

नीळा सूक्तम् (तैत्तिरीय संहिता ४-४-१२-५)

Nīlā Sūktam (taittirīya saṁhitā 4-4-12-5)

Nīlā Sūktam word-by-word meanings

This refers to the dēvī Aditi who is worshipped in the *taittirīya saṁhitā* just before the beginning of the popular Rudra mantras, indicating that many rituals, including that of Rudra worship, began with worship to the dēvī. In other *purāṇic* and *śhrivaishṇava* literature, she is referred to as Viṣṇupatnī, or the consort of Viṣṇu. (Lakṣhmī-śhrī dēvī and Mother Earth, Bhū dēvī, are also the consorts of Viṣṇu).

If we refer to Nīlā as Aditi, she is infinity as *aditi* means “un-divided” or “in-divisible” or infinity.

If we take the literal meaning, *nīla* means “blue”, hence she is referred to as the “blue dēvī”. Who or what is this blue dēvī? It is none other than Mother Earth who is visible as a blue Planet from the moon. This derivation also agrees with the term “consort of Viṣṇu” as Bhū dēvī (Earth) is addressed as a consort of Viṣṇu. Here we may consider Nīlā dēvī and Bhū dēvī as one. The mantras are addressed to the living goddess who animates our Mother Earth, who is also called as *Gaia* in new age Western writings.

नीळादेवी॰ शरणमहं प्रपद्ये सुतरसि तरसे नमः ।

। नीळा । देवीम् । शरणम् । अहम् । प्र-पद्ये । सु-तरसि । तरसे । नमः ॥

nīlādevīgm' śharaṇamaham' prapadyē sutarasi tarasē namaḥa ।

। nīlā । dēvīm । śharaṇam । aham । pra-padyē । su-tarasi । tarasē । namaḥa ॥

नीळा **nīlā** = blue ॥ देवीम् **dēvīm** = divinely shining feminine deity ॥ शरणम् **śharaṇam** = shelter

॥ अहम् **aham** = I ॥ प्र-पद्ये **pra-padyē** = fall at (Her) feet ॥ सु-तरसि **su-tarasi** = *su* = *sushṭhu* = excellent, *tarasi* = swimmer, hence *su-tarasi* = excellent swimmer ॥ तरसे **tarasē** = to the swimmer

॥ नमः **namaḥa** = my *namaskāras*

I surrender myself at the Feet of Nīlā dēvī, the excellent swimmer, who helps us swim and cross this samsāra-sāgara.

गृणाहि । घृतवती सवितराधिपत्यैः पयस्वती रन्तिराशा नो , अस्तु ।

। गृणाही ॥ घृतवती । स+वितः । आधि-पत्यैः । पयस्-वती । रन्तिः । आशा । नः । अस्तु ॥

gṛṇāhi । ghṛtavatī savitarādhipatyaiḥ payasvatī ran'tirāśhā nō , as'tu ।

। gṛṇāhī ॥ ghṛtavatī । sa+vitaḥa । ādhi-patyaiḥ । payas-vatī । rantīḥi । āśhā । naḥa । astu ॥

गृणाही **gṛṇāhī** = (we all) sing in praise to invoke her presence [from the root गृ gṛ]

घृतवती **ghṛtavatī** = full of ghee, here ghee represents the final essence of all intellect

॥ सवितः = स+वितः **savitaḥa** = sa+vitaḥa = with knowledge ॥ आधि-पत्यैः **ādhi-patyaiḥi** = through (your) overlordship or governance ॥ पयस्-वती **payas-vatī** = full of milk or full of juices ॥ रन्तिः **rantīḥi** = full of *rati* or affection (for us) ॥ आशा **āśhā** = the *diśhās* or directions ॥ नः **naḥa** = for us all ॥ अस्तु **astu** = be

We all sing in praise to her as full of knowledge and its final essence (that is, knowledge of the Self), so that her affection overflows for us from all directions.

ध्रुवा दिशां विष्णुपत्न्यघोराऽस्येशाना सहसो या मनोता ।

। ध्रुवा । दिशाम् । विष्णु-पत्नी । अघोरा । अस्य । ईशाना । सहसः । या । मन+उता ॥

dhruvā diśhām' viṣṇu'patnyaghōrā'asyēśhānā sahasō yā manōtā ।

। dhruvā । diśhām । viṣṇu-patnī । aghōrā । asya । iśhānā । sahasaḥa । yā । mana+utā ॥

ध्रुवा **dhruvā** = firmly focussed ॥ दिशाम् **diśhām** = in the directions (all)

॥ विष्णु-पत्नी **viṣṇu-patnī** = consort of Viṣṇu ॥ अघोरा **aghōrā** = not fearsome ॥ अस्य **asya** = his

॥ ईशाना **iśhānā** = overlordship ॥ सहसः **sahasāḥa** = with Him (with Viṣṇu) ॥ या **yā** = whosoever she

॥ मनोता = मन+उता **manōtā** = mana+utā = mind elevator = favourite

Our favourite, whosoever she is, she is firmly focussed, not fearsome, as the consort of Viṣṇu, along with His overlordship (simply meaning she is very loving for us all).

बृहस्पतिर्मातरिश्वोत वायुः सन्धुवाना वाता , अभि नो गृणन्तु ।

। बृहस्पतिः । मातरिश्वा । उत । वायुः । सम्+धुवाना । सम् । धुवाना । वाता । अभि । नः । गृणन्तु ॥

br̥has'patir' mātariśh'vōta vāyus' san'dhuvānā vātā , abhi nō gr̥ṇan'tu ।

। br̥haspatiḥ । mātariśhvā । uta । vāyuhu । sam+dhuvānā । sam । dhuvānā । vātā । abhi । naḥa । gr̥ṇantu ॥

बृहस्पतिः br̥haspatiḥ = the Divine Teacher ॥ मातरिश्वा mātariśhvā = the principle Mother vāyuhu that drives and animates all other vāyus (winds) ॥ उत uta = also ॥ वायुः vāyuhu = winds

॥ सन्धुवाना = सम्+धुवाना sandhuvānā = sam+dhuvānā = equal, same+cleansing ॥ वाता vātā = winds

॥ अभि abhi = lovingly ॥ नः naḥa = us ॥ गृणन्तु gr̥ṇantu = mentally wishing

May Br̥haspati and Mātariśhvā (both) lovingly wish us well with their equally-cleansing winds

विष्टम्भो दिवो धरुणः पृथिव्या , अस्येशाना जगतो विष्णुपत्नी ।

। विष्टम्भः । दिवः । धरुणः । पृथिव्या । अस्य । ईशाना । जगतः । विष्णु-पत्नी ॥

viṣh'tam'bhō divō dharuṇa[fp]' pṛthiv'yā , as'yēśhānā jagatō viṣh'ṇupat'nī ।

। viṣhṭambhaḥa । divaḥa । dharuṇaḥa । pṛthivyā । asya । īśhānā । jagataḥa । viṣhṇu-patnī ॥

विष्टम्भः = वि+स्तम्भः viṣhṭambhaḥa = vi+stambhaḥa = viśhēṣha stambhaḥa = special pillar

॥ दिवः divaḥa = of the heavens ॥ धरुणः dharuṇaḥa = hold together and hold aloft

॥ पृथिव्या pṛthivyā = by the Earth ॥ अस्य asya = his ॥ ईशाना īśhānā = overlordship

॥ जगतः jagataḥa = Universe ॥ विष्णु-पत्नी viṣhṇu-patnī = Viṣhṇu-consort

As the consort of Viṣhṇu, (and owning) His overlordship-powers (of maintenance), may she hold us all together, (like a) special pillar holding aloft the heavens.

विश्वव्यचा , इषयन्ती सुभूतिः शिवा नो , अस्त्वदितिरुपस्थे ।

। विश्व-व्यचा । इषयन्ती । सु-भूतिः । शिवा । नः । अस्तु । अदितिः । उपस्थे ॥

viṣh'vav'yachā , iṣhayantī subhūtiśh' śhivā nō , ast'vaditirupas'thē ।

। viṣhva-vyachhā । iṣhayantī । su-bhūtiḥi । śhivā । naḥa । astu । aditiḥi । upasthē ॥

विश्व-व्यचा viṣhva-vyachā = all-encompassing ॥ इषयन्ती iṣhayantī = impelling (by her power)

॥ सु-भूतिः su-bhūtiḥi = suṣhṭhu bhūtiḥi = superb materialization ॥ शिवा śhivā = good and auspicious

॥ नः naḥa = for us ॥ अस्तु astu = be ॥ अदितिः aditiḥi = infinity (Nīlā dēvī here)

॥ उपस्थे upasthē = in (her) lap.

O dēvī Aditi, superb materialization, (by) thy all-encompassing extent, (by your) inherent power, may you be śhivā for us all in your (comforting) lap!

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Please email them to Maunish Vyas: maunish.vyas@ecampus.utdallas.edu)