

Rudrashtadhyayi

Verse 1 - **Rishi:** Parameshti, **Chanda:** Gayatri, **Devata:** Rudra

ॐ नमस्ते रुद्र मन्यव उतो त इषवे नमः । बाहुभ्यामुत ते नमः ॥

namas te rudra manyava utó ta iṣave namaḥ | bāhubhyām uta te namaḥ ||

namah – obescience, **te** – to you, **rudra** – O Rudra, **manyave** – ferocious or anger, **uta** – and, **te** – to your, **iṣave** – arrows, **namaḥ** – my obesciences, **bāhubhyām** – shoulders/arms, **uta** – and, **te** – to your, **namaḥ** – my obesciences

Literal: O Rudra, my obesciences to your anger, moreover obesciences to your arrows and obesciences to your arms/shoulders.

Interpretive: O Rudra, my obesciences to your anger, to your shoulders and arms [which carry your bow] and finally to your arrows [which destroy your transgressors].

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Homage be paid unto thy wrath, O Rudra, homage to thy shaft: to thy two arms be homage paid.

Verse 2 - **Rishi:** Parameshti, **Chanda:** Aarshisvarat anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोरापापकाशिनी । तया नस्तन्वा शंतमया गिरिशन्ताभि चाकशीहि ॥

yā te rudra śivā tanúr aghorāpāpakāśinī |
tayā nas tanvā śaṁtamayā giriśantābhi cākaśīhi ||

yā - he, **te** - Your, **rudra** - O Rudra, **śivā** - peaceful/auspicious/beneficial, **tanúh** - form, **aghorā** - calming, **apāpakāśinī** - the preventer of sinful activity and bestower of spiritual fruits, **tayā** - that, **nah** - to us, **tanvā** - by your form, **śaṁtamayā** - the producer of happiness, **giriśanta** - the one who abides in the himalayas, **abhicākaśīhi** - look at us with your grace.

Literal: O Rudra, your form which is peaceful, auspicious, beneficial, calming and preventer of sinful activity, through this form which is the producer of happiness, O Lord, residing in the Himalayas may you look at us with your grace.

Interpretive: O Rudra, residing in the Himalayas bestow upon us your grace with your form which produces happiness, peace, auspiciousness, calmness, spiritual benefit and prevents sinful activity.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: With that auspicious form of thine, mild, Rudra! pleasant to behold, Even with that most blessed form, look, Mountain-haunter! here on us.

Verse 3 - **Rishi:** Parameshti, **Chanda:** Virat arshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

यामिषुं गिरिशन्त हस्ते बिभर्ष्यस्तवे । शिवां गिरित्र तां कुरु मा हिंसीः पुरुषं जगत् ॥

yām iṣuṃ giriśanta haste bibharṣy astave |
śivāṃ giritra tāṃ kuru mā himśīḥ puruṣaṃ jagat ||

yām – who, **iṣuṃ** – arrows, **giriśanta** – transfixed in the words of the Vedas, **haste** – in hand, **bibharṣi** – who holds, **astave** – to release, **śivāṃ** – your auspiciousness, **giritra** – the protector abiding in the Himalayas, **tāṃ** – to him, **kuru** – do, **mā** – don't, **himśīḥ** – destruction, **puruṣaṃ** – to humanity, **jagat** – material creation.

Literal: O Lord, transfixed in the words of the Vedas, who is holding in hand the arrows, may you release them to which is most auspicious. O Protector abiding in the Himalayas, do not destroy but protect humanity and material creation

Interpretive: O Lord, transfixed in the words of the Vedas, who is holding in hand the arrows, may you release them [to protect us] in a way which is most beneficial [for us]. O protector abiding in the Himalayas, [show your grace], do not show your wrath but protect humanity and material creation [you have created].

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: The shaft which, Mountain-haunter, thou art holding in thy hand to shoot, Make that auspicious, Mountain-Lord! Injure not man nor moving thing.

Verse 4 - **Rishi:** Parameshti, **Chanda:** nichrut arshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

शिवेन वचसा त्वा गिरिशाच्छां वदामसि । यथा नः सर्वमिज्जगदयक्ष्मँ सुमना असत् ॥

śivīna vacasā tvā giriśācchā vadāmasi |
yathā naḥ sarvam ij jagad ayakṣmam̐ sumanā asat ||

śivén - benefical form, **vacasā** - through words, **tvā** - to you, **giriśa** - Lord of the Himalayas, **accha** - to obtain, **vadāmasi** - we pray, **yathā** - for which, **naḥ** - we/our, **sarvam** - all, **it** - only, **jagad** - material creation, **ayakṣmam̐** - free from disease, **sumanāh** - of sound mind, **asat** - be.

Literal: O Lord of the Himalayas, through our auspicious words we pray to obtain you, through which our creation becomes free from disease and obtain a sound mind.

Interpretive: O Lord of the Himalayas, through our auspicious words we pray to obtain you, through which our creation [which you have created] becomes free from disease and obtains a sound mind [to understand you better].

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: O Dweller on the Mountain, we salute thee with auspicious hymn; That all, yea, all our people may be healthy and well-satisfied.

Verse 5 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** bhurik aarshi bruhati, **Devata:** Rudra

अध्यवोचदधिवक्ता प्रथमो दैव्यो भिषक् । अहीँश्च सर्वाँन्जम्भयन्त्सर्वाँश्च यातुधान्यो धराचीः परा सुव ॥

adhyavocad adhivaktā prathamó daivyo bhiṣak |

ahīmś ca sarvān jambhayant sarvās ca yātudhānyā dharācīḥ parā suva ||

adhyavocat - do/say that which is the great, **adhivaktā** - the exponent of the Vedas, **prathamah** - the first, **daivyah** - divinity, **bhiṣak** - the destroyer, **ahīmś** - reptiles, **ca** - and, **sarvān** - all, **jambhayan** - to destroy, **sarvāh** - all beings, **ca** - and, **yātudhānyah** - evil spirits, **adharācīḥ** - suppressor, **parā suva** - remove from us.

Literal: O Lord, exponent of the Vedas, the first, the benefactor of the devas, the destroyer of the cycle of birth, death and disease, bless us that we may be the greatest. O destroyer, suppress the reptiles and the evil spirits downwards, far away from us.

Interpretive: O Lord, exponent of the Vedas, the first [The supreme Lord], the benefactor of the Devas, the destroyer of the cycle of birth, death and disease, bless us that we may be the greatest. O destroyer, suppress the reptiles and the evil spirits [which produce desires, lust, anger, jealousy etc] downwards, far away from us.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: The Advocate, the first divine Physician, hath defended us. Crushing all serpents, drive away all Yātudhānis down below.

Verse 6 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** viraat aarshi pankti, **Devata:** Rudra

असौ यस्ताम्रो अरुण उत बभ्रुः सुमङ्गलः । ये चैनँ रुद्रा अभितो दिक्षु श्रिताः सहस्रशो वैषाँ हेड ईमहे ॥

asau yas tāmro aruṇa uta babhruḥ sumaṅgalaḥ |

yī cainam̐ rudrā abhito dikṣu śritāḥ sahasraśó vaiṣāṃ hīḍa īmahe ||

asaa - this sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra, **yah** - who, **tāmroh** - looking coppery, **aruṇa** - red, **uta** - and, **babhruḥ** - yellow, **sumaṅgalaḥ** - very auspicious, **yé** - that, **ca** - and, **enam̐** - his, **rudrāh** - sun raise, **abhitah** - in all, **dikṣu** - directions, **śritāḥ** - dependent, **sahasraśah** - thousands, **eṣāṃ** - his, **hēḍa** - anger/wrath, **ava īmahe** - detract/against

Literal: This Sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra, looking coppery, red and yellow, which is very auspicious, in whose close proximity there are thousands of sun raises in all directions, we pray against their wrath.

Interpretive: This Sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra, looking coppery [during sunrise], red [during sunset] and yellow [during the day], which is very auspicious, in whose close proximity there are thousands of [Rudras in the form of] sun raises in all directions, we pray against their wrath.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: That most auspicious One whose hue is coppery and red and brown, and those, the Rudras who maintain their station in the regions, who surround him in a thousand bands, of these we deprecate the wrath.

Verse 7 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** viraat aarshi pankti, **Devata:** Rudra

असौ यो वसर्पति नीलग्रीवो विलोहितः । उत्तैनं गोपा अदृशन्नदृशन्नुदहार्यः स दृष्टो मृडयाति नः ॥

asau yo vasarpati nīlagrīvo vilohitaḥ |

utainaṃ gopā adrśrann adrśrann udahāryaḥ sa dr̥ṣṭó mr̥ḍayāti naḥ ||

asaa - This Sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra, **yah** - who, **vasarpati** - who during sunset is constantly roaming, **nīlagrīvah** - adorning a blue neck, **vilohitaḥ** - bloody/red, **uta** - and, **enam** - his, **gopā** - cow herders, **adrśrann** - perceive, **adrśrann** - perceive, **udahāryaḥ** - girls carrying water, **sa** - they, **dr̥ṣṭah** - whilst witnessing, **mr̥ḍayāti** - experience deep happiness, **naḥ** - they.

Literal - This Sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra, who during sunset looks reddish and then blue. He who the cow herders, and the girls carrying water perceive, who whilst witnessing him experience deep happiness.

Interpretive - The Sun, the direct manifestation of Rudra who during sunset [initially] looks reddish and [then turning] blue [at night]. He [the blue necked one] who the cow herders, and the girls carrying water perceive, who whilst witnessing him [they] experience deep happiness.ⁱⁱ

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: May he who glides away, whose neck is azure, and whose hue is red, He whom the herdsmen, whom the girls who carry water have beheld, may he when seen be kind to us.

Verse 8 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** nichrut aarshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

नमो स्तु नीलग्रीवाय सहस्राक्षाय मीढुषे । अथो ये अस्य सत्वानो हं तेभ्यो करं नमः ॥

namo stu nīlagrīvāya sahasrākṣāya mīḍhuṣe |

atho yé asya satvāno haṃ tébhyo karaṃ namaḥ ||

namah - Obesciences, **astu** - to, **nīlagrīvāya** - the blue necked one, **sahasrākṣāya** - a thousand eyes, **mīḍhuṣe** - provider of rain, **atho** - and, **yé** - that, **asya** - to him, **satvānah** - devotees/servants, **ahaṃ** - I, **tébhyo** - to them, **akaraṃ** - I do, **namaḥ** - Obesciences

Literal: Obesciences to the blue necked one, adorning a thousand eyes, provider of rain and to all his devotees/servants I offer my obesciences.

Interpretive: Obesciences to the blue necked one, [who manifests himself as Indra] adorning a thousand eyes and provider of rain and to all his devotees/servants I offer my obesciences.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Homage to him the Azure-nested, the thousand-eyed, the bountiful, Yea, and his spirit ministers to them I offer reverence.

Verse 9 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** bhurik aarshi ushhrik, **Devata:** Rudra

प्रमुञ्च धन्वन्स्त्वमुभयोरार्त्त्योर्ज्याम् । याश्च ते हस्त इषवः परा ता भगवो वप ॥

pramuñca dhanvanas tvam ubhayor ārtnyor jyām |
yās ca te hasta iṣavaḥ parā tā bhagavo vapa | |

pramuñca - release, **dhanvanah** - bow, **tvam** - you, **ubhayoh** - both, **ārtnyor** - ends, **jyām** - string, **yāh** - that, **ca** - and, **te** - your, **hasta** - hands, **iṣavaḥ** - arrows, **tāh** - them, **bhagavah** - O Lord, **parāvapa** - cast afar

Literal: O Lord, release both sides your string attached to your bow and cast afar the arrows that are in your hands

Interpretive: O Lord (endorsed with the 6 qualitiesⁱⁱⁱ), release [from] both sides your string attached to your bow and cast afar the arrows that are [currently] in your hands.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Loosen thy bowstring, loosen it from thy bow's two extremities, And cast away, O Lord Divine, the arrows that are in thy hand.

Verse 10 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** bhurik aarshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

विज्यं धनुः कपर्दिनो विशल्यो वाणवाँ उत । अनैशन्नस्य या इषव आभुरस्य निषङ्गधिः ॥

vijyaṃ dhanuḥ kapardino viśalyo vāṇavāṃ ūta |
aneśann asya yā iṣava ābhur asya niṣaṅgadhiḥ | |

vijyaṃ - string less, **dhanuḥ** - bow, **kapardinah** - the one with matted locks, **viśalyah** - without arrows, **vāṇavāna** - hatchet, **uta** - and, **aneśann** - destroy, **asya** - his, **yāh** - that, **iṣava** - arrows, **ābhuh** - empty, **asya** - his, **niṣaṅgadhiḥ** - scabbard.

Literal: May the matted Locked ones bow be string less and his hatchet without arrows, and any existing arrows be destroyed and let his scabbard be empty.

Interpretive: May the matted Locked [Rudras], bow be string less and his hatchet without arrows, and any existing arrows be destroyed and let his scabbard be empty [of his sword].

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Now stringless be Kapardin's bow, his quiver hold no pointed shaft. The shafts he had have perished and the sheath that held his sword is bare.

Verse 11 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** nichrut anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

या ते हेतिर्मीदुष्टम हस्ते बभूव ते धनुः । तयास्मान्विश्वतस्त्वमयक्ष्मया परि भुज ।

yā te hetir mīdhuṣṭama haste babhūva te dhanuḥ |
tayāsmān viśvatas tvam ayakṣmayā pari bhujā ||

yā - that, **te** - your, **hetih** - weapon, **mīdhuṣṭama** - that which showers the knowledge of immortality, **haste** - in hand, **babhūva** - exists, **te** - that, **dhanuḥ** - bow, **tayā** - with that, **asmān** - do, **viśvatas** - on all sides, **tvam** - your, **ayakṣmayā** - without harm, **paribhujā** - protect us.

Literal: O Showerer of the knowledge of immortality, that weaponry bow which exists in hand, without harming, protect us on all sides.

Interpretive: O Rudra, Showerer of the knowledge of immortality, that weaponry bow [which exists] in [your] hand, without [causing any] harm, protect us on all sides.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Thy weapon, O Most Bountiful, the bow that resteth in thy hand, With that, deprived of power to harm, protect thou us on every side.

Verse 12 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** nichrut aarshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

परि ते धन्वनो हेतिरस्मान्वृणक्तु विश्वतः । अथो य इषुधिस्तवारे अस्मन्नि धेहि तम् ।

pari te dhanvano hetir asmān vr̥ṇaktu viśvataḥ |
atho ya iṣudhis tavāré asman ni dhehi tam ||

te - your, **dhanvanah** - bow, **hetih** - weaponry/arrows, **asmān** - us, **parivr̥ṇaktu** - forsake, **viśvataḥ** - all sides, **atho** - and, **ya** - that, **iṣudhih** - hatchet, **tava** - your, **āré** - far, **asman** - us, **nidhehi** - place, **tam** - that

Literal: May your arrows befitting your bow, forsake us on all sides and may you place your hatchet far from us.

Interpretive: O Rudra, may your arrows befitting your bow, [when released] forsake us on all sides and may you place your hatchet [containing arrows] far [away] from us.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: So may the arrow of thy bow, in all directions, pass us by, And in a place remote from us lay thou the quiver that thou hast.

Verse 13 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** nichrut aarshi anushtup, **Devata:** Rudra

अवतत्य धनुश्च सहस्राक्ष शतेषुधे । निशीर्य शल्यानां मुखा शिवो नः सुमना भव ॥

avatatyā dhanuṣ ṭvam̐ sahasrākṣa śateṣudhe |
niśīrya śalyānāṃ mukhā śivó naḥ sumanā bhava ||

avatatyā - with the strings released, **dhanuh** - bow, **ṭvam̐** - you, **sahasrākṣa** - thousand eyed, **śat** - a hundred, **eṣudhe** - quiver, **niśīrya** - to throw away, **śalyānāṃ** - arrows, **mukhā** - tip, **śivah** - most auspicious, **naḥ** - us, **sumanā** - gracious, **bhava** - let be.

Literal: With the string released from your bow, O thousand eyed, thousand quivered one. Throw away the tips of the arrows and be auspicious and gracious to us.

Interpretive: O thousand eyed and thousand quivered Rudra! With the the string released from your bow [on each end], throw away the tips of your arrows and be auspicious and gracious to us.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Having unbent thy bow O thou hundred-eyed, hundred-quivered One! And dulled thy pointed arrows' heads, be kind and gracious unto us.

Verse 14 - **Rishi:** Prajapati, **Chanda:** bhurik aarshi ushrik, **Devata:** Rudra

नमस्त आयुधायानातताय धृष्णवे । उभाभ्यामुत ते नमो बाहुभ्यां तव धन्वने ॥

namas ta āyudhāyānātātāya dhr̥ṣṇave |
ubhābhyām uta te namo bāhubhyāṃ tava dhanvane ||

namah - obesciences, **te** - your, **āyudhāya** - weapons/arrows, **anātātāya** - not placed, **dhr̥ṣṇave** - powerful, **ubhābhyām** - both, **uta** - and, **te** - your, **namah** - obesciences, **bāhubhyāṃ** - arms, **tava** - your, **dhanvane** - bow.

Literal: Obesciences to your bow and powerful arrows not placed. Obesciences to both your arms.

Interpretive: O Rudra, obesciences to both your arms. Obesciences again to your bow and your powerful arrows not placed [upon your bow].

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: To thy fierce weapon, now unstrung, be reverent obeisance paid. Homage be paid to both thine arms, and to thy bow be reverence!

Verse 15 - **Rishi:** Kutsa, **Chanda:** nichrut aarshi jagati, **Devata:** Rudra

मा नो महान्तमुत मा नो अर्भकं मा न उक्षन्तमुत मा न उक्षितम् ।

मा नो वधीः पितरं मोत मातरं मा नः प्रियास्तन्वो रुद्र रीरिषः ।।

mā no mahāntam uta mā no arbhakaṃ mā na ukṣantam uta mā na ukṣitam |

mā no vadhiḥ pitaraṃ móta mātaraṃ mā naḥ priyās tanvò rudra rīriṣaḥ ||

mā - don't, **nah** - us, **mahāntam** - elders, **uta** - and, **mā** - don't, **nah** - us, **arbhakaṃ** - children, **mā** - don't, **nah** - us, **ukṣantam** - youth, **uta** - and, **mā** - don't, **nah** - us, **ukṣitam** - mothers baring children, **mā** - don't, **nah** - us, **vadhīḥ** - inflict pain, **pitaraṃ** - father, **mā** - don't, **uta** - and, **mātaraṃ** - mother, **mā** - don't, **nah** - us, **priyāh** - wife, **tanvah** - grand children, **rudra** - O Rudra, **rīriṣaḥ** - strike

Literal: Don't inflict pain of your strike on elders, on children, nor youth or mothers baring children, nor to my father nor mother, nor to my wife or grand children, O Rudra.

Interpretive: O Rudra, don't inflict pain on our elders, children, youth, pregnant women, nor to my parents, wife and grandchildren.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Do thou no injury to great or small of us, harm not the growing boy, harm not the full grown man. Slay not a sire among us, slay no mother here, and to our own dear bodies, Rudra! do no harm.

Verse 16 - **Rishi:** Kutsa, **Chanda:** nichrut aarshi jagati, **Devata:** Rudra

मा नस्तोके तनये मा न आयुषि मा नो गोषु मा नो अश्वेषु रीरिषः ।

मा नो वीरान् रुद्र भामिनो वधीर्हविष्मन्तः सदमित्त्वा हवामहे ।।

mā nas toké tanaye mā na āyuṣi mā no góṣu mā no aśveṣu rīriṣaḥ |

mā no vīrān rudra bhāmino vadhīr haviṣmantaḥ sadam it tvā havāmahe ||

mā - don't, **nah** - our, **toké** - children, **tanaye** - grandchildren, **mā** - don't, **nah** - our, **āyuṣi** - life, **mā** - don't, **nah** - our, **góṣu** - cows, **mā** - don't, **nah** - our, **aśveṣu** - horses, **rīriṣaḥ** - hurt, **mā** - don't, **nah** - our, **vīrān** - soldiers, **rudra** - O Rudra, **bhāminah** - valiant, **vadhīh** - hurt, **haviṣmantaḥ** - offering oblations, **sadamit** - always, **tvā** - to you, **havāmahe** - call upon you in sacrifice.

Literal: Don't hurt our children or grandchildren, nor our lives. Don't hurt our cows or horses. Don't hurt our valiant soldiers. O Rudra, we offer always oblations to you in sacrifice.

Interpretive: O Rudra, don't hurt our children, grandchildren, cows, horses, valiant soldiers or own our lives. We offer always oblations to you in [the fire] sacrifice.

Ralph T.H. Griffith Translation: Harm us not in our seed or in our progeny, harm us not in our life or in our cows or steeds. Slay not our heroes in the fury of their wrath. We with oblations ever call on only thee.

ⁱThe word rudra has many meanings:

ru – sorrow and ignorance + drāvayati – he who melts or destroys = He who destroys sorrow and ignorance

rut – knowledge + rāti – he who gives = He who bestows knowledge

rodayati iti rudra – he who makes people cry

ⁱⁱAlthough the rudrashtadhyayi exclusively deals with Lord Rudra, according to Vaishnava tradition this verse points to Lord Sri Krsna, as there is no other scriptural reference to any other deity who brings bliss to the gopas' and gopis' other than Sri Krsna. This verse is counted as a 'gupta' - secret verse indirectly mentioning Sri Krsna, predicting his avatar and also showing his divine supremacy.

ⁱⁱⁱAlthough Rudra is the presiding and ultimate deity in this hymn, he is for the first time mentioned as Bhagavan. According to the Visnu Purana, there are six qualities which constitute the name Bhagavan. They are: aishwariya (opulence), virya (valour), sri (wealth), yash (fame), gyana (knowledge) and vairagya (renunciation).

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Rudrashtadhyayi

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NOTE: All interpretive translations will be of my own unless stated otherwise.