SRI SIVAKESADIPADANTAVARNANA-STOTRAM

This hymn on Siva in 29 verses composed in the Sragdhara metre describes the beauty of the Lord from the head to foot. There are some beautiful and novel comparisons such as the one in the third verse describing the beauty of the third eye of the Lord.

(1)

May the matted locks of Sarva (Siva) confer happiness on you. They adorn the head (of the Lord) in whose tall reddish brown shrubs circles the beautiful celestial river (Ganges). They resemble a creeper with ripe red sali (grains). They are the ropes which rescue all the people got stuck up in the pit of unsurmountable misfortunes. They are the flames of the fire which burn the hidden columns of worldly dreadful sins.

(Sarva denotes Lord Siva in one of his eight forms as sustaining the entire world. Sali denotes a variety of paddy.)

(2)
May the triple lines (on the forehead) of the beloved of Mrdani (Lord Siva) protect you. They cause a doubt whether they are the shining silvery steps on the path of liberation. They appear to be the visible marks made on the conquest of the three cities (demons), which are the foes of Sakra (Indra). By nature they resemble the three courses of Jahnavi (Ganges) on the high Himalayan tableland in the third eye. They are white with the splendour of the Moon.

(The word Sakra denotes Indra, perhaps a contraction of the word Satakrauta meaning the performer of hundred sacrifices.

"Puratraya" denotes the three cities of sons of Maya - Kamalaksha, Tarakaksha and Vidyunnali. Mrdani denotes the consort of Mrda (Siva).

The river Ganges is known a jahnavi because it emerged from the ear of sage Jahnu.)

(3)

कुध्यद्गौरीप्रसादानितस्मयपदाङुक्षसंत्तलक्षा -
बिन्दुसधिधि स्मरारेष्ट्वांतिकाणित्वमार्गालिकाशोभमाँ
मृध्युदाधिक्वसिन्धों: पतितश्वरीकारार्थी वो मार्तकं स्ताद्
अस्तोकापतिकुष्ठ हन्वाकणिकाशोभसंसदिक्षी II

May the third eye on the head of the enemy of the god of love be ever for the cutting off of manifold misfortunes. It is arid on account of sparks of fire emanating from it. As the Lord prostrates before the angry (Goddess) Gauri in order to appease her, it (the eye) vies with the drops of red lac besmeared on the big toe (of the Goddess). It has the lustre of the ruby embedded in the crystalline stone. It resembles the ish fallen from the divine river (Ganges) rising from the head (of Lord Siva).

(4)

भूत्वे हंगमूलयो: स्यात्यदहिमहिमरुगिरिन्यो: रिनगधर्वोऽ
देत्योध्वधनंसंश्चर्णस्कुट इव परिवेशावशेषो विभाति I
सर्गस्थित्यन्त्रोत्तिः धमुन्यङ्गलस्तीव निर्वृत्तिगर्वः
शविवाभर्तुरुख्युगलमथ दधिक्षिन्यं तदुवोर्व: II
May the charming elevated pair of eye-brows of the Lord of Sarvani (Parvati) be for your prosperity. It belongs to the two eyes made up of the discs of the sun and the remnant of the attractive halo clearly announcing the destruction of the multitude of demons. (That halo) exists during (the periods of) creation, existence and destruction. (The pair of eyebrows) shed their harshness when I approach it.

(5)

युगे रुक्माज्ञिपिण्य ग्रह इव पितले द्राग्यो: प्राणतुहित्रा
शेलस्य ध्वान्तनीलाम्बरचित्रत्वृहत्कचुकोभूत्वयस्मात: ॥
ते त्रेणेत्रे पदिते त्रिदाशवङ्कघटासित्यज्ञाऴश्चक्ष्ट्रे
नेत्रे नेत्रे भवेताऽवृत्तविनाहविद्याग्रामिनयस्मात् ॥

May the holy pair of eyes of the Three-eyed Lord be here quickly as the guide to control your horses, namely, the senses. When the golden lotus-like yellow pair of eyes (of the Lord) was covered in the past by the daughter of the mountain as in an eclipse, the universe had become a big apparel made of the black cloth of darkness. the two eyes are the mighty victorious weapons against the hosts of enemies of (Indra), the foremost among the thirty three gods.

(The words ghata and amitra may also be taken to denote the elephant and its rival lion comparing suitably with the gods and demons. The senses are often referred to in the philosophical works as the horses. Only a strong and capable person could control the horse.)

(6)

चण्डीवक्त्रार्पणेच्छोर्तवं भवेत: चण्डुरुकपाण्डुण्डनं
प्रोद्याक्षरं विनेतुं विने तु यवं रत्नोतसिरियूपम| ॥
चण्डार्पितविन्दुकामें सततन्तजन्मध्वान्तकाशायूषानोऽसे
चण्डीश्च ते श्रिये स्तामधिकेवंताक्षण्डले कुण्डले व: ॥

May the ear-pendants of Candisa (Lord of Candi) be for your abundant prosperity. As he desired to place his cheeks close to the face of Goddess Candi, they (the pendants) ap-
peared to descend down to remove the itching sensation on the moon like pale cheek of the Lord by scratching with the edges of the gems. They have the splendour of the orb of the sun. They are extremely skillful in destroying the ignorance of the people who always worship him. They are bowed to by Indra. (Ākhandala means Indra.)

(7)

ख्याताणेयोऽयोऽ: सुमानिक्षणेत्तुद्रोऽक्षसदिष्टान्वलोपान्तरं द्वारान्।
युन्मांकोऽक्षत्राभमुत्थपतिकारणकारशोभः।
शक्तिनांनाय भूयाबंललतिविकलोकलुक्कोण: स दोषाणः।

May that extremely bright and lofty edged nose of (the Lord) holding the club (Khatvanga in his hand pointing upwards be always able to protect you. It has the prominent large holes. It causes a doubt that it is the exceedingly white, foremost serpent (Adisesa) having its raised hood and hissing, desirous of gaining entry into the hole, namely, the face. It has the grace of the shining pericarps of the lotus, namely, the beautiful face.

(The nose of Lord Siva is fancied here to be Adisesa desirous of gaining entry into the hole namely the face of the Lord. 'Khatvanga' denotes a club or shaft with a skull at the top as one of the weapons of Lord Siva.

(8)

कुश्याय्या यायोऽ: स्वातन्त्रसदित्विविनिभितां लक्ष्ययंती।
भर्भेत न्यामिनिढ्या मुहुर्तिरवधूश्चिमायां शैलकल्पः।
युन्मांसौ शक्षुद्रलवहलदशीर्वारश्वितिकम्ब्रा।
विवास्तर दिव्यसिद्धः: कपितुवनस्वनलोकपलो कपोलः।

May the two cheeks of the Consort of the divine river (Ganges) bowed to by the gods protect you. The daughter of the mountain (Parvati) overcome by jealousy becomes ex-
tremely angry towards the Lord beholding the reflection of her own shining form in them (the cheeks) suspecting another spouse (of her Lord). The two cheeks are extremely white like the Moon on the tenth day of the bright fortnight.

(Śarvaraṇī denotes the night and Śarvarṣīṇa denotes the Moon.)

9

यो भासा भाइतुष्णान्तत्स्थितं इव निभृतं कौस्तुंभो दृढ्यमिच्छन
सोत्समन्हानिततं गलगतगरलं पस्युऽर्घे: पशूनाम् ।
प्रोधत्रेण्या यमदर्श पितवि गिरिसुढ्या संपद: साधिरेका
लोकः शोषीकृतान्ता यदाधरमहस्सा सोऽधरो वो विद्यताम् ॥

May that lowerlip, which with its lustre has spread redness in the world, confer on you unlimited prosperity. It shines with its splendour as if it is the kaustubha itself quietly stationed nearby, desirous of beholding the distinguished position on the throat of (Siva) the Lord of the flock, on account of intense brotherly affection.

10

अत्यथा राजते या वदनशशार्धरादुश्लासरुचार्वाणि
पीयूषाभ: प्रवाहप्रसरपरिसरत्तेनबन्धवलीव ।
देयात्सा दलपंक्तिक्षिप्तयिन्द्र हुनुवायादाबोरिक्रस्य
चुर्या दीप्तेन्दुकुन्दचच्चविमलतरप्रोज्यताया मुखे ॥

May that row of sharp-edged exceedingly shining teeth (of the Lord) having the progeny of Danu as the gate-keepers confer eternal happiness on you. They are like the lustrous rows of drops of foam floating on the nectarine lovely speech issuing forth from the moon-like face (of the Lord). By its lustre it has the beauty of a radiant Moon or jasmine.

(Danu was a handsome daughter of Daksha. She was cursed by Indra to become a monster as she offended him. As Śiva is the Cord of the bhāṭa - gaṇas, He is referred to as having the progeny of Danu as the door-keepers. Saśadharā denotes the Moon on account of the hare-like mark on the surface of the Moon.)
May the manifest sound of the dear consort of Sati (Parvati), possessing an incomprehensible form and being pleased, put an end to your birth that results in worthless fruit. It humiliates the sound of columns of thundering mountain - like clouds of the rainy season. (It also excels) the loud sound rising from the roaring ocean. It is of the form of the Supreme Brahman, and is deep.

(The original reading udayamurteh of the printed text has been emended as auyaktamurteh agreeing in sense with pranangala (Siva)).

May the wild laughter of the Astamurti certainly confer always on us our desired fruits and make us feel pleased. The three worlds are illumined by its lustre and hence appear to have been submerged inside the shining drops of the form of the ocean. It is extremely white resembling the extensive cascade of the celestial Ganges. It is extensive with the radiance of the teeth. It is extremely terrible with the voilent 'ha, ha, ha' sound.

(The wild laughter of Lord Siva known as attahasa is described as white in colour according to poetic convention.

Lord Siva is referred to as astamurti as an embodiment of the five elements (earth, water, fire air and ether), the Sun, Moon, and Priest.)
May the five faces of Lord Sambhu (Siva) viz. Sadyojata, this is white and facing the western direction, Vamadeva, that is golden and facing the northern direction, Aghora, that is resembling the hue of the cloud and facing the southern direction, Tatpurusa, that is of the colour of the rising sun and facing the eastern direction and Isana, the divine one, confer on you the desired objects.

(The five forms of Siva referred to above are also denoted by the term Pānca - brahman. The Lingapurāṇa describes the origin of these five forms. The Vedic hymns extol these forms.)

May the large neck of the consort of Ambika (Parvati), adorned with ornaments and looking beautiful like the conch and on which shine the three rays resembling the black collyrium as if they were made by Bhavani (Parvati) Herself with the collyrium Samvanani on account of Her love, shine within you always.

(The collyrium Samvanani is used to attract and captivate a person. The poet fancies here the natural folds on the neck of Lord Śiva as those made of the sāṁvanani collyrium by the Goddess in order to captivate Her Lord.)
May the kalakuta (the deadly poison), that makes the neck of the foe of Yama black, wash away the dirt in your heart. It has gained a position similar to that of the nectar as if conferring great prosperity on Parvati who was preventing its entry as it sought a place near its brethren - the face the moon, the teeth, the goddess Laksmi, the lip, the great kaustubha.

(The Kalakuta, Moon, Goddess Laksmi and the Kaustubha had their common origin from the milky ocean along with the nectar. Although the poison desired to gain a place only on the lip, it was able to gain a place on the throat which is the honourable seat of the nectar. The word Acalabhūh meaning the daughter of the mountain, denotes Pārvatī. Siva is often referred to as the foe of Yama because he overpowered Yama and protected Mārkaṇḍeya.

The poet has employed a chain of metaphors in this verse.)

May the stainless and shining shoulder joints of Dhurjati (Siva), having warded off your acquired sins, destroy the prohibited acts. They are adorned with the jingling armlet in the form of the serpents, and bear the mark of the beautiful golden bangles of Parvati, whose face resembles the full moon, and who embraces Lord Siva with exuberant love.

(The word Dhurjati, meaning one having matted hair is an epithet of Siva.)
May the hands of Lord Hara (Siva), the destroyer of the demon (Andhaka), destroy your multitude of sins. They appear as if they are the water of the celestial Ganges stretching her arms in the sky to embrace her dear by the neck. They appear to be the long bridge made of crystal for crossing the ocean of mundane existence. They appear to be the beams put across the house, namely, the three worlds.

(The term "amhas" means sin.)

May the chest of the foe of Daksha permanently and quickly destroy your sins. It shines with the besmeared holy ashes together with the sandal paste besmeared in between the breasts of the daughter of Daksha as she bent over on account of the weight of love. It has the perpetual splendour of the radiance of gems on the hoods of host of angry serpents. It resembles a huge crystalline slab.

(The word caksuḥ - śruti denotes a serpent as its eyes are supposed to be their ears. Dakṣadāvīṣṭ means the enemy of Daksha, namely, Siva. Dakṣājā denotes satī, the daughter of Dakṣa.)
May your mind ever sportively lie in the extensive belly of Lord Siva, the enemy of Yama. That belly has three folds, resembles the milky ocean, and abounds with pearls. It has the wonderful continuous rows of waves in the form of the cavity of the navel having the moving foremost serpent (Vasuki). It is the abode of ever fresh lustre (Goddess Laksmi). It is white like the Moon.

(The word Kala denotes Yama, and Kālasātru, the enemy of Yama. The poets usually describe the navel as a whirlpool. The poet aptly fancies the belly as the ocean and the navel as the whirlpool.)

May the heavy hip of the crescent - crowned be for your beatitude. The tiger's skin covering it shines like a chain of dark clouds mixed with dense snow on the extensive low land at the foot of the Himalaya mountains. It has the Lord of serpents as the waistlet. It is very extensive. It is the sporting place of Parvati, the daughter of the mountain, Himavan.

(The word 'Śailajā' denotes Pārvatī, as the daughter of the mountain (Himālaya).)
May the thighs of the enemy of Tripura confer on you the desired (object). Always they are the strong supporting pillars for the three worlds as well as the wider buttocks. They are round. They bear the grace of the trunk of the elephant of Indra. They devour the hosts of foes. They are white on account of the besmearing of the sacred ash. They are bowed to by the devotees incessantly with a mind melted with devotion.

(The comparison of the thighs of the gods Śiva or Viśnu with the columns supporting the world is a popular idea with the poets. Dāṇḍī in his introductory verse of his Daśakumār Carsonita – "brahmāndas - chatradandah..." fancies the feet as the hold for the umbrella, the primordial egg.)

May the beautiful knees of the Antakari that excel the ambrosia and the Sun by their lustre be for your happiness. They are glorified as the boxes made of the moonstone for keeping the mirror, namely, the mind of the ascetics. When the feet are bent while performing the dance, often the knees appear to be the pillows. to rest a while, for the heads of the excellent serpents tied around the waist.
Lord Siva is well-known to be the conqueror of the Lord of Death (Antaka) in the episode relating to the young devotee Markandeya and the Lord of Death. The knees are fancied here to be the resting place for the serpents adorning the waist of Lord Siva for laying their heads as the Lord is bending while performing the dance.

(23)

मुझीरिभूतभोगिप्रवरणणफणांमण्डलान्तर्नितान्त -
व्यादीर्धार्णर्थद्वितिककलियते स्तूयमाने छुसङ्गः ।
विभाष्ये विभाष्म व: स्फोटकमणिबुध्दम्ब्रह्मसिते ये
जड्डेष्ठे नदुश्मे भृशिमिन्न भव्यता मानसे शूलपाणे: ॥

May the two shanks of lord Siva, white as the conch and the Moon, be in your mind without any break. They are sprouting on account of the long rays of the invaluable gems placed in the hoods of excellent host of serpents that have become the anklets. They are extolled by the gods. They are learning sportive movements. They shine like the huge pillars made of crystal.

As Lord Siva is dancing, the shanks are fancied to be sprouting on account of the long rays emanating from the gems in the hoods of the serpents adorning as the anklets. The word "Sulapani" denotes Lord Siva as the trident-bearer.

(24)

अस्तोकस्तोमश्चैैस्पचितिमला भूरिभावोपारे:
कुर्वः: सर्वदोषेऽ: सततमभिवृत्तो स्रह्यपदेवलाघः ।
संयक्तमपूज्यमानाविह हृदि सरसीवानिः युष्मदीये
शर्स्य कोद्वताते तो प्रपदवर्रुहत्कत्चपावच्छभासाः ॥
May the turtles, namely, the upper parts of the feet of Lord Siva, sport always in your heart as in a tank. They are always surrounded by the realised souls such as Devala and others, always offering intense and pure worship by means of profound eulogies such as stoma and Sastra and offerings in the form of mental emotions. They are being worshipped well (by all). They have pure radiance.

The word Devala denotes a renowned Sage and also an attendant of an idol. The attribute is to the sage Devala. While stoma is a division of the Samaveda, sastra denotes a hymn of praise. They are repeated while performing sacrificial rites. The word Sarva denotes Lord Siva in the concept of eight forms of Siva (Astamurtti) as the supporter of the inanimate and animate beings.

(25)

या: स्वस्त्येकांशपातादतिवाहलगलतबयक्त्र प्रणुत्त्र -
प्राण प्राकोशयन् प्राहु निजमंगलवरं चालयन्त्त दशस्यम्।
पादाङ्कुट्यो दिशतन्त्र द्वृत्तमयुगहुः: कलमण्डोककल्या:
कल्याणं पुलमाल्यप्रकररविलसिता व: प्रणाद्राहिविलच: ॥

May the toes of the third - eyed Lord confer on you auspiciousness quickly. When the ten-headed (Ravana) was shaking the (Kailasa) mountain of the Lord, in the past, the Lord pressed (down the mountain) with one of the toes making (Ravana) tremble, profusely bleed in the mouth and bewail. (The toes) are encircled by the snakes. They are capable of destroying the sins. They have the grace of collection of jasmine garlands.

(In olden days when Ravana wanted to lift and throw aside the Kailasa mountain obstructing the path of his chariot he put his shoulders under it and began to lift the mountain. Lord Siva found it out and pressed the mountain with His big toe.)
May the row of nails shining on the lotus feet of the dark-necked (Siva) bestow on you extreme happiness. It is spotless. It is repeatedly shown the nirajana without any break by the rays of big radiant gems in the crowns on the bent heads of the gods such as Indra. It has the rips raised upwards. It is like the cluster of beautiful stars.

Lord Siva is known to be nilagriva, the dark-necked because of the lodging of the poison halahala in his throat. Nirajana means the waving of lights in adoration in front of an idol.

May the lotus feet of the Lord bearing the deer in His hand be for your prosperity. They blossom even though they are near the moon-face of the chaste lady Sati (Parvati). The gods (such as Indra and others) obtain their lustre by holding these lotuses in their minds just as in a tank. The assembly of wise men worship these lotuses always like the swarm of hovering bees. They have an extremely white lustre (on account of the ash).

(The deer held in the hand of Lord Siva symbolises the Vedas. The lotuses do not blossom in the night because the moon rises in the night. But the lotus feet of Lord Siva blossom even though the moon-face of the Goddess is close-by. Sati denotes Parvati in Her former birth as the daughter of Daksha.)
May the dust particles under the blossoming lotus feet of the blue-necked Lord (Srikantha) rescue you from the ocean of mundane existence for ever. The ascetics with their minds unaffected by the defects such as passion and others attain liberation by the grace (of the dust). They become the graceful garlands on the bent heads of the assembly of sages and gods, the latter being verily (the Lord’s) own form.

(The word “yati” denotes a person who has controlled his senses. Srikantha denotes Lord Śiva. The word Śrī denotes poison held by the Lord in the throat which gives the dark colour to his neck. The objects in the universe both inanimate and animate are really forms of the Lord himself.)

May the lustre of Lord Siva worshipped by all cut off the root of my infatuation every day. It spreads in the world on account of its limitless greatness. It is the supreme purport of the Vedas. It is beyond the purview of the qualities (sattva, rajas and tamas). It is the beginning. Great souls repeatedly proclaim that it destroys the sins, it is desireless and it is unknowable.

(With his 29th verse ends the Śivakesādiśadānta - varṇana - stotram of Sri Saṅkara Bhagavatpāda.)