

ॐ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः

Nirvana Shatakam

Nirvana Shatakam, also known as Atma Shatkam, is a hymn composed by Adi Shankaracharya (8th-9th Century CE). The seer explains his theory of Adwaita (non-dualism) in this beautifully composed Sanskrit hymn.

"Nirvana Shatakam" derives its name from the combination of "Nirvana," which signifies a state of being beyond form, and "Shatakam," referring to the "six" - the number of verses that articulate the idea that the true Self transcends all definitions, remaining beyond conventional categorizations. It is the Vedantic way of finding the TRUTH by eliminating, negating, or canceling out the illusory truths. When nothing else is left to eliminate, the Seeker finds only that which is true remains – the true Self, Atma.

Historical Origin of Nirvana Shatakam: Adi Shankaracharya embarked on an extensive journey throughout the expanse of India, dedicated to seeking and disseminating knowledge. Legend has it that a young Adi Shankara, at the age of eight, was wandering near the banks of the river Narmada in search of a spiritual teacher (Guru). There, he encountered the revered Seer Sri Govinda Bhagavat Pada, who posed a simple yet profound question, "Who Are You?" In response, it is said that Adi Shankara recited the six stanzas known as 'Nirvana Shatakam' or 'Atma Shatakam.' Upon hearing these verses, the Seer acknowledged Sri Adi Shankara as his disciple.

The Essence of Nirvana Shatakam: Nirvana Shatakam delves into the fundamental and enigmatic query of "Who am I?" It scrutinizes the soul, mind, virtues, vices, relationships, companionship, bodily organs, desires, needs, and all worldly attachments, concluding that these are mere appendages, and only the Atma (Soul) holds true significance, while the rest is inconsequential. This profound mantra unites the Atma with the Divine (Brahman) by dissolving worldly attachments, both internal and external. This union leads to self-realization, enlightening us that our Atma is interconnected with the entire universe.

Benefits: Nirvana Shatakam offers numerous advantages, with inner peace being the most coveted.

1. Each word within the mantra contains intricate Sanskrit compositions with multiple layers of meaning. The central idea of this mantra is the recognition that we are not confined by physical or mental constraints; we are, in essence, Shiva. Chanting and listening to Nirvana Shatakam daily can generate a profoundly positive aura, fostering heightened awareness.
2. In the midst of today's fast-paced lifestyles, it's easy to succumb to emotions and mental stressors such as anxiety and anger. Nirvana Shatakam's meaning and vibrations empower individuals to maintain a sense of inner serenity, offering solace in times of distress. This mantra proves particularly valuable for those grappling with anxiety and depression, serving as a therapeutic remedy.
3. Chanting and listening to Nirvana Shatakam cultivates emotional equilibrium, allowing individuals to navigate challenging situations with composure. It facilitates the detachment from unnecessary bonds, thus enhancing productivity and maintaining a constant state of bliss, independent of external circumstances.

Transliterated verses

*mano buddhyahankaara chittaani naaham
na cha shrotra jihvhe na cha ghraana netre
na cha vyoma bhumir na tejo na vaayuhu
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (1)*

*na cha praana sangyo na vai pancha vaayuhu
na vaa sapta dhaatur na vaa pancha koshah
na vaak paani-paadau na chopastha paayu
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (2)*

*na me dvesha raagau na me lobha mohau
mado naiva me naiva maatsarya bhaavaha
na dharmo na chartho na kaamo na mokshaha
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (3)*

*na punyam na paapam na saukhyam na duhkham
na mantrō na tirtham na vedaah na yajnaah
aham bhojanam naiva bhojyam na bhoktaa
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (4)*

*na mrtiyur na shankaa na me jaati bhedaha
pita naiva me naiva maataa na janma*

*na bandhur na mitram gurur naiva shishyaha
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (5)*

*aham nirvikalpo niraakaara rupo
vibhut vaaccha sarvatra sarvendriyaanaam
na chaasangatam naiva muktir na meyaha
chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham (6)*

Lyrics in Sanskrit and English with meaning.

VERSE 1

मनो बुद्ध्यहंकारचित्तानि नाहम्

न च श्रोत्र जिह्वे न च घ्राण नेत्रे

न च व्योम भूमिर् न तेजो न वायुः

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥१॥

mano buddhyahankaara chittaani naaham

na cha shrotra jihve na cha ghraana netre

na cha vyoma bhumir na tejo na vaayuhu

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

मनो (Mano) - The mind	बुद्धि (Buddhi) - The intellect	अहंकार (Ahankaara) - The ego
चित्तानि (Chittaani) - The memory	न (Na) - Not	अहम् (Aham) - I am
न (Na) - Not	च (Cha) - And	श्रोत्र (Shrotra) - The ears
जिह्वे (Jihve) - The tongue	न (Na) - Not	च (Cha) - And
घ्राण (Ghraana) - The nose	नेत्रे (Netre) - The eyes	न (Na) - Not
च (Cha) - And	व्योम (Vyoma) - Space (ether)	भूमि: (Bhumir) - The earth
न (Na) - Not	तेजो (Tejo) - Fire	(Na) - Not
वायु: (Vaayuhu) - Wind	चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure Blissful	रूप: (Rupah) - Form
शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva		

I am not the mind, the intellect, the ego or the memory,

I am not the ears, the skin, the nose or the eyes,

I am not space (ether), not the earth, not fire, water or wind,

I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,

The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

VERSE 2

न च प्राण संज्ञो न वै पञ्चवायुः

न वा सप्तधातुर् न वा पञ्चकोशः

न वाक्पाणिपादौ न चोपस्थपायू

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥२॥

na cha praana sangyo na vai pancha vaayuhu

na vaa sapta dhaatur na vaa pancha koshah

na vaak paani-paadau na chopastha paayu

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

न (Na) - Not	च (Cha) - And	प्राण (Prana) - The breath
संज्ञो (Sangyo) - Neither	न (Na) - Not	वै (Vai) - Nor
पञ्चवायुः (Pancha vaayuhu) - The five airs	न (Na) - Not	वा (Va) - Nor
सप्तधातुः (Sapta dhaatur) - The 7 tissues	न (Na) - Not	वा (Va) - Nor
पञ्चकोशः (Pancha koshah) - The 5 sheaths of matter	न (Na) - Not	वाक् (Vaak) - The speech
पाणि (Paani) - The hands	पादौ (Paadau) - The feet	न (Na) - Not
च (Cha) - And	उपस्थ (upastha) - the genital organ	पायू (Paayu:) - the anus
चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure Blissful	रूपः (Rupah) - Form	शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva

Neither am I the Vital Breath, nor the Five Vital Airs,

Neither am I the Seven tissues (ingredients or building blocks of the Body), nor the Five Sheaths (coverings or container-like parts),

Neither am I the organ of Speech, nor the organs for Holding (Hand), Movement (Feet) or procreation (genital), or Excretion (anus),

I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,

The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

VERSE 3

न मे द्वेष रागौ न मे लोभ मोहौ

मदो नैव मे नैव मात्सर्य भावः

न धर्मो न चार्थो न कामो ना मोक्षः

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥३॥

na me dvesha raagau na me lobha mohau

mado naiva me naiva maatsarya bhaavaha

na dharmo na chaartha na kaamo naa mokshaha

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

न (Na) - No	मे (Me) - me	द्वेष (Dvesha) - Likes
रागौ (Raagau) - Dislikes	न (Na) - No	मे (Me) - Me
लोभ (Lobha) - Greed	मोहौ (Mohau) - Delusion	मदो (Mado) - Pride
नैव (Naiva) - Nor	मे (Me) - Me	नैव (Naiva) - Nor

मात्सर्य (Maatsarya) - Jealousy	भावः (Bhaavaha) - Feeling	न (Na) - No
धर्मो (Dharmo) - Duty	न (Na) - No	चा र्थो (Cha artho) - and desire for wealth
न (Na) - No	कामो (Kaamo) - pleasure (sex)	न (Na) - No
मोक्षः (Mokshaha) - Liberation	चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure	Blissful रूपः (Rupah) - Form
शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva		

There is no like or dislike in me, no greed or delusion,
I know not pride or jealousy,
I have no duty, no desire for wealth, lust, or liberation,
I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,
The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

VERSE 4

न पुण्यं न पापं न सौख्यं न दुःखम्

न मन्त्रो न तीर्थं न वेदाः न यज्ञाः

अहं भोजनं नैव भोज्यं न भोक्ता

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥४॥

na punyam na paapam na saukhyam na duhkham

na mantram na tirtham na vedaah na yajnaah

aham bhojanam naiva bhojyam na bhoktaa

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

न (Na) - No	पुण्यं (Punyam) - Virtue	न (Na) - No
पापं (Paapam) - Vice	न (Na) - No	सौख्यं (Saukhyam) - Pleasure
न (Na) - No	दुःखम् (Duhkham) - Pain	न (Na) - No
मन्त्रो (Mantro) - Mantras	न (Na) - No	तीर्थ (Tirtham) - Pilgrimage
न (Na) - No	वेदाः (Vedaah) - Scriptures	न (Na) - No
यज्ञाः (Yajnaah) - Rituals	अहं (Aham) - I am	भोजनं (Bhojanam) - The act of enjoying (via the senses)
नैव (Naiva) - Nor	भोज्यं (Bhojyam) - The enjoyable object	न (Na) - Nor
भोक्ता (Bhoktaa) - The enjoyer	चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure Blissful	रूपः (Rupah) - Form
शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva		

No virtue or vice, no pleasure or pain,

I need no mantras, no pilgrimage, no scriptures or rituals,

Neither am I the experience itself, nor the experienced, nor the one experiencing,

I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,

The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

VERSE 5

न मृत्युर् न शंका न मे जातिभेदः

पिता नैव मे नैव माता न जन्म

न बन्धुर् न मित्रं गुरुर्नैव शिष्यः

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥५॥

na mrtyur na shankaa na me jaati bhedaha

pitaa naiva me naiva maataa na janma

na bandhur na mitram gurur naiva shishyaha

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

न (Na) - No	मे (Me) - My	मृत्युर् (Mrtyur) - Fear of death
न (Na) - No शंका (Shankaa) - Caste	न (Na) - No	मेजातिभेदः (Mejaati bhedaha) - my creed
पिता (Pitaa) - Father	नैव (Naiva) - Nor	मे (Me) - My
नैव (Naiva) - Nor	माता (Maataa) - Mother	न (Na) - No
जन्म (Janma) - Born	न (Na) - No	बन्धुर् (Bandhur) - Relative
न (Na) - No	मित्रं (Mitram) - Friend	गुरुर् (Gurur) - Teacher
नैव (Naiva) - Nor	शिष्यः (Shishyaha) - Student	चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure Blissful
रूपः (Rupah) - Form	शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva	

I have no fear of death, no caste or creed,
 I have no father, no mother, for I was never born,
 Neither am I a relative, nor a friend, nor a teacher nor a student,
 I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,
 The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

VERSE 6

अहं निर्विकल्पो निराकार रूपो

विभुत्वाच्च सर्वत्र सर्वेन्द्रियाणाम्

न चासंगतं नैव मुक्तिर् न मेयः

चिदानन्द रूपः शिवोऽहम् शिवोऽहम् ॥६॥

aham nirvikalpo niraakaara rupo

vibhut vaaccha sarvatra sarvendriyaanaam

na chaa sangatam naiva muktir na meyaha

chidaananda rupah shivo'ham shivo'ham

अहं (Aham) - I am	निर्विकल्पो (Nirvikalpo) - Devoid of duality	निराकार (Niraakaara) - My form is formlessness
रूपो (Rupo) - Form	विभुत्वाच्च (Vibhut vaaccha) - Exist everywhere	सर्वत्र (Sarvatra) - Pervading all
सर्वेन्द्रियाणाम् (Sarvendriyaanaam) - Senses	न (Na) - Not	चा (Chaa) - And
संगतं (Sangatam) - Attached	नैव (Naiva) - Nor	मुक्तिर् (Muktir) - Free

न (Na) - Nor	मेयः (Meyaha) - Captive	चिदानन्द (Chidaananda) - Ever Pure Blissful
रूपः (Rupah) - Form	शिवोऽहम् (Shivo'ham) - I am Shiva	

I am devoid of duality, my form is formlessness,
I exist everywhere, pervading all senses,
Neither am I attached, neither free nor captive,
I am the Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness; I am Shiva, I am Shiva,
The Ever Pure Blissful Consciousness.

In conclusion:

The word-by-word study of this hymn marks a significant moment in the lives of dedicated students who have embarked on the journey of Vedic studies. The pursuit of Vedic- Advaita knowledge is not just a scholarly endeavor; it is a lifelong commitment to understanding the essence of the Self. Dedication to Vedic knowledge will yield a lifetime of fulfillment, enlightenment, and a deep sense of purpose.

Om Sri Gurubhyo Namaha,

Acharya Shunya