

श्रीशिवरहस्याख्यः महेतिहासः

THE ANCIENT SHIVA-GRANTHA

TITLED

SHREE SHIVARAHASYAAKHYAH
MAHETIHAASA

[THE GREAT HISTORY
KNOWN AS
THE AUSPICIOUS MYSTERY OF SHIVA]

प्रथमांशः

FIRST PORTION

CHAPTER ONE

[SOOTAMUNI'S ARRIVAL AT THE 'SATRA']

Sanskrit text & Translation

by

Narayanalakshmi

DEDICATED
TO
ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Bangalore, India, the so-called Lakshmi (Master of Sanskrit and Philosophy, and a language teacher by profession) changed miraculously into a Tejaswini (a recluse with no-identity), when she entered the sacred Himalayan region, in quest of 'Truth sublime' even as she was in her early forties.

Living alone amidst the looming mountains of the sacred land, inside a small cottage made of stone and mud, helped by a few devoted youngsters, she went through a penance of knowledge for many years, till her quest was fulfilled by the grace of Shiva.

As there was nothing more to be achieved on this planet than what state she was in, she just took to translating the 'Sacred Granthas' that were based on Upanishad-Truths, and some rare Sanskrit books of ancient literature which were slowly turning into dust, due to the lack of proficiency in Sanskrit language that covers the modern minds.

'BrhatYogaVaasishtam authored by Maharshi Vaalmiki' is a wonderful Grantha which explains the abstract truths of the Upanishads in a simplified manner, and here it is offered to the seekers of Vedic Knowledge to assist in their studies, with proper translation and explanation along with the Sanskrit verses-

- by Maa Tejaswini/Narayanalakshmi.

INTRODUCTION (01)

[WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO STUDY THIS TEXT?]

This ancient text which describes the mystery of 'Shiva (without a form) (yet shining as the form of this Jagat-state)' reveals the highest level of Realization state - named as 'Shivam'.

This is not a Puraana-story, that describes the life-events of a Shiva-entity with a form, as one of the Trinities. This does not give you any merit also, when read.

Only a student who has mastered the essence of the Upanishads and Great texts like - BrhatYogaVaasishtam, and Tripuraa Rahasyam - can even approach it, as a further study.

Only a person who is in the Turyaa-state (the fourth state that is sought by the Aatman-seekers), can grasp the mystery concealed in the ordinary-looking verses and hymns mentioned in this text.

Only a person who is neither a Shaivaite, nor a Vaishnavait; and who is not attached to a form of a deity, can approach this text which talks about a Shiva - who is beyond all the forms and names.

Only a person who uses this text as a portal to the higher level of Realization, can gain some knowledge by its study.

The text talks of Munis, Shiva-devotees like Jaigeeshavya, the DevaLoka residents like Vishnu, Brahmaa, Kumaara, Ganesha, Shiva, Umaa, Nandi, Naarada and others; and has many hymns that praise them; yet hides in its verses, the secret of the formless Shiva who is something beyond the name Shiva also.

If you are struck to forms of deities like Shiva, Vishnu, Umaa and others - then, do not venture to study this Great text.

Only if the 'Knowledge of the Supreme Brahman' alone is your goal,
only if you are capable of sacrificing the 'I' you hold on to as an identity inside the 'fire of Knowledge',
only if you are ascertained fully that this Jagat-phenomenon is completely non-existent except as an appearance rising from the mind-hollow,
only if you are ready to ascend the (subtle) Kailaasa Mountain with complete surrender to Shiva,
then and then only -
venture to open the text and go through it slowly,
absorbed in the truths presented here,
like a journey towards the Shivam-state, the ultimate goal of a Mumukshu - the seeker after Liberation.

INTRODUCTION (02)

[DEVALOKA]

DevaLoka, the world of shining beings ...!

Does it exist really?

Why not? Do you believe that this tiny earth-planet alone can exist, as the one and only world in the entire cosmos!?

To study this text..

you must have a firm ascertainment

that beings like Devas and Asuras really exist,

that the events mentioned in this text are real, and

there is indeed a DevaLoka also, which is very very huge and over-flows with immense population of various categories of Devas and Rishis.

This so-called DevaLoka exists in another dimension; and is ruled by 'Indra'.

Like the fish (two-dimensional beings) can never imagine and understand the life of the land-beings (three-dimensional beings),
the life of these 'Devas' (shining beings) also cannot be comprehended by us - the so called humans.

These Devas cannot be seen with the physical eyes.

Their images (faces) also cannot be imagined by us.

Their bodies are made of solidified-lustre.

The higher level of Devas have immense lustre - as if crores of suns seen at once.

A human will burn off if he is in the presence of such Devas.

These Devas do not have internal organs like the mammals here.

They do not have hunger, food craving, sweat etc; they do not have lungs, digestive organs, excretory organs, reproduction system like that of the humans here.

The Lustre-intensity and the Knowledge-level decides the hierarchy of Devas.

The highest of them is Umaa, the Queen of DevaLoka.

The most ordinary Devas are sort of less lustrous and more physical, and have minimal powers; and they die like humans... and are not realized or knowledge-prone.

And, the DevaLoka is not made of one or two Devas, but is populated by crores and crores of Devas, where this earth population may be compared to a tiny ant-colony to that of an elephant-population crowding the Vindhya Mountain.

Devas are extremely gigantic in size.

(The humans here are too tiny compared to them (like crawling ants) and cannot even have a glimpse of their full images, if in their presence.)

The Rulers of the Devas - Vishnu, Rudra and others are ferocious characters and are unapproachable to the other Devas. Brahmaa is the Creator who is absorbed in 'Knowledge' only.

Vishnu is the care-taker of DevaLoka and Rudra is the powerful warrior who guards the DevaLoka.

These three are known as Trinities, the main Devas who guard the DevaLoka.

Umaa, the Queen resides in a ChintaaMani mansion, completely unapproachable to even the Trinities. She is a warrior Goddess and is capable of fighting any Asura - (the enemy-clan).

Shiva - one of the Trinities - has Skanda and Ganesha as his two sons (carrying his Knowledge-essence). They have their own gigantic mansions (guarded by many Rudras).

Do not imagine these Devas as picturized by the artists of this earth - as always smiling and having baby-faces. They are ferocious-looking and wield highly powerful weapons, and battle any Asura who trespasses their territories.

To study this text..

you need immense imagination power...

and also some sort of realized state...

and dispassion towards the body and its relations..

(a shadow of Nirvaana-state at least,

and the complete non-identity with the body, where you wear it like a costume only).

if not -

then - it is just a book as read - for no purpose.

waste of time...

like reading formulae in Physics without understanding them,

and may also offend the Devas mentioned here.

And,

Complete surrender -

and, some minimal devotion at least to the formless Shiva,

and the courage to burn off your complete identity and stay as a no one,

are very very necessary.....!

INTRODUCTION (03)

SHIVA AND SHAKTI

Shiva is the auspicious Brahman-state and Shakti his power to exist as the Jagat-phenomenon. They both are inseparable, rather the same principle appearing as two. How can you separate Shiva and Shakti at all!

‘Shiva’ and ‘Shakti’ mentioned in this Great text ‘Shivarahasyetihaasa’ - are just different sound-forms referring to the same principle of Reality. They are not male and female characters, as Shiva and Shiva depicted in the Puraanas.

The Shiva and Shakti of ShivaRahasya are not the Kailaasa residents of a Brahmaa’s Creation.

How to describe that state of Shiva/Shakti who stay far across the reach of language, for the very description that appears here is the manifestation of the unmanifest Shiva-Shakti!

"Shiva is the immutable screen, and Shakti is the prismatic play projected upon it."

Shakti is the luminous choreography of the Absolute - the iridescent rainbow that shimmers across the fathomless, infinite expanse of Shiva, lending form to the formless and voice to the eternal silence.

Shakti is not separate from Shiva; she is his own innate brilliance (vimarsha) making his unmanifest nature (Prakaasha) visible to itself.

"The Jagat, the perceived phenomenon is a cinematic tapestry woven entirely of light. Shakti is that wild, shimmering projection of names and forms, dancing across the immutable screen of Shiva. The drama turns, the cosmos burns, yet the Screen remains forever unblemished, unaltered, and profoundly awake."

This is the core realization of the ShivaRahasya - that no matter how terrifying, joyful, or complex the worldly movie appears, it can never leave a single scratch or stain on the underlying Consciousness hosting it.

Shiva is the motionless Depth; Shakti is the self-luminous Display. The entire cosmos is but ‘Awareness’ experiencing its own infinite potentiality through the prism of Divine Motion.

In the non-dual traditions, this relationship is called Ananyatva (अनन्यत्व) - absolute non-separateness. Just as the heat cannot be separated from the fire, and the light cannot be isolated from the sun, Shakti is the dynamic pulse (spanda) of Shiva himself. The movie and the screen are, fundamentally, one undivided reality.

In non-dual systems (like Kashmir Shaivism), the Universe is often described as ‘Prakaasha-Vimarsha’, the light of awareness and its own self-reflective display. The light isn’t just flashing randomly; it is structured, moving, and telling a grand cosmic story across the unmoving background.

A "phantasmagoria" is a sequence of shifting, dreamlike images.

Shakti is the phantasmagoric beam or the prismatic play.

A single, pure source of light splits into a kaleidoscope of diverse worldly forms.

"Effulgence" (from the Latin ‘effulgere’, to shine forth) implies a brilliant, pouring-out of light.

It matches the grand, scriptural tone of the ShaivaRahasya Itihaasa.

INTRODUCTION

(04)

SHIVA RAHASYA ITIHAASA

The ‘ShaivaRahasya (ShivaRahasya) Itihaasa’ (frequently classified as an Upapuraaṇa, but structurally self-designated and revered as an Itihaasa Ratnam) is one of the most monumental, voluminous, and esoteric texts in Shaiva literature.

Spanning approximately 100,000 verses (Shlokas) divided into 12 parts (Aṃshas) and 1000 chapters (adhyaayas), its sheer scale is comparable to the MahaaBhaarata.

The text serves as an exhaustive compendium of non-dualistic Shaiva philosophy, theology, sacred geography (Maahaatmya), and esoteric Saadhanaa.

Structural Architecture:

The text unfolds as a grand narrative lineage, traditionally recounted by Lord Skanda (Kaartikēya) to Sage Jaigeeśhavya, which was subsequently transmitted via Soota Puraaṇika to the Rishis assembled in the Naimishaa Forest.

Unlike conventional Puraanas that focus heavily on genealogies, the ShaivaRahasya prioritizes the preservation of pure non-dual experience (Advaita-Anubhooti) alongside formal ritual practice.

The Projection Metaphor:

Linguistically and philosophically, the ShaivaRahasya- particularly through the Ṛbhū Geetaa - employs a striking dialectic of absolute negation (neti neti) coupled with immediate affirmation. It presents reality through a beautiful, early visual metaphor: Shiva is the immutable, unmoving screen (Adhiṣṭhaana), while Shakti is the dynamic, cinematic light projected onto it.

Because of its massive size, the complete ShivaRahasya Itihaasa remained largely preserved in private palm-leaf manuscript collections and was rarely printed in its entirety.

A historical landmark occurred in the mid-20th century when the text was painstakingly translated from Sanskrit manuscripts into a massive 30-volume Kannada edition (1946–1950) under the patronage of Sri Jayachamaaraajendra Wadiyar (published in the Jayachamaaraajendra Grantharatnamaala series by H. Gangaadhara Shaastrī).

While partial English and Tamil translations of the Ṛbhū Geetaa core are widely accessible, complete unabridged access to all 100,000 verses of the underlying Itihaasa remains a rare and treasured find among specialized research libraries and monastic archives.

*(This translation of the original Grantha is humble offering
to the lotus-feet of Shiva/Shakti.)*

॥ ॐ नमश्शिवाय ॥

श्री शिवरहस्ये प्रथमांशे सूतमुनिसंवादे प्रथमोऽध्यायः

FIRST CHAPTER IN THE FIRST PORTION
OF
SOOTAMUNI CONVERSATION
IN
SHREE SHIVARAHASYA

प्रार्थना

SALUTATION TO SHREE GANESHA

शुक्लांबरधरं विष्णुं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजं
प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत्सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये॥

*I meditate upon the All-pervading one (Lord Ganesha),
who wears the white garment,
who is white in hue like the moon,
who is endowed with four arms,
and who has a smiling face -
for the removal of all the obstacles.*

SALUTATION TO THE DEVOTEES OF SHIVA

शिरसा शिवभक्तानां पादांबुजरजःकणान्
वंदामहे वयं नित्यं वासनाध्वान्तभास्करान्॥

*With our heads fully bent in devotion,
we always offer salutation
to the dust-particles of the lotus-feet that belong to devotees of Shiva,
which are the suns that destroy the darkness of Vaasanaas (subtle dormant wants).*

सूतमुनि संवादः

‘CONVERSATION WITH SOOTAMUNI’

MUNEESHVARAS MEET SOOTAMUNI

पुरा माहेश्वरे सत्रे प्रवृत्ते, मुनयस्तदा यदृच्छयाऽऽगतं सूतं पैप्पलादं हि,

सत्रिणः वाजश्रवस आहुस्तं समवेता महर्षयः,

Long ago, the Munis -

who were always engaged in performing the Maaheshvara-Satra (Mega-sessions or ‘sacrificial sessions’ that can last for hundreds of years),

who belonged to the school of Muni Vaajashravas (also known as Sage Gautama or Uddaalaka), and who were engaged in performing the Sacrifice - gathered around -

‘Paippalaada (who belonged to the Pippalada school of Atharva Veda) (known as) ‘SootaMuni’, (Ugrashravas Sauti, son of Lomaharshana, disciple of Maharshi Veda Vyaasa, known as ‘Soota’ because he is a narrator of Puraanic tales),

who had arrived there in course of his travel, and spoke to him like this.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE MUNIS

कृष्णाजिनोत्तरासंगा भस्मोद्धूलितविग्रहाः

These Munis whose bodies were fully covered by ashes, wore deer-skin (Krshnaajina, skin of the black antelope) only, as their garments;

त्रिपुण्ड्रविलसत्फाला रुद्राक्षांगदकंकणाः

their foreheads were marked by the three horizontal lines of ashes (mixed with cow dung or milk or sandal) (Tripundraka);

they wore bracelets made of Rudraakshas (dried stones of the fruit of Elaeocaepus ganitrus tree);

यज्ञेश्वरं महारुद्रं पूजयन्तोऽध्वरेण ते लिंगेऽग्निहोत्रे सूर्ये च रुद्रसूक्तजपादराः

these Munis were worshipping MahaaRudra through a Yajna-rite, and were also into the discipline of AgniHotra and Sun-worship, and were diligently reciting the RudraSookta;

पञ्चाक्षरावृत्तिपराः शिवनामपरायणाः

they were always chanting

the Mantra made of five letters - ‘na ma shi vaa ya’ -, and the various names of Shiva.

पञ्चकोशातिगं देवं पञ्चास्यं परमेश्वरं, ध्यायन्तः परया भक्त्या

These Munis were always meditating on -

‘Parameshvara who had five faces (Sadyojaata, VaamaDeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha, Ishaana), and who transcended the five Koshas (levels of existence made of Anna, Praana, Manas, Vijnaana and Aananda)’ -

with extreme devotion;

तं पप्रच्छुरकल्मषाः संपूज्यार्घ्यासनैर्भोज्यैः प्रश्रयप्रश्नभाषणैः अन्योन्यं कुशलप्रश्नैः प्रश्रयावनतास्तदा॥

they who had faultless minds,

worshipped SootaMuni with Arghya and Paadya, offered him a seat and refreshments,

and conversed about his well-being and theirs, and other matters concerning his philosophy;

and questioned him like this, with extreme humbleness.

NOTES

[Satra:

सत्र- Derived from the root सद् (sad), meaning "to sit,"

A 'satra' etymologically implies a session where people "sit together."

Depending on the context, it refers to a specific class of massive Vedic sacrifices, a community monastery, or an institutional assembly.

In Sanskrit philology and ritual literature,

the word सत्र (satra) - often spelled 'sattra' - carries deep structural meaning'.

Unique Rules of a Satra:

No Single 'Yajamaana':

Unlike ordinary rituals funded by a single patron (Yajamaana) who hires priests (Rtvij), a 'satra' is a communal, cooperative sacrifice.

Priests are the Patrons:

All participating priests (typically a minimum of 17) collectively act as the Yajamaanas; they share the spiritual merits (apoorva) equally.

Braahmaṇa Eligibility:

It strictly requires participants who are deeply versed in the Veda and capable of performing alternating priestly roles.]

[Vaajashravas:

The name 'Vaajashravas' is a patronymic or a descriptive title rich in Vedic symbolism:

वाज (vaaja): Food, nourishment, strength, or the speed/bounty of a horse.

In a ritual context, it specifically refers to the sacrificial food or rewards of a yajña.

श्रवस् (shravas): Fame, glory, or that which is heard.

Thus, 'Vaajashravas' literally translates to - "he whose fame is derived from the distribution of food/wealth" or "one who is renowned for sacrificial offerings."]

Uttara-Meemaṃsaa / Vedaanta mindset: seeks 'shreyas' (the good, the eternal, absolute liberation).

Poorva-Meemaṃsaa mindset: is bound to the Karma-Kaṇḍa (the ritualistic portion of the Vedas).

'Vaajashravas' represents the Poorva-Meemaṃsaa mindset.

His eyes are fixed on 'preyas' (the pleasant, worldly wealth, and celestial pleasures of heaven).

His Yajna-performances are driven by egoistic attachment.]

[Rudra Sookta:

The Shatarudreeya / Shree Rudram) is one of the most powerful, structurally intricate, and historically significant Vedic hymns dedicated to Lord shiva in his fierce form as Rudra.

Structural Overview: Namakam and Chamakam

The text is traditionally divided into two distinct halves, consisting of 11 chapters (anuvākas) each.

Together, they create a rhythmic, meditative dialectic between surrender and manifestation.

Namakam (Anuvākas 1–11)

Repeatedly uses the word नमः (namah) - "obeisances to you."

Chamakam (Anuvākas 12–22)

Repeatedly uses the phrase च मे (ca me) - "and to me let this be granted."]

Cosmic Vision: The Divine is recognized equally in the majestic forces of nature, the honest artisan, and the societal outcast or thief; and is the central realization of the famous Śrī Rudram (also known as the Shatarudreeya) from the KṛṣṇaYajurveda.

The Non-Dual Vision of the All (Sarvaatmatvam):

The RudraSookta views Rudra as the entire fabric of the universe.

It radically dismantles the duality between "pure" and "impure," "noble" and "lowly."

न केवलं ऋषिभ्यः नृपतिभ्यश्च नमस्क्रियते,

अपि तु निसर्गशक्तेः हरितकेशानां वृक्षाणां गर्जतां मेघानां तक्ष्णां पथां चतुष्पथानां च;

तथा च समाजेन बहिष्कृतेभ्यः च्यतेभ्यः स्तेनेभ्यः परिचरेभ्यः तक्ष्भ्यः कुलालेभ्यः निषादेभ्यश्च नमस्यते।

"Obeisances are offered not only to the Sages and kings,

but also to the forces of nature - to the green-haired trees, the roaring clouds, the carpenters, the paths, and the crossroads;

and likewise, obeisances are paid to those marginalized and cast out by the society - to the thieves, the cheats, the carpenters, the potters, and the hunters.

ईश्वरेण सह वास्तुकारस्य चौरस्य च तादात्म्यनिरूपणेन एष सूक्तः एकाग्रम् अद्वैतदर्शनं दृढयति -

यत् किमपि विद्यते तत्सर्वम् एकस्यैव परमसच्चिदानन्दस्य रूपान्तरम् अस्ति।

"By demonstrating the identity of the Divine with both the architect and the thief, this hymn reinforces an uncompromising non-dualism: that whatever exists is but a modification of the single, supreme Cosmic Consciousness (Parama-Sacchidananda)."

In the 'Shatarudreeya', this framework dismantles the human dichotomy of "sacred" versus "profane." By offering obeisances to the robber and the physician in the same breath, the text serves as a foundational scriptural pillar for absolute non-dualism. It forces the intellect to look past social stratification and moral dualism to recognize the single undercurrent of Reality.

नमो हिरण्यबाहवे सेनान्ये दिशां च पतये नमः॥

"Obeisances to the Golden-armed One, to the Commander of forces, and to the Lord of the structural directions."

Within the context of the Shatarudreeya, this opening invocation establishes the overarching cosmic presence of the Divine, before the text transitions into recognizing the same essence in the everyday and the marginalized.

Golden-armed (Hiraṇya-baahu): Symbolizes the self-luminous, effulgent power of consciousness that animates the universe.

Commander (Senaanī): Represents the ordered, guiding principle behind all cosmic action and cosmic forces.

Lord of the Directions (Dishaam pati): Affirms that the Divine pervades all space, leaving no corner of existence - nor any being within it - outside of its absolute domain.

Birth of the Pañchaaksharee Mantra:

From a textual history perspective, the Śrī Rudram is the womb of the most famous Śaivite mantra.

In the exact centre of the Namakam (8th Anuvāka), the phrase appears:

नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च॥

"Obeisances to the auspicious one, and to the one who is exceedingly auspicious."

This is the earliest scriptural appearance of the Namahshivaaya mantra, cementing the evolution of the Vedic Rudra (the Howler/Fierce One) into the classical shiva (the Auspicious One).

Beyond its liturgical use in continuous recitation (Paaraayana) during water ablutions (Abhisheka), the text holds free-standing mantras of immense philosophical weight:

The Tryambaka Mantra (Mahaamṛtyuñjaya):

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।
उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात्॥

*"We worship the three-eyed one, who is fragrant and sustains all growth.
Just as a ripe cucumber is effortlessly liberated from its stalk,
may we be liberated from death unto immortality."]*

MAUNIBHAARGAVA PLACES THE REQUEST TO SOOTAMUNI

तेषां कुलपतिर्वृद्धः प्राह तं मौनिभार्गवः ।

Their Kulapati (elderly person who is revered as their chief) named 'MauniBhaargava', the 'Silent one who was a descendant of Bhrgu' spoke like this to 'SootaMuni'.

MauniBhaargava Spoke:

पैप्पलाद सनाथास्मः त्वदागमनतो वयम्, माहेश्वरं यतस्सत्रं प्रवृत्तं पारमेश्वरम्।

Hey Paippalaada, we who are engaged in Maaheshvara-Yajna, to please 'Parameshvara' - have attained great support by your arrival.

त्वं भक्तोऽतीव रुद्रस्य स्कन्दनन्दीशसन्निभः॥

You are a great devotee of Rudra and are very close to Skanda and Nandeeshha.

जैगीषव्यो मुनिः पूर्वमूर्ध्वरेता महातपाः शंकराज्ञाप्रभावेन स्कन्दाद्यत्प्राप्तवान्

शुभम् पुण्यं शिवरहस्याख्यमितिहासोत्तमोत्तमम् त्रिणेत्रापारचरितं द्वादशांशसमन्वितम्॥

Jaigeeshavya Muni, who is renowned for his severe penance, who is UrdhvaRetas (who lives in perpetual celibacy) - obtained from Skanda by the force of command issued by Shankara, the auspicious meritorious knowledge named 'ShivaRahasyaakhya', the excellent chronicle, which describes the historical events connected to Shiva's life, which contains twelve parts (Amshas) -

उपासता त्वयापूर्वं मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शंभोस्त्वयि यत्प्रोक्तवान्स्वयं

यस्मिन्ददौ हरः प्रीत्या संस्थितेषु मुनिष्वपि

द्वादशांशयुतं साक्षाद्रहस्यं शिवसंभवम् शिवरत्नमहाकोशं

when you (Soota) worshipped him with your mind, speech and actions dedicated to Shambhu's worship, with unparalleled devotion -

which was instructed by Shambhu himself to you,

which Hara offered also to the Munis who had assembled there,

which contained twelve Amshas, which describes the 'Secret of Shambhu's manifestation',

which is the treasure-chest containing Shiva-gems,

तद्देव्या हृदयंगमम् स्कन्दायाचष्ट सा देवी प्रीत्या

which is very much treasured in her heart, by Devi,

which was instructed to Skanda by Devi with much affection,

तेन प्रदर्शितम् शंकरस्याऽऽज्ञया सूतगुरोते शांभवोत्तमे

which was revealed by him to you, the SootaGuru, the best of Shambhu-devotee by the command of Shankara,

जैगीषव्यायतत्प्रादात् स्कन्दस्स्कन्दिततारकः,

which was given to Jaigeeshavya by Skanda who destroyed Taaraka;

इति शुश्रुम वृत्तान्तम्॥

so it has come to our knowledge.

तन्नोब्रूहित्वं घृणानिधे, सुगोप्यमपि तद्ब्रूहि यतो भक्ता वयं शिवे

That knowledge, you please reveal to us, since you are rich with the wealth of compassion. Even if it is Great Secret, please reveal that to us, for we are the devotees of Shiva.

त्रिणेत्रसुचरित्राणां पात्रभूता मुनीश्वराः। माहेश्वरेण सत्रेण शुद्धगात्रा वयं सदा॥

We the best of Munis, are of purified bodies, because of performing Maaheshvara-Satra, and are qualified to absorb the events connected to the Tri-eyed Shiva.

सुत्राममान्ये लोकेऽपि वाञ्छा नो पातभीतितः। गात्रे कलत्रे पुत्रेवा मित्रेवा स्नेहवर्जिताः विरक्ताश्च।

We are without any attachment to the body, or wife, or son, or friend, and do not have to fear the danger of falling downwards into sinful acts, since we have not the least desire for anything in this world ruled by Indra ('Sutraaman', the Excellent protector), and we are filled with extreme dispassion.

वदास्मभ्यं रहस्यं शांभवं मुदा।

Please reveal to us the 'Secret of Shambhu' without any hesitation.

त्वं नो ज्ञानप्रदस्साक्षाद्गुरुः शिवसमो मतः।

You are the Great Guru who bestows the 'Knowledge' to us.

You are equal to Shiva according to us.

त्वं नो माता पितास्माकं वद तत्करुणाबलात्।

You are our Mother who is filled with affection for us; you are our Father who cares for us. Please be compassionate and instruct us this Knowledge".

इत्थं स पैप्पलादो हि सूतः पृष्ठोमुनीश्वरैः उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यं तेषां भक्त्या सुतोषितः।

अनन्यशंभुभक्त्याच जानन्पात्रञ्चतानपि।

When the Muneeshvaras placed a request like this,

Paippalaada Soota, was well-pleased by their devotion, and addressed them with his hands folded in humbleness, understanding that they were fit to be instructed, and himself having unparalleled devotion towards Shambhu.

Soota spoke:

पात्रं भवन्तः कृपया महेशितुः सत्रेण दानैस्तपसोपसद्भिः।

पवित्रगात्रावभृतेन दीक्षया वेदान्तसारार्थविचारनिष्ठाः।

You are all qualified to receive this Knowledge by the grace of Mahesha, since you have been performing this 'Maaheshvara-Satra', and have sanctified your bodies through the acts of charity, and ascetic practices (penance), and have the Deekshaa (initiation) fit to receive this Knowledge, and you are always engaged in analyzing the essence of Upanishads (Vedaanta).

(Unless one had reached some level of Self-realization, after studying all the Upanishads and the Upanishad-based Scriptures like BrhatYogaVaasishtam and Tripura Rahasyam, the subtle knowledge presented in this text cannot be grasped by him.

*This text is not a Puraana describing Shiva's story as a Trinity;
but refers to the mystery of the Shiva, the Aatman that hides within oneself.*

*This text will not bestow any superior merit as such;
and just going through the book as a religious act will not render any fruit as such;
and will not fulfil your worldly desires also.*

It is not a Puraana-story; but points out the highest level of Aatman-state, far beyond the instructions of the Upanishads also.)

शृणुध्वमाद्यं प्रथमांशमेतद्यथा गुरुर्मे भगवान् प्रसादभाक्।

महेश्वरस्याप्रतिमप्रभावो भावो भवोत्कृष्टहृदोऽङ्गिताशः॥

जैगीषव्यमुनिस्तताप तपसा रुद्रं जपंस्तुष्टधीः

कष्टानप्यसमीक्ष्य संवृतमनाः वर्षायुतं वायुभुक्।

(शृणुध्वमाद्यं प्रथमांशमेतद्यथा)

Listen at first, to this first portion (Amsa), in which -

(गुरुर्मे भगवान् जैगीषव्यमुनिः)

Jaigeeshavya Muni, who is my Guru, the Bhagavaan (endowed with all the riches of knowledge),

(प्रसादभाक्)

one who is fit to receive the 'Grace of Maheshvara',

(अप्रतिम-प्रभावः)

who exists as unparalleled state of penance,

(भावः)

who stays in the state of pure absorption of devotion (to Siva),

(भव-उत्कृष्ट-हृदः)

whose heart has become supreme; purified, exalted and elevated through intense focus on
'Lord Bhava (Shiva)',

(or, 'whose heart has risen completely above the ocean of Bhava');

(उङ्गिताशः)

who has thrown away the thoughts of the world completely -

(तताप तपसा रुद्रं जपंस्तुष्टधीः)

performed severe penance, reciting the Mantra of Rudra,

with a mind oozing with blissful-devotion,

कष्टानप्यसमीक्ष्य संवृतमनाः

disregarding all the difficulties he met with,

with his mind fully withdrawn (from all the agitations)

(वर्षायुतं वायुभुक्)

consuming only the air, for 'Ayuta (myriad) years'.

शिष्टः श्रीशिपिविष्टपादकमलध्यानो विशिष्टाऽन्तरो ब्रह्मिष्ठो हि गरिष्ठमद्भुततरं प्राप प्रसादं हरात्।
 Being well-disciplined in the practices, and engaged in the continuous contemplation of
 the lotus-feet of 'Shree ShipiVishta' (Shiva),
 with his mind endowed with excellent purity, and established in the state of Brahman,
 he obtained the most venerable, the most wonderful blessing from Hara.

["Shipi" refers to 'pashus' (living beings/animals), and "vishṭa" means pervading or residing within.
 Thus, it means "He who resides within all living beings as the inner soul."

"Shipi" also means 'rays of light';

'ShipiVishta' also means "He who is clothed in rays of light" or "The Effulgent One."

'ShipiVishta' is the expression of the 'Supreme Consciousness' that is completely 'diffused into and
 manifest within the material universe', whether as light rays (rashmi) or the life-force of living beings
 (pashu).]

इति श्री शिवरहस्ये प्रथमांशे सूतमुनिसंवादे प्रथमोऽध्यायः

**END OF THE FIRST CHAPTER NAMED 'SOOTAMUNI CONVERSATION'
 IN
 THE FIRST PORTION IN SHREE SHIVARAHASYA**