

Ṭoṭakāṣṭakam

Text, Transliteration, and Translation



SWAMINI SVĀTMAVIDYANANDA



तोटकाष्टकम् *Toṭakāṣṭakam*

विदिताखिलशास्त्रमुधाजलधे
महितोपनिषत्कथितार्थनिधे ।
हृदये कलये विमलं चरणम्
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥१॥

*viditā-khila-śāstra-sudhā-jaladhe
mahitopaniṣat kathitārthanidhe
hṛdaye kalaye vimalaṃ caraṇaṃ
bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇaṃ ॥1॥*

O Knower of the ocean of the nectar of scriptures! Treasure of the truths of the Upaniṣad, In my heart I contemplate on your flawless feet. O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

करुणावरुणालय पालय माम्
भवसागर दुःख विदूनहृदम् ।
रचयाखिलदर्शनतत्त्वविदम्
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥२॥

*karuṇā-varuṇālaya pālaya mām
bhavasāgara duḥkha vidūnahṛdam
racayā-khila-darśana-tattva-vidam
bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇaṃ ॥2॥*

O storehouse of raining compassion! Protect me whose heart is afflicted by the misery of the ocean of becoming. Make me into one who understand the truths of all schools of philosophy. O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

भवता जनता सुहिता भविता

निजबोधविचारण चारुमते ।

कलयेश्चर जीवविवेकविदम्

भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ३ ॥

bhavatā janatā suhitā bhavitā

nija-bodha-vicāraṇa-cārumate

kalayeśvara-jīva-viveka-vidam

bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam ॥3॥

By you the masses have been made happy, O You with beautiful mind skilled in self-enquiry! Make me into one who knows *īśvara* and *jīva* (as one). O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

भव एव भवानिति मे नितराम्

समजायत चेतसि कौतुकिता ।

मम वारय मोहमहाजलधिम्

भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ४ ॥

bhava eva bhavāniti me nitarām

samajāyata cetasi kautukitā

mama vāraya moha-mahājaladhiṃ bhavaśaṅkara

deśika me śaraṇam ॥4॥

Knowing that you are indeed Lord Shiva, a sense of wonder always rises in my heart. Remove from me from the vast ocean of delusion. O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

सुक्रितेऽधिक्रिते बहुधा भवतो
भविता समदर्शनलालसता ।
अतिदीनमिम्परिपालय माम्
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ५॥

*sukrite'dhikrite bahudhā bhavato
bhavitā sama-darśana-lālasatā
atidīnam imaṃ paripālaya mām
bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇaṃ ॥5॥*

Through your grace, the longing for the vision of oneness increases when (the effect of) virtuous deeds grow in abundance. Protect me, this utterly helpless one. O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

जगतीमवितुं कलिताकृतयो
विचरन्ति महामहसश्छलतः ।
अहिमांशुरिवात्र विभासि गुरो
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ६॥

*jagatīm avitum kalitākṛtayo
vicaranti mahāmahasaśchalataḥ
ahimāṃśurivātra vibhāsi guro
bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇaṃ ॥6॥*

For the sake of protecting the universe, great sages take on various forms and wander quietly. O Guru, among these great ones, you shine like the sun! O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

गुरुपुङ्गव पुङ्गवकेतन ते
समतामयतां नहि कोऽपि सुधीः ।
शरणागतवत्सलतत्त्वनिधे
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ७ ॥

*guru puṅgava puṅgavaketana te
samatāmayatām nahi ko'pi sudhīḥ
saraṇāgata-vatsala-tattvanidhe
bhavaśaṅkara deśikame śaraṇam ॥7॥*

O most exalted of all Gurus, who is the embodiment of Lord Shiva, with the Nandi as his banner! None of the wise ones is equal to you. O treasure-house of the vision of Vedanta, compassionate to those who refuge in you! O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

विदिता न मया विशदैककला
न च किञ्चन काञ्चनमस्ति गुरो ।
द्रुतमेव विधेहि कृपां सहजाम्
भवशङ्कर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ८ ॥

*viditā na mayā visadaikakalā
na ca kiñcana kāncanamasti guro
drutameva vidhehi krupāṃ sahajām
bhavaśaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam ॥8॥*

Even a single branch of knowledge is not understood fully by me. I do not possess even the least bit of wealth, Oh Teacher, quickly bestow on me your spontaneous grace. O Guru Shankara, be my refuge.

—OM TAT SAT—



Toṭakāṣṭaka is an octet in the Toṭaka meter composed by Totakacharya, a disciple of Adi Shankara in praise of his teacher. It is a beautiful devotional hymn, whose lilting cadence and musical lyrics serve to uplift the spirit, and to transmit the salient message that the gain of self-knowledge is fully contingent upon the cultivation of śraddhā, reverence and total surrender unto the Guru. This fervent hymn is a powerful and timeless reminder for all seekers of self-knowledge to prioritize the study of Vedanta in their lives.