

Siva Gita

The Siva-Gita is a text of Vedantic Saivism that comes to us from the latter portion (uttara kanda) of the Padma Purana. In many ways, it is a text not unlike the Bhagavad-Gita, except the focus is fully on Siva. In the Siva-Gita, the teacher is Lord Siva and the disciple is Sri Rama, and the narrator is Suta.

The Siva-Gita begins with episode from the Ramayana epic, where Rama is despondent over the loss of Sita. At this time, Rama is visited by Sage Agastya, and the sage prescribes to Rama that he should observe a special vow called the Pasupata vrata. By observing this vow Agastya promises that Rama will have a vision of Lord Siva, and will receive the Pasupata astra (weapon) without which Ravana cannot be defeated. Rama performs the vow and at the end of four months receives a divine vision of Siva. Siva presents Rama with the Pasupata astra, and Rama in turn asks Lord Siva a series of questions. The dialogue between Rama and Lord Siva makes up the bulk of the Siva-Gita.

Chapter VI – Glory of God

Rama said:

O Lord! (Having heard You declare that You are the Creator of the world) a great wonder wells forth in me. You are the Lord with the moon on Your crest, with three eyes and as radiant as pure crystal. ||1||

You have a form with limited stature bearing masculine appearance, accompanied by Mother Parvati and sport here itself with Your entourage of attendants. ||2||

How is it that You (create, protect and dissolve) the world made of five elements and consisting of the animate and inanimate? Tell me, O Lord, the beloved of Parvati, should You have concern for me. ||3||

The Lord said:

Listen, Rama, the high-souled one and of noble observances! I will tell you that which is difficult to comprehend even for the Gods, (and which can be understood) only by continence and by effort, and through which you will with ease cross to the other shore of the sea of births and deaths. ||4||

The five elements, the fourteen worlds, the oceans, the mountains, the demons, and the sages; those that are seen as unmoving, like trees, and those that move (creatures), the Gandharvas, the Pramathas, the Nagas, all these are My glorious manifestations. ||5-6||

In ancient days, the Gods like Brahma, desirous to see My personal form, churned (the ocean) as a team, (using) the Mount Mandara, the dearest to Me. ||7||

The Gods, standing in front of Me, praised Me with folded palms. On seeing Me thus, the Gods were deluded by Me, and the intelligence of Brahma and the other celestial beings was obscured. ||8||

Remaining ignorant, they repeatedly asked Me: “Who are You?” Then I told the Gods: “I am that primordial Being. O Gods! I was the first of all! I am so even at the present, and I will be so in the future too. There is nothing other than I in this world. ||9-10||

O Leaders of Gods! There is nothing whatever other than Myself, either permanent or impermanent. Faultless, I am the Lord of the Vedas and of Brahma. ||11||

O Leaders of Gods! I extend unto the south, unto the north, unto the east, and the west, above and below. I am the terminal and the intermediate directions. ||12||

I am the Savitri and the Gayatri, I am woman, man, and neuter; the meters of Tri?? up, Jagati, Anu??up, Pa?kti and the three Vedas. ||13||

I am the truth among all (the phenomena), the tranquil, the three household fires, scriptural study and ritual, the Preceptor, the speech, the secret, the heaven and the Lord of the world. ||14||

I am the foremost, the pre-eminent among all the Gods, greatest of knowers of truth, am the Lord of the waters, am the noblest, the supreme One with six attributes, the Ruler (Isa), the Light, and the first cause of the all. ||15||

I am the Rg Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, the Atharva?a, full of sacred mantras, and similarly the distinguished Angiras all originate from Me. ||16||

I am the Itihasas, the Pura?as, I am the kalpa (rituals), and the performer of the rituals. I am the Narasamsi (hymn of Rudra); I am the Gatha (hymn praising Vedic ritual). I am meditation and the secret wisdom. ||17||

I am the Vedic verses, the aphorisms (Sutras), the sub-commentaries; I am the commentaries. Similarly, I am the sciences, the Vedic sacrifices, the oblation and the substances offered. ||18||

I am the giver as well as the gift; I am this world and the world hereafter; I am the imperishable and the perishable; I am control of senses and of the mind; I am the indweller of the senses. ||19||

I am the hidden secret in all the Vedas; I am the forest and I am the unborn. I am the

nourisher and the pure; I am the middle and anything beyond it. I am the exterior as well as the interior; I am the front and the imperishable. ||20||

And I am light as well as darkness. I am the subtle elements and the senses. I am the intellect and the ego. Verily, I alone am all the objects of experience. ||21||

I am Brahma, Vi??u and Mahesa. I am Uma, Skanda, and Vinayaka. I am Indra, Agni, and Yama. I am Nir?iti, Varu?a and Vayu. ||22||

I am Kubera and Isana, the worlds of Bhū, Bhūva, Svaha, Maha, Jana, Tapa and Satya. And I am the earth and I am the waters, the fire and air. ||23||

I am space; I am the sun, the moon and the stars. The planets, too, am I. I am the vital breath (pra?a) and time, similarly death and immortality. I am the physical matter too. ||24||

I am the past and the future. I am the universe in its entirety. I am the sum and substance of everything. For those who silently chant, I am the Pra?ava (OM) at the beginning. I am the vyaharitis: bhū, bhūva, svaha in the middle; and then the Gayatri at the end. I am of the form of the extended universe. ||25||

I am the eaten and the drunk. I am, too the done and the undone. I am the superior and the inferior. I am the Sun and the Refuge of all. ||26||

I am the good of the world; I am the Divine imperishable and the subtle. I am the very self of Prajapati (Brahma). I am the sacred, the benign, the ungraspable and the first. ||27||

I alone am the withdrawer. I am the container of the luminous fire of deluge. I am established in the hearts of all as Divinity and vital power. ||28||

I am the very Pra?ava (Omkara) consisting of three morae (a, u, m) whose head is the north, feet the south and the middle is all that is in between. ||29||

I am truly the Pra?ava (Omkara), one, eternal and ancient because I lead (pious souls) upwards (to heaven) and send them down (when their merit is exhausted). ||30||

I am called Pra?ava because in the act of sacrifice I am Brahma (directing the sacrifice) make (the Rtviks) render obeisance to the brahma?as (or Rg, Yajus and Sama Vedas). ||31||

Just as ghee pervades a piece of meat and makes the body (of the eater) grow, I (pervade) similarly all the worlds; therefore, the Pervader of all am I. ||32||

Because Brahma and Vi??u, and other Deities did not see the beginning or end to My form (Jyotirli?ga), I am called the Infinite. ||33||

Since I save My devotee from the ocean of dread of being born in a womb, old age, death and the cycle of births and deaths, I am called the Savior. ||34||

I dwell as the soul in the four kinds of bodies (born of womb, of egg, of sweat and of the earth). Taking a subtle form I live in the heart. Hence, I am called subtle. ||35||

I illuminate the devotees immersed in the primeval darkness (of ignorance) with my incomparable light, like a flash of lightening. Therefore, I am known as lightening. ||36||

Since I alone create and dissolve the worlds, make (the souls) go from one world to another and bestow grace, I am the only supreme Lord. ||37||

Since there is no second to that transcendent Brahman, which withdraws all the beings into itself, I (that Brahman) alone exist as Rudra. ||38||

Since I rule all the worlds with My wondrous powers, I am the Isana (Ruler) of this world, the Lord and the witnessing eye. ||39||

(The scriptures extol Me) as Isana, as Indra, as Brahma and the Lord of all at all times, and the Lord of disciplines and knowledge. Hence, I am called Isana. ||40||

I behold all beings; I teach the knowledge of the Self and the path (to that knowledge). I pervade everything. Therefore, I am called Bhagavan. ||41||

I perpetually create, protect and dissolve all the worlds and enliven them all. And hence I am the great Lord. ||42||

He, that great Lord, glories by the stupendous powers and the yoga of self-knowledge. He creates and protects all that exists. I am that (Lord). ||43||

This Lord am I, present everywhere. I was prior to everything else. It is I who is in the womb; it is I who is born and that which is to be born. I have faces in every direction. I am the indwelling spirit in beings. ||44||

I have eyes everywhere; I have faces in all directions; My arms are everywhere; My feet everywhere. With my arms and feet I command the production, as one secondless Lord, of the earth and the heaven. ||45||

Those wise men who directly see Me as abiding in their own self, in the center of their heart, of the size of a tip of the hair; as of the form of the universe; as the source of the Vedas, and to be worshipped always, for them alone there is peace

eternal, and not others. ||46||

I alone stand as the basis of the world of maya. All the fivefold elements are fully pervaded by Me. One who enquires in this way about Me, the Lord, the Supreme Person, and the Governor (of the universe) attains peerless peace. ||47||

The marks of mind implicit in the vital airs are said to be hunger, thirst and restlessness. Those who cut asunder the thirst which is responsible for all the activities and fixing the mind in Me through reason, and meditate on Me, get the peace eternal and not others. ||48||

Knowing Me as Brahman, the bliss, from where speech along with the mind recoil unable to reach it, one does not fear anything whatsoever. ||49||

Hearing my words on the supreme knowledge as a means to release, chanting My names, giving themselves to meditating on me, the Gods – all of them – at the end of their lives attained union with Me in days of yore. From such a knowledge all the things are seen everywhere by them as manifestations of My glory. ||50-51||

From Me alone everything is born. In Me, everything is established. In me, everything is resolved. I am that Brahman which is secondless. ||52||

I alone am the subtler than the subtlest; similarly I am the greatest. I am the world and am pure (unsullied by creation). I am the most ancient. I am the complete being. I am the sovereign. I am the golden One and of the very form of auspiciousness (Sivam). ||53||

I (grasp) without hands and (walk without) feet; I am that inestimable power; I see without eyes; I hear without ears. I am every manifest form and there is no one who knows Me. I am ever the consciousness. ||54||

I am alone the One who revealed by all the Vedas. I am the author of Vedanta, and I am alone the knower of the Vedas. There is no merit or demerit in Me; there is no destruction for Me; nor are there births, bodies, senses and intellects for Me. ||55||

The earth, water, fire, air nor space (the five elements) find no place in Me. Thus knowing the nature of the supreme Self indwelling in the cave of the heart, partless and secondless, witness unto all, devoid of cause and effect, one attains the pure supreme Self (that I am). ||56||

O Rama of great intelligence! One who knows Me truly, he alone and none else, in all the worlds attains the fruit of liberation.” ||57||

Thus ends the sixth chapter called the Glory of God in the Siva-Gita which is an

upani?ad delivering Brahma-vidya and a yoga sastra occurring as a dialogue between Siva and Rama in the Padma Pura?a.

Rama said:

What was asked by me, O all-pervasive Lord, that stands as such. Here, an answer was not received from You by me at all, O great Lord! 1

Your body, O Lord – being of limited measure – how is it the origination of all beings, their maintenance and dissolution? 2

How are the Deities bound to their respective duties stationed in You? How is it that all of them are one with You? How is it that the fourteen worlds (are one with You)? 3

O Lord! Even after hearing it from You, there is a great doubt in me. You must deign to dispel the doubt in my mind which suffers from incomprehension. 4

The Lord said:

Though the seed of the banyan tree is very tiny, the huge banyan tree always existed in it. Otherwise, how can that tree come out of that seed? 5

Similarly, O Rama, the origination and dissolution of the beings take place in My body. Even a large mass of salt easily dissolves in water and is no more visible, but when (that water is) boiled that salt appears as before. 6

Just as light emanates every dawn from the solar sphere, similarly all the universe originates from Me, exists and then merges in Me. Everything is in Me. O Rama of noble resolves! Know it thus. 7

Rama said:

O great Lord! Just as for a person confused regarding directions, the confusion is not removed even when correctly informed, similar is my delusion. What shall I do? 8

The Lord said:

O Rama! I will show you how all this, the moving and the unmoving beings of the world subsist in Me. But you will not be able to see this. O son of Dasaratha, I will endow you with divine vision. Through that, shedding all fears, behold the expanse of everlasting luminosity of Mine. 9-10

My majesty cannot be perceived through physical eyes either by human beings or by celestial beings without My grace. 11

Suta said:

Having said thus, the Lord blessed him (Rama) with divine vision. Then he (Rama) saw the form of the Lord resembling subterranean fire. 12

Seeing that (form) luminous like millions of lightening flashes and striking intense terror even among the brave, Rama in sheer fright, collapsed on his knees to the ground. Rama, the dauntless hero, fell prostrate on the ground and again and again praising (the Lord) then rising, looked as far as he could. Rama saw the form of the Lord, the Destroyer of Tripura, with sidereal universes inside it looking like she-sparrows, in constellations of luminous blaze. 13-15

He saw (within the form of the Lord) the mountains like Meru, Mandara and Vindhya, the seven seas, the sun and the moon, the Gods and the five elements. 16

The son of Dasaratha beheld the forests, the holy mountains, the fourteen worlds and the entire cosmic expanse. He saw the battles between the Devas and the Asuras; those born and yet to be born; the ten incarnations of Vi??u and the His sports in those incarnations. 17

O dvijas, He saw the defeat of the Devas, the burning of Tripura and the extinction of all that is born and yet to be born. Beholding all this, Rama filled with fear, prostrated again and again. (At this point) true wisdom dawned on Raghunandana (Rama), and he extolled Sankara with meaningful hymns that contain the very essence of the Upanishads 18-21

Rama said:

O Lord! The Destroyer of distress of those who take refuge in You! Be gracious! Be gracious! O Lord of the universe! O, Thou worshipped by the Universe! Be gracious! Thou the Bearer of the Ganges, with moon adorning Your crest! Protect me, helpless as I am, from the fear of births and deaths. 22

O Lord! This world, indeed, is born only from You, in You alone the created beings live always, O Sambhu! Into You alone they undergo merger, just like trees and creepers into the earth. 23

O Wielder of the trident! Brahma, Indra and Rudra, the Maruts, the Gandharvas, the Yak?as, Asuras, the community of Siddhas, rivers like the Ganges, the oceans, all of them live in the midst of Your person. O Moon-crested One! Everything is illusorily projected by Your maya. In You alone, the universe attains perceptibility. All this is perceived by the common people mistakenly (as real), just as silver is seen in a

seashell or a rope is mistaken for a snake. 24-25

Filling the entire universe with Your splendour, manifesting things by Your own resplendence, O God of Gods, without Your light, this universe cannot be perceived even for a moment. 26

Great things do not rest on flimsy support. One single atom cannot support the Vindhya mountains. This universe rests on Your person through Your maya alone. I am convinced now about this. 27

Just as a fear-causing snake appearing in the rope has not really come into being, nor exists, nor undergoes destruction, similarly is the universe too taking shape in You, through that sheer maya of Yours, O Nilaka??ha. 28

When it is enquired as to Your body assuming the nature of being, the very basis for the world of manifestation, that itself is seen to be certainly due to my ignorance. Thou art wholly the nature of Consciousness and Bliss. 29

O Destroyer of Tripura, Thou alone, being praised, bestow upon the enjoyers the fruits of the eminently meritorious acts, performance of Vedic sacrifices and charitable acts. But even this statement is not fully true because there is nothing different from You at all. 30

The Sages declare those as deluded by ignorance who mistakenly think that Siva, Lord of the Himalayas, is pleased by external acts of worship and services. How can there be any desire for pleasure for one who is formless? 31

O Supreme Lord! Even the sovereignty of all the three worlds, You bestow as a reward on those people who offer You a leaf or a little water. I deem it all as the work of ignorance. 32

You pervade all the quarters and the intermediate directions. Thou art the universe, secondless, the infinite and the eternal. Even when this universe become extinct, there is no loss to You, just as there is no detriment to space (within a pot), when the pot is broken. 33

Just as the one, single Sun in the sky gets its many reflections in various vessels of water, so Thou, O Lord, art (variously) reflected in different minds. 34

There is nothing to be done by You even when the world is created, protected and dissolved. Even then, You bestow heaven etc. on the souls beginninglessly embodied according to their mortal fruits. It all happens as in a dream. 35

O Sambhu! For the two inert bodies, the subtle (suk?ma) and the gross (sthula) there could be no consciousness without the Self. Therefore, the scriptures, O

enemy of Tripura, speak of pleasure and pain experienced through Your reflection in them. 36

Prostrations to Thee, O Swan in the ocean of Existence and Consciousness; prostrations to Thee, O Blue-Throated One, the very form of Time; prostrations to Thee, the Destroyer of all sins; prostrations to Thee, the one (witness) experiencer of the functions of the mind, which after all is illusory. 37

Suta said:

Prostrating thus before the Lord of the universe, standing with folded hands before Him, the over-awed Rama praised the supreme Lord in so many words. 38

Rama said:

O Self of the universe! Withdraw this cosmic form of Yours. By Thy grace, O Sambhu, the ocean of the world (of existence) has been seen (by me). 39

The Lord said:

O Rama, the mighty-armed! There is nothing other than I.

Suta said:

Saying thus, the Lord withdrew the Gods and the other (forms) into His own form. 40

Closing his eyes in sheer delight, Rama again opened his eyes and saw the Lord standing over the tiger-skin on the crest of the (Himalaya) mountain. Rama saw Lord Nilaka??ha with three eyes and five faces, donning the tiger skin, His person adorned with sacred ash, wearing the serpents as His bracelets and sacred thread, wearing matted locks, blazing like lightening. (He saw) the One, the Lord of the universe, with moon on His crest, the supremely adorable, assuring freedom from fear, with four arms, holding a battle-axe, with a deer in one hand. 41-44

Then prostrating, Rama, at the Lord's command, sat in front of Him. Then, the God of Gods told Rama, "Whatever you want to ask, O Rama, you can ask of Me. There is no preceptor for you other than I." 45

Thus ends the seventh chapter called the Vision of the Cosmic Form in the form of a dialogue between Siva and Rama in the Siva-Gita an upani?ad delivering Brahma-vidya, and a yoga sastra occurring in the Padma Pura?a..