Master E.K.
ŚRĪ SŪKTAṂ
Commentary:
Master E.K.
INTRODUCTION

The fifteen Vedic Hymns which became famous as Śrī Sūktaṃ, are among the most popular passages of the Vedas. The Śrī Sūktaṃ forms part of the Rigveda appendix and is considered by the orthodox Indians to be most holy. Since thousands of years up to date we find people who recite Śrī Sūktaṃ daily in their houses. It is considered most auspicious and wealth-giving to recite this Sūktaṃ daily in the houses, as well as in the temples. The daily puja of an orthodox Brahmin with the 16 Upacharas (services to the Lord) is done by many with a recital of the Śrī Sūktaṃ Mantrams separately. Some do Puja with Puruṣa Sūktaṃ while others do it with Śrī Sūktaṃ.

The God is invoked as either masculine or feminine by the devotee according to his liking and the mode of worship. When the invocation is in the form of a female, it is called Śrī or Lakshmi. The term ‘Śrī’ means that which adheres to the masculine principle of the God in the form of shape, number, name, colour etc. Power and consciousness are the two aspects of the God as seen by man. Consciousness is understood as the Puruṣa, the male principle who is the steering intelligence of Power. Power is worshipped as female
principle, ‘Śrī’, since it depends upon the masculine
principle, is to be steered. The whole creation is
understood as the manifestation of the Lord and hence
it is included in the Śrī aspect of Lord. Since the creation
is nothing but the splendour of the Lord, Śrī is
understood as splendour and wealth. This aspect is
well-defined and described in stanzas of Śrī Sūktāṃ.
The male aspect of God is beyond attributes but it is
Omnipresent in the female aspect which includes all the
attributes like shape, name, number, colour, position,
quality etc.

Śrī Sūktāṃ occupies an important role in the
Science of Temple Ritual which is called Agamaśastra.
Also in the Tantric way of worship (which is in fact a true
copy of the Vedic Ritual in its original), Śrī Sūktāṃ plays
a very important role. The Ritualistic Science of the
Royal Path, which is known as Śrī Vidya, is but a
scientific and practical way of glorifying the Goddess
‘Śrī’. The Mantras of this Sūkta as well as those of
Puruṣa Sūkta are highly significant in their scientific
value. For example the Puruṣa Sūktāṃ begins with
‘Sahasra Śīrṣā’, the first two syllables ‘S’ & ‘H’ form
consonants that govern the respiration. Hence they
include the Mantram SŌHĀM which is the Mantram of
our breath. Śrī Sūktāṃ begins with ‘Hiranyavarṇāṃ’. So
it begins with the second syllable of Puruṣa Sūktāṃ
which is the second of the pair of consonants ‘S’ & ‘H’. As the Vedic students of Yoga know ‘S’ is the consonantal sound which governs inhalation while ‘H’ is the consonant which governs exhalation. Hence, the Goddess ‘Śrī’ governs the exhalation aspect of the Lord. That means she forms the splendour of the expression of the whole from the Lord as His own out-breathing.

Three Rishis named Ananda, Kardama and Chiklita are said to be the seers of the Goddess of Splendour. The first of these, Ananda, is described, as Anandanadha, the Lord of Bliss in Śrī Vidya. From this comes the tradition of naming the Sanyasis of a particular School of Śrī Vidya as Anandas, like Sradhananda, Pranavananda, Hamsananda etc. In many ways the science of ‘Śrī’ gained prominence in ancient India and expressed itself as the various schools of ritualistic philosophy. Even the school of Alchemists who claim that they transmute the baser metals into gold, take their scientific procedure from Śrī Vidya and Śrī Sūktam.
STANZA-1:

hiranyavarṇāṁ hariṇīṁ suvarṇarajatasrajām ।
candrāṁ hiraṇmayīṁ lakṣmīṁ jātavēdō ma āvaha ॥

Glossary:

hiranyavarṇāṁ = Her, who is of the golden hue
hariṇīṁ = Her, who is of the yellowish hue
suvarṇarajatasrajām = who has the golden and silvery necklaces
candrāṁ = who is of the lunar nature
hiraṇmayīṁ = who is of the splendour of gold
lakṣmīṁ = who is the emblem (of the creation)
jātavēdaḥ = Oh! God of fire, from whom the Veda is born
ma = for me
āvaha = you make her possess

Meaning:

Oh! Lord of Fire! From you, the wisdom of the Vedas is born. You make the Goddess of creation possess me, the Goddess who is an expression of the golden yellow hue and who is Herself an embodiment of the splendour of gold. She, who is adorned with jewels of gold and silver and who is of the lunar nature, may possess me (as her own child).
STANZA-2:

tāṃ ma āvaha jātavēdō lakṣmīmanapagāminīṁ I
yasyāṃ hiraṇyaṃ vindēyaṃ gāmaśvaṃ puruṣānaham II

Glossary:

jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, the birth place of Veda
anapagāminīṁ = Her, who does not desert
tāṃ = Her
lakṣmīm = the Goddess of Wealth
ma = to me
āvaha = bestow
yasyāṃ = by whom
hiraṇyaṃ = the splendour of gold
gām = the cow
aśvaṃ = the horse
puruṣān = the persons
aham = I
vindēyaṃ = can obtain

Meaning:

Oh! Lord of Fire! From you, the Wisdom of the Vedas is born. You bestow upon me the Goddess of Splendour, who will not desert me. By virtue of Her presence, I inherit Gold, Cattle, Horses and Attendants.
**STANZA-3:**

aśvapūrvāṃ rathamadhyāṃ hastinādaprabōdhinīṃ Ⅰ
sriyaṃ dēvīmupahvayē śrīrmādēvīrjuṣatām Ⅱ

**Glossary:**

- aśvapūrvāṃ = She, who is preceded by the horses
- rathamadhyāṃ = having the chariots in the middle and She who is sitting in the midst of the chariot
- hastināda = by the roars of elephants
- prabōdhinīṃ = being awakened
- dēvīm = the one with divine light
- śriyaṃ = the Goddess who always supplements the Lord
- upahvayē = I approach and address
- dēvī = The Goddess of divine light
- śrīḥ = She who supplements the Lord
- mā = Me
- juṣatām = favour

**Meaning:**

I approach and address Her who is preceded by horses, seated in the midst of the chariot (our body) and who is being awakened by the roars of elephants. May the Goddess of the Lord's supplementation favour me.
**STANZA-4:**

kāṃ sōsmitāṃ hiraṇyapṛākārāmārdrāṃ jvalantīṃ tṛptāṃ tarpayantīṃ l

padmē sthitāṃ padmavarṇāṃ tāmīhopahvayē śriyam ll

**Glossary:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saḥ</td>
<td>He (God, the Veda Purusha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāṃ</td>
<td>of which Lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asmitāṃ</td>
<td>As the Awareness of ‘I AM’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hiraṇyapṛākāraṃ</td>
<td>who has golden layers around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārdrāṃ</td>
<td>wet (moisture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jvalantīṃ</td>
<td>shining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tṛptāṃ</td>
<td>accomplished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarpayantīṃ</td>
<td>causing satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>padmē sthitāṃ</td>
<td>Seated in the Lotus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>padmavarṇāṃ</td>
<td>lotus-coloured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tām</td>
<td>Her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>śriyam</td>
<td>The Lady of Splendour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iha</td>
<td>here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upahvayē</td>
<td>I invite near to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Meaning:**

I invite the Goddess of Splendour who manifests in layers of gold, liquid or molten gold, who shines forth as accomplishment and the accomplished one, who is seated in a lotus being herself lotus coloured and whom the Lord visualised as the awareness of “I AM” in all.
STANZA-5:

\(\text{c̣andrāṃ prabhāsāṃ yaśasā jvalantīṃ śriyāṃ lōkē}
\)
\(\text{dēvauśṭāmudārām} \)  

\(\text{tāṃ padminīmīṃ śaraṇamahāṃ prapadyēalakshmīrmē naśyatāṃ}
\)
\(\text{tvāṃ vṛṇē} \)

Glossary:

- \(\text{c̣andrāṃ} = \text{Her who is shining like moonlight}\)
- \(\text{prabhāsāṃ} = \text{shining forth}\)
- \(\text{śriyāṃ} = \text{Goddess of possession}\)
- \(\text{lōkē} = \text{in the world}\)
- \(\text{yaśasā} = \text{by Her fame (presence)}\)
- \(\text{jvalantīṃ} = \text{who is shining}\)
- \(\text{dēvauśṭām} = \text{who acquired the liking of the Gods}\)
- \(\text{udārām} = \text{Whose Rays travel upwards}\)
- \(\text{tāṃ} = \text{Her}\)
- \(\text{īṃ} = \text{who is called this}\)
- \(\text{padminīm} = \text{who is of Lotus nature}\)
- \(\text{ahaṃ} = \text{I}\)
- \(\text{śaraṇām} = \text{refuge}\)
- \(\text{prapadyē} = \text{I fall (at Her feet)}\)
- \(\text{tvāṃ vṛṇē} = \text{by your taking me up}\)
- \(\text{mē alakshmīḥ} = \text{my imperfection}\)
- \(\text{naśyatāṃ} = \text{may be destroyed}\)

Meaning:

I take my refuge in Her who is of the Lotus nature, who shines with upward beams of Moon-light which exist around Her, as Her splendour. If you take hold of me, Oh! Goddess of Splendour, may the imperfection in me go away from me.
STANZA-6:

ādityavarṇē tapasōadhijātō vanaspatistava vrkṣōatha bilvaḥ I
tasya phalāni tapasā nudantu māyāntarāyāśca bāhyā
alakṣmīḥ II

Glossary:

ādityavarṇē = Oh! The Goddess of colours and sounds of the Sun God
atha = And now
Tava Tapasaḥ = by virtue of the warmth of your devotion
adhijātō = born out of
vrkṣaḥ = the tree
vanaspatiḥ = a classification of plants
bilvaḥ = the Bilwa tree
Tasya = its
phalāni = fruits
āntarāyāḥ = inward ones
ça = also
bāhyā = outward ones
māya = self-projections
alakṣmīḥ = undesirable things
tapasā = by the warmth of your affection
nudantu = may be expelled.

Meaning:

Oh! Goddess of the colours and sounds of the Sun God, who is the child of Aditi! Bilwa is the one plant which is born out of the warmth of your devotion. May its fruit dispel the undesirable self-projections, objective and subjective, by virtue of the same warmth of your devotion.
STANZA-7:
upaitu māṃ dēvasakhaḥ kīrtiśca maṇinā saha I
prādurbhūtōasmi rāṣṭēasmin kīrtimṛddhiṃ dadātu mē II

Glossary:

dēvasakhaḥ = the friend of Gods
kīrtiḥ + ça = and also fame
maṇinā saha = along with brilliant gems
māṃ = me
upa + yetu = may he approach
asmin rāṣṭrē = in this province
prādurbhūtaḥ = born
asmi = Am I
mē = to me
kīrtim = fame
ṛddhiṃ = prosperity
dadātu = may He bestow

Meaning:

May the friend of Gods, who is always with fame and the essence of all merit approach me. May He bestow prosperity upon me who is born in this province.
STANZA-8:
kṣutpipāsāmalāṃ jyēṣṭhāmalakṣmīṃ nāśayāmyaham ।
abhūtimasamṛddhiṃ ca sarvāṃ nirṇuda mē grḥāt ॥

Glossary:

kṣut = hunger
pipāsā = thirst
malāṃ = filth
jyēṣṭhām = inauspiciousness
alakṣmīr = non-splendorous
aham = I
nāśayāmi = destroy
abhūtim = non-prosperous state
asamṛddhiṃ = insufficiency
ça = also
sarvāṃ = all
mē grḥāt = from my house
nirṇuda = drive out (banish)

Meaning:

I will destroy the goddess of ill-luck, whose signs are hunger, thirst and filthiness. You banish insufficiency and non-prosperous tendency away from my house.
STANZA-9:

gandhadvārāṁ durādharṣāṁ nityapuṣṭāṁ karēśiṇīṁ ।
īśvarīṁ sarvabhūtānāṁ tāmihōpahvayē śriyam ॥

Glossary:

gaṃdhadvārāṁ = She, who has fragrance as Her gateway
durādharṣāṁ = who is not easily accessible
nityapuṣṭāṁ = who is always fulfilled
karēśiṇīṁ = accessible through rays as hands
sarvabhūtānāṁ = to all the beings
īśvarīṁ = the Goddess of Mastery
tāṁ = Her
śriyam = Goddess Śrī
iha = herewith
upahvayē = I invite to make an approach

Meaning:

I herewith invite to make an approach towards the Goddess of Mastery over all the beings. She opens Her own fragrance as the gateway to our approach. An approach to Her is not easy. One should approach Her through the rays of Her presence as his own hands of good deeds. Then She is ever present, fulfilled.
STANZA-10:

manasaḥ kāmamākūtiṃ vācaḥ satyamaśīmahi ।
paśūnāṃ rūpamannasya mayi śrīḥ śrayatāṃ yaśaḥ ॥

Glossary:

manasaḥ = of the mind
kāmam = desire
ākūtiṃ = interest
vācaḥ = of the word
satyam = truth
paśūnāṃ = of the cattle
annasya = of the food
rūpam = shape
aśīmahī = we enjoy
yaśaḥ = fame
śrīḥ = plenty
mayi = in me
śrayatāṃ = may they gather

Meaning:

Oh! Goddess of plenty! We shape our desires and interests of our mind. We shape our food, our cattle and their food. May the Goddess of splendour approach me in the form of name and fame.
STANZA-11:

kardamēna prajābhūtā mayi sambhava kardama ।
śriyaṃ vāsaya mē kulē mātaraṃ padmamālinīm ॥

Glossary:

kardamēna = by the Prajapati Kardama
prajābhūtā = She became mother of children
kardama = Oh! Sage Kardama
mayi = in me
sambhava = be born
padmamālinīm = Her, who has the garland of Lotuses
mātaraṃ = Her, who is the mother
śriyaṃ = Her, who is the Goddess of Splendour
mē kulē = among my clan
vāsaya = make Her live

Meaning:

The Goddess of Splendour, who is adorned with the garland of Lotuses, is made the mother of children by the Prajapati Kardama. Therefore, Oh! Kardama, you be born in me. Make Her live among my clan.
STANZA-12:
āpaḥ srjantu snigdhāni cīkīṭa vasa mē gṛhē ।
ni ca dēvīṃ mātaram śriyaṃ vāsaya mē kulē ॥

Glossary:

- cīkīṭa = Sage Chikleeta
- āpaḥ = the waters (of life)
- snigdhāni = the glittering ones
- srjantu = may they create
- mē gṛhē = in my house
- vasa = to live
- mātaram = Her, who is the mother
- śriyaṃ dēvīṃ = Her who is Goddess Sri
- mē kulē = in my clan
- ni vāsaya = make Her live

Meaning:

Oh! Sage Chikleeta! You see that waters of life create beings on earth that are glittering and radiant with life. To that effect you live in my house. You pray the Goddess of Splendour that She continues to exist in my clan.
STANZA-13:

ārdrāṃ puṣkariṇīṃ puṣṭim piṅgalaṃ padmamālinīṁ I
candrāṃ hiraṇmayīṁ lakṣmīṁ jātavēdō ma āvaha II

Glossary:

jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, the birth-place of Wisdom
ārdrāṃ = red and moist
puṣkariṇīṃ = one who causes fullness
piṅgalaṃ = of honey colour
padmamālinīṁ = bearing a wreath of lotuses
candrāṃ = the Goddess presiding the Moon
hiraṇmayīṁ = of golden colour
lakṣmīṁ = The Goddess of wealth
ma āvaha = may She possess me

Meaning:

Oh! God of Fire! The birth-place of Wisdom may the Goddess of wealth possess me. She is the Splendour of fullness in glowing red, who radiates honey colour. This Goddess of the Moon shines in golden beams and is found decorated with a garland of Lotuses. May the Goddess possess me.
STANZA-14:

ārdrāṃ yaḥ kariṇīṃ yaṣṭiṃ suvarṇāṃ hēmamālinīṃ I
sūryāṃ hiraṇmayīṃ lakṣmīṃ jātavēdō ma āvaha II

Glossary:

ārdrāṃ = red with the rays of rising Sun
kariṇīṃ = the female elephant, or the ray of light
yaṣṭiṃ = having its trunk as a beam
suvarṇāṃ = of good coloured or gold coloured, also having sonorous sounds
hēmamālinīṃ = garlanded by golden glow
sūryāṃ = the Goddess who is the Splendour of the Sun God
hiraṇmayīṃ = who is full of golden beams
lakṣmīṃ = having the creation as Her symbol
jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Fire, who gives birth to the Wisdom
ma āvaha = let her possess me

Meaning:

Oh! Brilliant Fire! You bring the Light of Wisdom as my dawn with its red ray before me, to bring the splendour of the Goddess Lakshmi, with her lifted trunk of elephant and the golden yellow glow around Her. May the Goddess of Splendour possess me as the Dawn of my day.
STANZA-15:
tāṃ ma āvaha jātavēdō lakṣmīmanapagāminīṁ ī
yasyāṁ hiraṇyaṁ prabhūtaṁ gāvō dāsyōaśvānvindēyaṁ
puruṣānahaṁ īī

Glossary:

jātavēdaḥ = Oh! Agni, born of the Vedas and the birth-place of the Vedas
yasyāṁ = in whom
hiranyam = gold
gāvḥ = cows (the rays)
dāsyḥ = Servants
aśvān = horses
puruṣān = men
aham = I
vindēyaṁ = may obtain
tāṃ = Her
anapagāminīṁ = who has the nature of not deserting any one
lakṣmīṁ = The Goddess of wealth
ma āvaha = make Her possess me

Meaning:

Oh! Brilliant Fire! I pray you to make the Goddess of wealth possess me. By that I will be able to obtain the cows, the servants, horses, attendant-men and the hold of everything. Her nature is not to desert anyone when she favours.