजोद्युतिधरः - Ojas-tEjO-dyuti-dharah

One who is endowed with strength, vigor and brilliance.

ojas-tejo-dyuti-dharAya namah.

Ojas means strength or inherent vitality, tejas means reputation or power to overcome enemies, and dyuti means effulgence or radiance. Since bhagavan alone has all of these, He is ojas-tejo-dyuti-dharah. Recall that we are now going through the nAma-s that describe the viSva-rupa. Sri Sankara gives the reference to gltA - tejas-tejasvinAmaham (7-10), and balam balavatAam cAham (7-11).

nAma 277. प्रकाशात्मा - prakAsAtmA

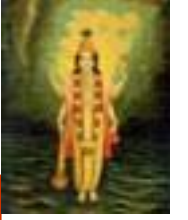
He of a nature that is well-known to all.

prakASAtmane namah.

dhRtarAshtra was blind not only externally but also in his mind. Even to him, bhagavan made Himself known. In mahAbhArata -udyoga parva, dhRtarAshtra says -

"tvameva puNdarIkAksha! Sarvasya jagatah prabhuh |





tasmAt te yAdava-SreshTha! PrasAdam kartumarhasi ||

"Oh Lotus-eyed One! You are the Protector of all the worlds. Therefore, the foremost among the yAdavas! You should take pity on me. "Another interpretation is that He has a form whose nature is of radiance. The writer in dharma cakram points out that the prakASa or light from the sun and stars can reveal external objects, but none of these can reveal the Absolute Truth. This can be revealed only by mahAvishNu the prakASAtmA, who gives the external light to the sun and stars in the first instance.

nAma 278. प्रतापनः - pratApanah

He who scorches (His enemies).

pratApanAya namah.

Sri BhaTTar interprets this nAma in the context of the gl tA where arjuna says that he is unable to stand the sight of the magnificent viSva-rUpa darSanam when Lord KRshNa reveals that the enemies in the kaurava side are falling into the fiery mouth of the Lord and being scorched to their end - tejobhirApUrya jagat samastambhAsastavogrAh pratapanti vishNo (gl tA 11.30). Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that this can also refer to the time of pralaya when the Lord scorches the Earth with the prlayAgni. Sri Sankara gives the explanation that He is pratApana because He heats the world through power manifestations like the Sun.

nAma 279. ऋद्धः - riddhah

He who is full in all respects.

RddhAya namah.

The root from which this word is derived is Rdh vRddhau - to prosper, to increase. He is full of guNa-s like dharma, knowledge, dispassion, etc.





nAma 280. स्पष्टाक्षरः - spashTa-aksharah

He of clear words (through the veda-s).

spashTAksharAya namah.

The reference here is to the veda-s. Sri BhaTTar's interpretation is that He is spaTAksharah because He revealed Himself through the letters of the veda-s very clearly. Sri Sankara's interpretation is that He has this nAma because He is clearly indicated by the supreme sound of PraNavam. Sri cinmayAnanda gives the reference to gl tA in support of this interpretation -

mityekAksharam brahma vyAharan mAm anusmaran |

Yah prayAti tyajan deham sa yAti paramAm gatim||

"One who chants my name (PraNavam) and leaves his body at the time of death thus remembering Me, he shall go to the Supreme state". Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives a very different interpretation. He uses the root spaS bandhane - to tie together, and akshara to mean things that don't disappear but reappear again and again until (and even after?) pralaya - he uses the words Apralaya sthAyI nakshatrAdi in Hindi), viz. the nakshatra manDala etc. Thus he interprets this nAma's meaning as referring to mahA vishNu who has thus tied together and is holding together this Universe with its constellation of the heavenly bodies.

nAma 281. मन्त्रः - mantrah

The mystic word (He who protects those who meditate on His name).

mantrAya namah.

tan-mantAram trAyate iti mantArah, or mananAt trAyate iti mantrah -mantra is that which protects him who meditates on it. In BrahmA purANa, BhagavAn says -





*mantrAya namah
Sri Lakshmi HayagrIvan
Poundarikapuram Sri mad Andavan Ashramam - Sri Rangam*



thRshNA toya samAKI rNAt ghorAt samsAra sAgarAt |
apArAt pAramApnoti yo mAm smarati nityaSah ||

"He who thinks of me always, will certainly cross this vast and frightful sea of samsAra which is filled with the waters of greed and avarice". Sri BhaTTar also gives the reference to the varAha carama Sloka-s from varAha purANa -
sthithe manasi susvsthe SarI re sati yo narah |

dhAtu-sAmye sthithe smartA viSva-rUpam ca mAm aJam ||
tatastam mriyamANam tu kAshTha pAshANa sannibham |
aham smarAmi mad-bhaktam nayAmi paramAm gatim ||

"The man who, when his mind is in normal condition, when the body is not shattered, and when the elementary constituents of his body (dhAtu-s) are in perfect equipoise, meditates on Me who has the world as My body and who am not subject o births due to karma - when that man lies like a log of wood or a piece of stone in his dying moments, I think of this devotee of Mine and lead to attain the Supreme Abode".

Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that He is the Sacred formula in the form of the three veda-s. The writer in dharma cakram gives the perspective on the importance of mantra-s in our scheme of life. Just as we take external bath for keeping our bodies clean, mantra-s are the means to keep our minds clean. This can be done either through constant repetition of the mantra-s (japam), through deep and constant contemplation (meditation), through musical singing (bhajans) etc. Recall tirumangai AzhvAr - nalamtarum Sollai nAN kaNDu koNDEn nArAyaNA ennum nAmam - peria tirumozhi1-1-9).

nAma 282. चन्द्रांशुः - candrAamsuh

He who is possessed of the effulgent rays like those of the moon.

canDrAmSave namah.





The word canDra is derived from the root caDi AhIAde dI ptau ca - to delight, to shine. He brings delight to the minds of those who are scorched by the heat of samsAra. He also nurtures the vegetable kingdom with nutrition - paushNAmi caushadIh sarvA somo bhUtvA rasAtmakah - gltA15-13. It is known in experience also that the cool rays of the moon are soothing. BhavAn is like the rays of the moon for His devotees.

nAma 283. भास्करद्युतिः - bhAaskaradyutih

He who has the effulgence of the sun.

bhAskara-dyutaye namah.

This effulgence is such that it shatters and throws His enemies in all directions. Recall the reference to Lord rAma as rAma-divAkara -

Sara jAIAmSumAnSUrah kape! RAma-divAkarah |

Satru-rakshomayam toyam uapSosham nayishyati ||

(sundara kANdam 37-18)

"O Monkey (HanumAn)! The sun-like rAma, who is valiant and who has heaps of ray-like arrows, will certainly dry up the water of the inimical rAkshasa-s. "The reference to Sri AndAl's tiruppAvai (kadir madiyam pOI mugattAn) is relevant in this context. Dr. V. V. rAMAnujan in his vishNu shasranAma bhAshyam points out the significance of the two nAma-s - candrAmSuh and bhAskara-dyutih occurring side by side. It is unique that BhagavAn has at the same time the comforting coolness of the moon and the scorching heat of the sun in Him - He is soothing to His devotees and burning to His enemies. The description of the viSva-rUpam continues, and we know from arjuna's description that the tejas of the viSva-rUpam is scorching and frightful. An instance of this simultaneous existence of the soothing and burning guNa-s of His tejas is the nRsimha incarnation, where His form terrorized hiraNyakaSipu, and but was divinely pleasing to prahIAda. He is bhAskara-dyutih also because He is the cause for the dyuti or brightness of bhAskara or the sun, or for that matter,





the brightness in every one of us. We can see the brightness of the sun but we cannot see the brightness of mahA vishNu. His effulgence is explained by sanjaya in the gl tA -

divi sUrya sahasrasya bhaved yugapadutthitA |

yadi bhAh sadRSI sA syAd-bhAsas-tasya mahAtmanah ||

(gl tA 11-12)

"If simultaneously thousands of suns appear in the sky shining bright, the tejas or effulgence that is seen can be compared to a fraction of the tejas of paramAtmA".



SIOkam 31

अमृतांशूद्रवो भानुश्शशबिन्दुस्सुरेश्वरः ।

औषधं जगतस्सेतुः सत्यधर्मपराक्रमः ॥ ३१ ॥

amrutAmsUdbhavO bhAnus sasabindus surEsvarah |
aushadham jagatassEtus satyadharma parAkramah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 284. अमृतांशूद्रवः - amrutAmsUdbhavah

The source of nectar-rayed moon.

amRtAmSUdbhavAya namah.

This nAma consists of three words - amRta, amSu, and udbhavah.

1. amRta means immortal or life-giving,
2. amSu refers to rays, and
3. udbhavah is one who created.

Both Sri BhaTTar and Sri Sankara have interpreted this as referring to the creation of the moon by the Lord during the churning of the Milky Ocean. This is generally the interpretation that most other authors have accepted. Sri cinmayAnanda gives reference to the gltA to point out how the moon's rays are life-giving to the plants - pushNAmi caushadhIh sarvAh samo bhUtvA rasAtmakah - I become the life-giving rays of the moon and make all the plants grow and flourish. Sri satyadevo vASishTha has given an independent interpretation. He uses the meaning liquid or "jalam" for the word amRta, and the meaning "distribute" from amSu - vibhAjane to distribute, and gives the interpretation that the name means that He created the life-forms by distributing the waters or amRta. He gives the example of how the life-form is created in the mother's womb floating in the waters, and how the physical



body is kept healthy and well-nourished by drinking the water and eating the food.

nAma 285. भानुः - bhAnu

The lustrous Sun or One who is Radiant.

bhAnave namah.

BhAtiiti bhAnuh - That which shines or One who shines. BhagavAn is the source of radiance to the Sun itself. The passage from muNDakopanishad - **tameva bhAntamanubhAti sarvam, tasya bhAsA sarvamidam vibhAti** -(muNda - 2.2.10). He illumines Himself, and illumines everything else in this world as well, including the Sun, whose lustre is one-thousandth of His lustre. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha also points out that He is the lustre in all of us by being the agni or fire in all bodies. As long as this agni is lit in our body, we are healthy; when the fire subsides, the body is non-functional (death of the body occurs). So He is the bhAnu in all of us. The dharma cakram author reminds us that the light of the Sun can only give external light, but cannot help in revealing the paramAtmA or the Supreme Soul. This can be done only by the paramAtmA or bhAnu.

nAma 286. शशबिन्दुः - sasabinduh

- a) He who disowns the evil-minded.
- b) The Moon
- c) One who controls the paths of the planets and the stars.

SaSAbindave namah.

SrI BhaTTar derives the interpretation from SaSa - pluta gatau - to swerve or jump from the right path, and bindu derived from bidi - to disown. SrI Sankara has interpreted the nAma as referring to the moon. The interpretation given is





- One who has the mark of a hare - viz. the moon. This is based on the words SaSa meaning hare, and bindu meaning a dot. Since the moon has a mark which looks like a hare, this interpretation is given. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha has used the nAmaas SaSa-vinduh instead of SaSa-binduh. He uses the meaning for SaSa as that which leaps or moves around, from the root SaS - pluta-gatau. For vindu he derives the meaning from the root vid - j~nAne - to know (based on the pANinisUtra vinduricchuh - 3.2.167) - vinduh = vedana SilAh - intelligent. Thus for the nAma SaSavinduh, the meaning given is One who knows (controls) the paths of all the planets and stars (the Sun, the moon, etc.).

nAma 287. सुरेश्वरः - surEsvarah

The Lord of the gods.

sureSvarAya namah.

SurANAm I svarahsureSvarah - One who is the Leader of all the gods. Just as He disowns those who go in the wrong path (previous nAma), this name says that he is the Leader of those who tread the good path. The word sura itself is composed of su - Sobhana, and rA - dAnah i.e., one that brings or bestows auspicious or good things. One who is the Lord of those who bestow auspiciousness or do good in plenty is sureSvara. The dharma cakram writer reminds us that the significance of this nAma is that by worshipping mahA vishNu who is the sureSvara, we will move towards the path of the sura-s.

nAma 288. औषधम् - aushadham

The Medicine.

aushadhAya namah.

He is the Ultimate Medicine for the poison of samsAra, and there is no other medicine for this. In mahAbhArata we have "devA devarshayaScaiva yam viduh dukkha bhesajam"-The gods and the celestial sages know Him to be the





remedy for distress - Santi parvA 79-22. Another quote in Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam (the source is not given) is "ekAgratA mUlya balena labhyam bhavaushadham tvam bhagavan! kilaikah"- Oh BhagavAn! Thou alone art verily the recipe for the samSara, and can be obtained by the high price of the concentration of the mind on Thee". Dr.V.V. rAmAnujan has given the following reference from divya prabandham in support of the interpretation of this nAma - "tE~ngOda vaNNan varu naragamtI rkkum marundu" - 3rd tiruvandAdi - 3. The dharma cakram writer points out that BhagavAn who is Nature Incarnate is aushdham in day-to-day life as well since inhaling the fresh air of nature, eating food which is not synthetic, etc., lead to a healthier life.

nAma 289. जगतस्सेतुः - jagatassEtu

- a) The barrier for the world.
- b) The bridge for crossing the ocean of samsAra.
- c) One who binds and keeps in-tact all that moves in this world.

jagatah-setave namah.

He is the barrier that ensures that there is order in the different things in this world, by making sure that the good and bad do not mix together in a chaotic way. He ensures that there is no effect for the karma that is not undertaken, there is always effect for the karma that has been undertaken. Those who do good get the benefit for their good and those who indulge in bad deeds get the benefit of their bad deeds, etc. The passage from bRhadAraNya upanishad is given in support of this interpretation - **eshahsetuh vidharaNa eshAm lokAnAm asambhedAya** - 6.4.22 (He is the bridge that supports all the worlds so that they may not get into confusion). Sri Sankara gives an additional interpretation, viz. that He is the bridge for crossing the ocean of samsAra. Sri satdevo vAsishTha gives the interpretation that BhagavAn ties together all that exists in this world. This includes the function of holding together the different bones, nerves, and muscles in the body, as well as the





system of stars and planets. Jagat is derived from gati - that which moves, and setu - that which binds. He is the setu in all bodies, and in addition holds all these bodies and other things that exist in this world together in order, and thus He is hagatah-setu. The dharma cakram writer gives the example of a river which is bound by its banks and kept in control, or the ocean which is bound by the land surrounding it and kept under control. So also, BhagavAn has kept the jIvAtmA under control by limiting it to the indriya sukham and the ocean of samsAra. It is only mahA vishNu who can help this jIvAtmA out of these bounds, and it is by meditating on Him that the jIvAtmA can get liberated and cross the ocean of samsAra.

nAma 290. सत्यधर्मपराक्रमः - satyadharmaparAkramah

One whose qualities and valor are always true.

satya-dharma-parAkramAya namah.

Here dharma refers to the auspicious qualities of BhagavAn, and parAkrama refers to His valor. One in whom they are never failing (satya) is satya-dharma-parAkramah. Sri cinmayAnanda interprets the nAmato mean that BhagavAn is one who embodies satya (truth), dharma (righteous), and parAkrama (heroism). In vAlmI ki rAmAyaNa Sri rAma is referred to assatya-parAkramah - One whose parAkrama is never in vain, and is always used for the good of the world. The writer in dharma cakram points out that the nAma tells us the importance of living a life of truth, righteousness, and the valor resulting from this kind of life. Those who live a life along these lines are bound to succeed in what they do, as evidenced by the lives of HanumAn, BhI shma, etc.





SlOkam 32

भूतभव्यभवन्नाथः पवनः पावनोऽनलः ।

कामहा कामकृत्कान्तः कामः कामप्रदः प्रभुः ॥ ३२ ॥

bhUtabhavya bhavannAthah pavanah pAvanOSnalah |

kAmahA kAmakruthkAntah kAmah kAmapradah prabhuh ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 291. भूतभव्यभवन्नाथः - bhUtabhavya-bhavannAthah

The Lord of all in the past, present and future.

bhUta-bhavya-bhavan-nAthAya namah.

Sankara distinguishes the meanings of the two nAma-s by interpreting the first one as "The Lord of Past, Present, and Future", or that He is beyond time, and the current one as "The Lord of all beings in the Past, Present, and Future". In other words, the first interpretation refers to His being Timeless, and the second refers to His being the Lord of all beings in all time.

nAma 292. पवनः - pavanah

He who moves about (Wind).

pavanAya namah.

Pavata iti pavanah. Sri BhaTTar gives the interpretation based on the root pavi - to move about. He moves about in all places at all times with no constraints. The wind's ability to do this is but a fraction of His ability in this regard. pavatAm pavanah asmi (gl tA 10-31) - Among those that move about, I am the wind.





SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives the meaning for this nAma as One who is Pure, and for the next nAma he gives the interpretation that in addition to His being Pure (pavanah), He also purifies everything else -pAvanah).

nAma 293. पावनः - pAvanah

He who purifies everything.

pAvanAya namah.

pAvayati iti pAvanah. pAvanah sarva-lokAnAm tvameva raghu-nandana -Oh Scion of raghu race! You alone are the purifier of all the worlds -rAmAyaNam -uttara kANDam - 32.9. The power of Ganges to purify anyone from all sins is because of its contact with His Sacred Feet. We have in SrI vishNu sahasranAmam "pavitrANAm pavitram yo mangalAnAm camangalam - He is the Purest of the pure, and the Most Auspicious among those that are auspicious". SrI v.v.rAmAnujan gives the reference from tiruvAi-mozhi (2-8-5) - devAdi-deva perumAn en tIrthanE - tIrthan here means Pure. Another reference he has given is - karam nAngudaiyAn pErOdi tIrthakarar Amin (iraNDAm tiruvandAdi - 14) - Let us become pure by chanting the name of the One with Four Hands.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha points out that it is mahA-vishNu's pAvana Sakti that is at play when the effect of the poison of a crab bite is removed from the body of a person by dropping the juice of red chile in the ears of that person. He gives several other examples as well.

nAma 294. अनलः - analah

One who is never satisfied (in His Mercy or dayA).

analAya namah.

alam means "to be satisfied". analam is the condition of never being satisfied. SrI v.v.rAmAnujan gives reference to periya tiruvandAdi - unaDiyArkku en





Seyvan enRE irutti ni (53) - "Always thinking about what You can do next for Your devotees". He is the One who helped draupadi during her time of distress and then forever felt that He did not do enough for her because He did not personally appear in the palace when she called for Him, and when He ultimately departed for Sri vaikunTham, still felt that He was indebted - RNam pravRttam idam me hRdayAtnApasarpati.

analam literally refers to fire (since fire is never satisfied, and will keep consuming more and more things if left uncontrolled). A certain amount of heat is necessary in the body for the body to continue alive. Since He is the fire that supports life in the body, He is called anala. The insatiable nature of His dayA has been sung by Sri deSika in dayASatakam, where we find that no matter what great sins we have committed, His dayA will consume (forgive) all those when we surrender to Him with devotion and sincerity. The hunger of His dayA will not be easily quenched even by the enormous sins committed by us, and He will forgive all these if we adopt the simple step of SaraNAgati to Him (Sloka 29 of dayASatakam). He is like the fire that will burn all our sins without limit. So He is analah in this sense as well.

nAma 295. कामहा - kAmaha

The Destroyer of desires.

kAma-ghne namah.

He removes the desires in worldly matters in the minds of His devotees. Sri cinmayAnanda gives an analysis of why it is necessary that desire should be destroyed. When desire arises, there are two possibilities -either the desire is fulfilled, or it is not. If it is fulfilled, the result is the desire for more - greed. If it is not fulfilled, the outcome is anger and frustration. So for inner calm, desire needs to be destroyed, and it is only His Grace which can cause this to happen.

Someone who has successfully climbed a very high hill will not desire to





conquer a smaller hill. So also, one who has developed a desire for the paramAtmA will not desire anything less or anything else. He iskAma-hA in the sense that desire in Him will automatically destroy the desire in lesser objects.

nAma 296. कामकृत् - kAmakruth

One who creates desirable things, and also fulfils the desires.

kAma-kRte namah.

He fulfils whatever is desired, be it towards bhoga or moksha. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the explanation - kAmAn karoti pUrayati itikAma-kRt - One who fulfils the desires. It is natural that a person with less wealth goes to a person with more wealth for fulfilling his need. The only one who can ultimately fulfill the desires of anyone is the One who has everything, vishNu the kAma-kRt. kAma-kRt can also mean One who creates desires; in this sense, He creates the good desires, just as He destroys the undesirable desires (kAma-hA).

The dharma cakram writer from mANikka vAcakar "vENDattakkadu aRivOy nI, vENDa muzhudum taruvOy nI, vENDum pariSu onRu uNDu enil aduvum undanviruppanRE". He also quotes tirumangai AzhvAr in this context - kulamtarum Selvam tandiDum, aDiyAr padDum tuyar Ayina eIlAm nilam taramSeyyum nIL viSumbum aruLum aruLODu peru nilam aLikkum, nalam tarumSollai nAn kaNDu konDEn nArAyaNA ennum nAmam. He gives the lesser objects to those who desire this, and the very utterance of His nAma can give moksham also.

nAma 297. कान्तः - kAntah

He who is charming.

kAntAya namah.

This nAma will re-occur as nAma 660 later. kAnta also means attraction. In





tamizh, this word is used to refer to magnet. The dharma cakram writer describes the different kinds of attraction, involving the five senses, as well as the attraction involving thought and the one involving good behavior or character. BhagavAn is kAntah because He is the One responsible for all the different types of attractions, and in addition He is also attractive in every one of these.

nAma 298. कामः - kAmah

The Lovable (or manmatha).

kAmAya namah.

People in this world are after dharma, artha, kAma or moksha. For all these four, He is the one who is sought after. The dharma cakram writer points out that those who desire wealth or physical objects and are after sensuous attraction lower themselves, whereas those who desire bhagavAn elevate themselves. Those who desire the ultimate liberation know that the most desirable is bhagavAn vishNu. kAma also refers to manmatha, who is considered the god of desire. manmatha's ability to be desirable is but a fraction of bhagavAn's.

nAma 299. कामप्रदः - kAmapradah

The Grantor of wishes.

kAma-pradAya namah.

He grants the wishes of those who desire Him as well as those who are after trifles. For those who desire nothing other than Him, He fulfils their desire by being in their mind constantly. He makes Himself available in any form that is desired. In kaThopanishad we have "ekobahUnAm yo vidadhAti kAmAn (2.5)" - The One who fulfils the desires of the many.





nAma 300. प्रभुः - prabhuh

1. One who has the supreme power to attract the minds of all towards Himself;
2. One who surpasses all in being.

prabhava namah.

Power to attract everyone's mind towards Him through His extreme loveliness. Sri Sankara bhAshyam for this nAma is prakarsheNa bhavanAtprabhuh - One who surpasses all in being. The dharma cakram writer gives examples of how bhagavAn surpasses all in being: by not slipping from the right path (acyuta), by always having the indriya-s under control (hRshI-keSah), by establishing dharma over adharma (paritrANAyasAdhUnAm vinASaya ca dushkRtAm), by being the destroyer of the evil asura-s (madhu-sUdana, keSi-sUdana, kamsa cANUra mardana, etc.)...





SIOkam 33

Starting from this, up to nAma 313, are interpreted by Sri BhaTTar as referring to the vata-patra-SAYI avatAra or the incarnation as a Child on the banyan leaf.

युगादिकृद्युगावर्तो नैकमायो महाशनः ।

अदृश्यो व्यक्तरूपश्च सहस्रजिदनन्तजित् ॥ ३३ ॥

yugAdikrut ugAvartO naikamAyO mahAsanah |

adrusyO vyaktarUpasca sahasrajidanantajit ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 301. युगादिकृत् - yugAdikrut

The Creator at the beginning of a yuga.

yugAdi-kRte namah.

Sri BhaTTar gives the interpretation "yugasya ante'pi Adim karoti" - Even at the end of a yuga, He makes the beginning of another. Even at the dissolution of the Universe, He saves it from the distress of Deluge by beginning the Universe again; even at the end of the Universe through pralaya, He begins Creation again.

Sri Sankara gives the derivation:

yugAdeh kAla-bhedasya kartRtvAtyugAdi-kRt

He is called yugAdi-kRt because He is the cause of periods of time such as yuga.

According to Sri cinmayAnanda, Adi here refers to other divisions of time such as centuries, years, months, days, etc.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri suggests that through these divisions of time, like



the day and night following each other, He gives a meaning of continuity to time which is otherwise a never-ending cakra or circle with no beginning or end. The word yuga is derived from the root yuj - yoge - to unite. He creates the continuity or connectivity between one yuga and another by ensuring that the life-forms are re-created according to their karma-s.

A related alternate interpretation given by Sri Sankara is yugAnAm AdimArambham karoti iti yugAdi-kRt - The Institutor of the yuga etc. It may be recalled that there are four yuga-s, kRta, tretA, dvApara, and kali.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha interprets yuga as kAla-cakra, Adi as beginning, and the term yugAdi as referring to the Sun, who is the cause of the division of time as day and night etc. He then interprets yugAdi-kRt as the One who created the Sun or One who created the kAla-cakra.

The dharma cakram writer points out the limited nature of our body and our life in this world in the context of this huge, immeasurable, and unending, kAla or time. Instead of wasting it on petty goals, and worrying about the past which is gone or the future on which we have no control, we should learn to meditate on Him in the present, over which we have control.

nAma 302. उगावर्तः - ugAvartah

He who revolves the yuga-s or aeons.

yugAvartAya namah.

Avarta refers to revolution or rotation. Sri BhaTTar's interpretation is that He is yugAvarta because He makes the kRta and other yuga-s go round again and again with their respective dharma-s. (It is said that if the extent of dharma in the society in kRta yuga is 100%, that in tretA yuga is 75%, in dvApara yuga is 50%, and that in kali yuga is 25%. kRta yuga is also called satya yuga based on this). This rotation is seen in a dimension where we can relate to it easily in the form of day and night, morning, afternoon, and evening, the four seasons with their constant attributes (rain, snow, heat, etc.,) repeating again



and again. He is not only the Creator of Time as we saw in the previous nAma, but He is also the Administrator of Time as we see in this nAma.

nAma 303. नैकमायः - naikamAyah

He of multifarious wonders.

naika-mAyAya namah.

This is one of the nAma-s for which the interpretation of Sri BhaTTar and Sri Sankara are purely based on the respective philosophies (viz., viSishTAdvaita and advaita respectively) to which they subscribed.

Sri BhaTTar points out that mAyA here refers to knowledge or wonderful truths, and should not be interpreted as illusion. He is naika-mAyA because of His innumerable and wonderful exploits. He gives several examples to point out the use of the word not as illusion but as truth, knowledge, etc. "mAyAm tu prakRtim vidyAt" - Know that mAyA is prakRti or Primordial Matter.

"mAyA vayunam j~nAnam" - all signify knowledge, according to niruktam.

In vishNu purANa, there is mention of Lord vishNu destroying the thousands of mAya-s of SambarAsura with His discus. If mAyA here refers to illusion, then a discus was not needed to destroy it; so obviously here mAyA refers to real objects.

Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that this nAma refers to His assuming many forms of illusion.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha derives the meaning from the root mA - mAne - to measure, and gives the interpretation that this nAma means that He has innumerable dimensions to Him.





nAma 304. महाशनः - mahAsanah

He who is a voracious eater.

mahASanAya namah.

mahat aSanam yasya sah mahASanah. The root is aS - bhojane - to eat. The reference here is to His swallowing the seven worlds. Recall the pASuram "ulagam uNDa peru vAyA". Also we have from tiruvAi mozhi- "kArEzh kaDalEzh malai Ezh ulagu uNDum ArA vayiRRAnai aDa-ngap piDittEnE" - 10-8-2.

Sri Sankara refers to His act of consuming everything during the time of pralaya.

Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives another additional derivation for this nAma based on aS - vyAptau sa-nghAte ca - to pervade, to accumulate. So in addition to the meaning that His food is huge, he also gives the alternate interpretation that His pervasion or vyApti is large or extensive.

nAma 305. अदृश्यः - adrusyah

He Who cannot be seen.

adRSyAya namah.

BhagavAn's acts are inscrutable. In mahAbhAratam, we have

katham nu ayam SiSuh Sete loke nASam upAgate |
tapasA cintayanScApi tam SiSum nopalakshaye ||

(vana parva -191-94)

"When the entire world has met with destruction, how come this child is alive and lying down (on a leaf)? Even though I try to understand this through the power of my austerities, I am unable to understand the true nature of this child".





SrI v.v.rAmAnujan refers us to nammAzhvAr -

"katkill unnaik kANumARu aruLAI tiruvAi mozhi 7.2.3.

katkill here means One who cannot be seen through our normal vision.

In the upanishad-s we have

"adreSyam agrAhyamagotram...." (muNdakopanishad 1.1.6)

"adRSyam avyavahAryam agrAhymalakshaNam...SAntam Sivam advaitam..."
(mAnDUkya 1.7)

The dharma cakram writer points out that He is adRSyah because He cannot be recognized through the five senses, nor by logical analysis. For that matter, it is only His Grace that can make Him be realized.

nAma 306. व्यक्तरूपः - vyakta-rUpah

He of a manifest form.

vyakta-rUpAya namah.

His celestial form is easily visualized by the sages such as mArkaNDeya.

atasI -pushpa samkASah SrI -vatsa kRta lakshNah |
sAkshAt lakshmyA iva AvAsah sadA pratibhAti me ||

(bhArata - vana 188.96)

"He, who is like the blue lily flower in color, and who is adorned by the SrI vatsa mole, appears to me always as the abode of Lakshmi".

tasya tAmra-talau tAta! caraNau supratishThitau |
sujAta-mRdu-raktAbhih a~ngull bhih alamkRtau ||
praNatena mayA mUrdhnA gRhI tvA hyabhivanditau ||

(bhArata - vana 188.13)

"O Dear! His two feet with red surface adorned by the lovely soft and red



toes, were firmly placed on my head when I bowed with bent head and worshipped Him". Notice that just in the previous nAma we had seen Him to be adRSya, and now we encounter Him as vykata-rUpa. The difference is that in the previous nAma we saw that He cannot be seen through the normal means of perception. In the current nAma we see that He is easily perceived by His devotees who have transcended the influence of the five senses.

Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that the **ca** in the Slokam - **vyakta rUpaSca** - indicates that even while being adRSya, He is of vykata-rUpa or manifest form to His devotees, through so many incarnations etc.

The dharma cakram writer points out that the previous nAma revealed vishNu's attribute which is beyond our perception, and the current nAma reveals His attribute of being present in everything as antaryAmi.

nAma 307. सहस्रजित् - sahasrajit

The Conqueror of thousands.

sahasra-jite namah.

Sri BhaTTar interprets the 'thousands' here as referring to thousands of aeons or Time which He conquers by being in yoga-nidrA while everything else is dissolved in pralaya.

Sri Sankara interprets it as referring to His conquering thousands of enemies or asura-s in battle.

nAma 308. अनन्तजित् - anantajit

One whose victory is endless, limitless, countless.

ananta-jite namah.

He is ananta-jit because He has everything that exists under His control. In every incarnation He alone wins in the end. Sri BhaTTar gives the interpretation that His mahimA or greatness is beyond comprehension.



SIOkam 34

इष्टोऽविशिष्टश्शिष्टेष्ट शिशखण्डी नहुषो वृषः ।

क्रोधहा क्रोधकृत्कर्ता विश्वबाहुर्महीधरः ॥ ३४ ॥

ishTOऽvisishTas sishTEshTas sikhaNDee nahushO vrushah |

krOdahA krOdhakruthkartA visvabAhur mahI dharah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 309. इष्टः - ishTah

- a) One who is liked by everyone.
- b) One who is worshipped in ishTi or sacrifice.

ishTAya namah.

He is ishTa because He is liked by everyone and this is because He is the Supreme Bliss. The dharma cakram writer emphasizes that there is nothing else that is worth liking and going after, because nothing else is Permanent Bliss. We should learn to convert the desire that we have for material objects to the desire for understanding AtmA, and ultimately to the desire for paramAtmA. The second interpretation is self-explanatory, and is related to the termishTi which means sacrifice.

nAma 310. अविशिष्टः - avisishTah

- a) He who is impartial to everyone.
- b) He who cannot be distinguished.
- c) He who has no equal.

aviSishTAya namah.



He protects everyone just as a mother protects all of her children without partiality. Another interpretation is that He is aviSishTa because He cannot be distinguished by virtue of the fact that He is the antaryAmi in everything. It is unclear from the sources I have on whether Sri BhaTTar had interpreted 309 and 310 together as one nAma - aviSishTah ishTah - meaning He is one who does not distinguish between beings and treats them all alike like a mother her children. Two of the four sources I have that follow Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAna treat the two together as one nAma. In the versions which treat these as two nAma-s, there is a further variation for nAma 310 - viSishTa instead of aviSishTa - One who is Special and Unique - One who is the noblest and most sacred. This version is used by Sri cinmayAnanDa.

nAma 311. शिष्टेष्टः - sishTEshTa

- a) He who is dear even to eminent persons.
- b) He who dearly loves the eminent persons

SishTeshTAya namah.

- a) SishTAnAm ishTah SishTeshTah or
- b) SishTA ishTA asya iti SishTeshTah.

Sri Sankara gives reference to bhagavad-gItA - "priyo hi j~nAnino atyarthamaham sa ca mama priyah (7.17)" - I am dear to a j~nAni beyond description; and he is also very dear to Me. A j~nAni here refers to one who has realized that the one goal that is worth striving for is He, and nothing else; thus, by his very nature, the only thing dear to him is BhagavAn. Sri v.v.rAmAnujan gives reference to tiruppAvai - "veLLattaravil tuyilamarnda vittinai uLLattukkoNDu munivargaLum yOgigaLum".

nAma 312. शिखण्डी - sikhaNDee

- a) He who has the plume (or effulgence) of Lordship



b) He who wears a peacock feather

SikhanDine namah.

The word SikhanDa means a tuft of hair or the plume of a peacock. Sri BhaTTar uses the meaning 'crest' to mean that He is at the crest or peak of Lordship. Sri Sankara gives the interpretation that this nAma refers to Lord KRshNa as a cowherd boy, with the peacock feather in His head.

nAma 313. नहुषः - nahushah

One who binds (the jiva-s by His mAyA).

nahushAya namah.

nahyati iti nahushah. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri gives the interpretation that He binds all beings through His beauty and soulabhyam. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha interprets this to mean that He binds (controls) all beings and so He is nahushah. This binding extends in the world we observe even to the different parts of the body being bound appropriately so that they function as a unit. So also the different planets are bound together so that there is order.

nAma 314. वृषः - vrushah

a) He who drenches (those who are scorched by the heat of samsAra).

b) He who showers His devotees with all that is asked for

c) He who is the embodiment of dharma.

vRshAya namah.

The word is derived from the root vRsh - to drench or to shower. He also showers whatever is asked for on His devotees, and so He is vRshah in that sense as well - **kAmAnAm varshaNA**t vRshah - Sri Sankara. He also gives the following verse from mahAbhArata -





vRsho hi bhagavAn dharmah smRto lokeshu bhArata|
naighanTuka padAkhyAnaih viddhi mAm vRsha ityuta||

(SAntiparva 330.23)

"O arjuna! vRsha is explained by the lexicographers and likewise known in this world as sacred dharma. Hence know Me as vRsha". Thus, vRsha and dharma are synonyms. Sri BhaTTar interprets the next 8 nAma-s as referring to paraSurAma or bhArgava rAma incarnation.

nAma 315. क्रोधहा - krOdhaA

- a) He who gave up His anger.
- b) He who destroys the anger in sAdhu-s.

krodha-ghne namah.

krodham hanti iti krodha-hA. Sri BhaTTar's interpretation: At the mere request of KASyapa mahArshi, He gave up His anger which had previously resulted in the destruction of 21lineages of kshatriya-s. Sri v.v. rAmAnujan gives reference to divya prabandham in support of this interpretation: "mazhuvinAl avani araSai mUvezhu-kAl maNi-muDi poDi paDuttu udirakkuzhuvAr punalil kuLittu ven-kopam tavrindavan" - periya tirumozhi 8-1-6. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that this nAma indicates that BhagavAn can control His anger just at the mere thought of controlling it. In His incarnation as Lord rAma, we find that He became intensely angry at times (rosham AhArayat tIvram - 3-30-19), (krodhasya vaSameyivAn - 6-59-136), but only He can also get rid of this anger at will in an instant. A lesson applicable in this context to real life is given by the dharma cakram writer who quotes Sri paramahansa on how to handle situations which may require one to be angry - "Hiss but don't bite". In other words, do not ever let your anger get to a point where you cause harm to others. Sri Sankara's interpretation: He is krodha-hA since He helps the sAdhu-sto overcome anger. Anger is a





result of unfulfilled desires, and when desire is overcome, anger is also overcome.

nAma 316. क्रोधकृत् - krOdhakrut

He who developed anger.

krodha-kRte namah.

In His incarnation as paraSurAma, He got angry at kArta-vIrya and his kshatriya race and destroyed 21 generations of them, before giving up His anger as mentioned in the previous nAma. Sri Sankara gives the meaning that He creates anger in people who are wicked or bad - asAdhushu krodham karoti iti krodha-kRt, and they cause their own destruction because of this anger.

nAma 317. कर्ता - kartA

He who slays.

kartre namah.

Continuing his interpretation of the sequence of nAma-s as describing paraSurAma incarnation, Sri BhaTTar interprets this nAma as referring to the slaying of kArta-vIrya. Sri Sankara gives the meaning that He is kartA or Creator of the Universe - kriyata iti karma jagat tasya kartA. Sri Sankara gives the interpretation for 316 and 317 as individual nAma-s, and also suggests that they can be considered as one nAma together -krodha-kRt-kartA - One who destroys those who demonstrate anger viz. the asura-s. For the purposes of accounting for 1000 nAma-s, 316 and 317 as treated as one nAma in Sri Sankara bhAshyam, and as two in Sri BhaTTar's vyAkhyAnam.

krodha-kRt-kartre namah.

The interpretation in this case is krodha-kRtAm daityAdInAm kartA chedakaiti ekam nAma. Sri satyadevo vAsishTha gives the interpretation -





krodhamkaroti iti krodha-kRt krodha-kRtam kRntati chinatti hanti vA sakrodha-kRt-kartA.

nAma 318. विश्वबाहुः - visvabahuh

He who has arms for the good of the world.

viSva-bAhave namah.

Bhagavan uses His arms for removing the thorns (evil-doers) for the good of the world. Hence He is called viSva-bAhuh. Again the context in which Sri BhaTTar interprets the nAma is with respect to paraSurAma incarnation, and thus the reference here is to the destruction of 21 generations of rAkshasa-s. Sri Sankara gives the meaning in a more general sense. He is viSva-bAhu since He has arms that are endless in number to support the world, and extend everywhere for the same cause. In SvetASvatara upanishad, we have reference to viSvato-bAhuh (3.3). Everything depends on Him, and in this sense also He is viSva-bAhuh. Thus, He has infinite arms for both destroying the evil-doers (Sri BhaTTar), and for helping His devotees (Sri Sankara). In both cases, His actions are always for the good of the world. The dharma cakram writer points out that as we use our hands in performing our karma-s, BhagavAn performs the acts of creation, protection, etc. of the world, and in this sense He is viSva-bAhu. The nAma should also remind us that these hands of ours are for doing good to others.

nAma 319. महीधरः - mahI dharah

The Supporter of the world.

mahI-dharAya namah.

mahIm dhatte iti mahI-dharah. He supports the world by removing the evil-doers or wicked people in the world. Sri Sankara bhAshyam is that mahI means both pUjA (mahatva) and earth. He is mahI-dhara because He accepts



the offerings from devotees or because He supports the world. Sri cinmayAnanda gives an example to explain the meaning of 'support'. This is like the cotton supporting the cloth, the gold supporting the ornament, or the clay supporting a clay pot. In this sense, His supporting the world is the same as saying that the world and He are inseparable and same, and the world is one of His manifestations.



mahl dharah

SIOkam 35

अच्युतः प्रथितः प्राणः प्राणदो वासवानुजः ।

अपान्निधि रधिष्ठानमप्रमत्तः प्रतिष्ठितः ॥ ३५ ॥

acyutah prathitah prANah prANadO vAsavAnujah |
apAnnidhi radhishThAna mapramattah pratishThitah ||

[PLEASE ADD PRANAVAM BEFORE EACH NAAMA]

nAma 320. अच्युतः - acyutah

He who does not fall from His status.

acutAya namah.

This nAma occurred previously (nAma 101).

The different interpretations have been covered there. The additional material below was not covered earlier. Sri v.v. rAmAnujan adds the following reference from rAmAyaNa - "mitra-bhAvena samprAptam na tyajeyam kathancana dosho yadyapi tasyasyAt " - "No matter what flaws a person has, if he has come to Me seeking My friendship, there is no way that I will abandon him under any circumstance". Sri rAmAnujan also gives the reference to divya prabandham - "kArtigaiyAnum kari-mugattAnum kanalum mukkaN-mUrtiyum mODiyumveppum mudugiTTu" - the reference here is to the story of bANAsura who was abandoned by the other devatA-s when he approached them for protection. Not so with bhagavAn - na me bhaktah praNaSyati - "My devotee will never perish" - gl tA. Another meaning for acyuta is One who does not slip from His position - nacyuta iti acyutah. The dharma cakram writer points to the passage in muNDakopanishad which describes the two birds sitting in different branches of the tree, one tasting the fruit and the other just watching the bird that is tasting the fruit (of karma). This has been



described in a previous write-up. BhagavAn is the acyuta, from His superior position, watching the jIvAtmA which is tasting the fruits of karma in this case.

nAma 321. प्रथितः - prathitah

One who is famous, One who is of great reputation.

prathitAya namah.

The nAma is derived from the root prath - to become famous (prath - prakhyAn - prasiddhi). This fame can be associated with the previous nAma - His guNa of being acyuta, or on account of His creation, sustenance, etc. of the Universe. Supports for the interpretation are:

"tasya nAma mahad-yaSah" taittiriya nArAya.1.9

"yaSasaSca eka bhAjanam" rAmAyaNa - kishkindA 15.19

perumai uDiaya pirAnAr tiruvAi mozhi - 1-6-9

nagar-il- pugazhAi tiruvAi mozhi - 6-10-10.

The dharma cakram writer points out that the fame that is derived from things such as wealth, position in life, etc. are impermanent and disappear as soon as the underlying cause that resulted in this fame disappears. This is not the case when the fame results from adherence to dharma, and in this case the fame is permanent. This is as evidenced by the cases of hariS-canDra, the pANDava-s, prahIAda, hanumAn, etc. BhagavAn is prathitah for the same reason i.e., He is satya-parAkrama, satya, satya-kAma, satya-samkalpa, satya-vrata, etc., and so He is prathitah.

nAma 322. प्राणः - prANah

The Life-Breath.

prANaya namah.





He is prANa for those who resort to Him (SrI BhaTTar). He is also the life-energy for all beings (SrI Sankara) - prANo vA aham asmi - aitareyaAraNyaka 2.2.3). SrI v.v.rAmAnujan gives reference to prabandham - ulagukkEOruyirumAnAi - tiruvAi mozhi 6-9-7. The next 11 nAma-s are interpreted by SrI BhaTTar as describing the kUrma (Tortoise) incarnation.

nAma 323. प्राणदः - prANadah

The Life-Giver.

prANadAya namah.

Since He gave the strength to the deva-s to churn the Milky Ocean, He is prANa-dah (SrI BhaTTar). SrI Sankara gives the interpretation that He is the Life-giver to everyone (deva-s and asura-s), and also gives an additional interpretation using the meaning dyati - cuts - He cuts the strength of asura-s. SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives the following explanation - prANan dadAti dyati khaNDayati va sa prANa-dah - BhagavAn both gives life to all beings, and takes away the life of all beings when the time comes, and so He is prANa-dah in both senses. The dharma cakram writer points out that the different aspects of our life and body - such as our thoughts, our words, etc., are all different reflections of the prANa in us. Without prANa, our life will cease to exist, and our body will cease to function. But by controlling this prANa, we can control our body and all its actions. There is no limit to what can be achieved by having control over our prANa or breath. This nAma of mahAvishNu should teach us that the prANa that has been given to us by Him should be used for good purpose.

nAma 324. वासवानुजः - vAsavAnujah

The younger brother of vAsava or indra.

vAsavAnujAya namah.





SrI BhaTTar says in his vyAkhyAna that this nAma refers to BhagavAn being born as the younger brother of indra in order to help him get the nectar which he wishes to have.

SrI v.v.rAmAnujan points out that the reference in this nAma is NOT to upendra or vAmana (nAma 153). I am unable to explain what this incarnation is.

SrI satyadevo vAsishTha gives an interpretation which does not involve a reference to indra. He interprets vAsavAnujah to mean One who has entered into everything in this world -

vasati sarvatra vaste sarvam iti vA vAsuh I Svarah;

vAsohidam vAsavam sarvam jagat;

vAsavam jagat anujAto = anupravishTovAsavAnujah.

nAma 325. अपां निधिः - apAm-nidhi

The Sustainer of the waters of the ocean.

apAm-nidhaye namah.

SrI BhaTTar continues his interpretation of this nAma based on the kURma incarnation, and points out that this name indicates that He sustained the great Ocean when it was being churned. SrI v.v.rAmAnujan refers us to tiruvAi mozhi - appanE! Azh-kaDalaik kaDaindatuppanE! (4.7.5). SrI Sankara gives the meaning "The Ocean" to this nAma based on "Apo yatranidhIyante sah apAm-nidhih - The place where the waters get collected in abundance". He also gives reference to the gl tA - sarasAm asmi sAgarah -Among lakes I am the Ocean - gl tA 10.24. SrI cinmayAnanda points out that the glory and might of the oceans are but a tiny reflection of bhagavAn's glory divine. SrI rAdhAkRshNa SAstri takes the anubhavam of this nAma a step further and points out that just as the waters of all the rivers and canals ultimately reach the ocean and lose their identity, so also those who worship BhagavAn become



one with Him. In this sense He is apAm-nidhih, or the Ocean where everybody merges in the end. The dharma cakram writer points out that just as the ocean is the beginning and the end for the water (by evaporation of the waters of the ocean, the vapor rises, condenses and comes back in the forms of rain, which then forms the rivulets and rivers, and these in turn go back to the ocean), so also the beings of this world originate from Him, and ultimately merge back into Him. Just as the good water as well as the dirty water gets into the ocean but then lose their identity and get merged into the ocean, so also the jIvAtmA-s attain equality without distinction when they reach Him. Unlike the bounds which man can place for the lesser bodies of water, there is no bound that he can place for the ocean - another reflection of BhagavAn asapAm-nidhih or Ocean. Though the external surface of the ocean is full of waves, its deep inside is peace incarnate, and in this sense also He is apAm-nidhih.

nAma 326. अधिष्ठानम् - adhishThAnam

The Support.

adhishThAnAya namah.

SrI BhaTTar interprets this as referring to His supporting the mandara mountain in His kUrma incarnation. He gives reference to vishNu purANa in support -

"kshI roda-madhye bhagavAn kUrma-rUpI svayam harih |
mandarAdreh adhishThAnam bhramato'bhUt mahA-mune ||

(1.9.88)

BhagavAn nArAyaNa Himself, in the form of kUrma, supported the mandara mountain in the middle of the Milk Ocean when the mountain was revolving (at the time of churning)". SrI Sankara gives the more general meaning that He is adhishThAnam because He is the basis or support for everything in this Universe - adhithishThantibhUtAni.



nAma 327. अप्रमत्तः - apramattah

The Vigilant.

apramattAya namah.

He is extremely attentive in the protection of those who are in distress (Sri BhaTTar). **pramatta** refers to one who is careless or inattentive. **apramatta** refers to His guNa of extreme vigilance in protecting those who have surrendered to Him - ASrita-rakshakan. Sri Sankara's interpretation is that He is vigilant in awarding the effects of karma to those who are entitled to them. Sri cinmayAnanda points out that **pramada** refers to one who makes errors in judgment, and **apramatta** is One who does not make errors in judgment. Sri rAdhAkRshNa SAstri points out that the vigilance here could also refer to bhagavAn being very careful and vigilant in distributing the nectar that came out of the churning of the Milk Ocean to the appropriate persons. The dharma cakram writer points out that the lesson we should take from this nAma is that we should always be vigilant about the thoughts that enter our mind, and ensure that our thoughts do not stray towards the pleasures of indriya-s but instead meditate on Him constantly. Just as a thief would not enter a house where people are awake, negative thoughts won't enter one's mind when one is awake and vigilant in the thought of bhagavAn. Whenever negative thoughts enter one's mind, one should divert those thoughts to positive energy by chanting bhagavAn's nAma instead. This is the lesson one should take from this nAma.

nAma 328. प्रतिष्ठितः - pratishThitah

He who is self-dependent.

pratishThitAya namah.

One who is supported and established in His own greatness, without any support from external sources. The following upanishadic quote echoes this





explanation almost verbatim -

"sa bhagavah kva pratishThita iti | sve mahimni" (chAndogya 7.24.1)

To the question "Where is bhagavAn firmly established?", the reply is "In His own greatness". In vishNu dharma (72.2), we have a similar statement - "sve mahimni sthitamdevam" - "The Lord who rests on His own greatness". One who supports the rest of the Universe obviously is not supported by something external, since then His support will depend on something else. We get our greatness from our wealth, our fame, etc., which are all impermanent; not so with bhagavAn - His greatness is not dependent on impermanent things. Sri cinmayAnanda explains this nAma in terms of cause and effect. Everything else in this Universe has its cause, and thus everything else is an effect. Unlike this, bhagavAn is the Ultimate Cause. The lesson we should take from this guNa of bhagavAn is that we should learn to depend on the One who is Permanent in this Universe, and not be dependent on all the impermanent things such as wealth, fame, etc. The dharma cakram writer gives the example of pANdava-s and kaurava-s. We are constantly reminded of the impermanent things in life by the occurrence of aging, death, loss of fame, friend becoming enemy, etc., and all these should teach us that the life that is to be led is by meditating on the One who is Permanent, viz. bhagavAn.

(To be Continued in Volume II)

-dAsan kRshNamAcAryan

