

Mantra Pushpam

Mantra Pushpam is a special prayer offered in the Vedic tradition, particularly at the conclusion of Yajnas (sacrifices), Pujas, and the worship of deities. It is not merely the offering of flowers; it is a spiritual process of conceiving Vedic mantras as flowers and offering them to the Supreme Soul (**Paramatma**). From an Advaitic perspective, the meaning and significance of Mantra Pushpam are profoundly deep.

Advaita Significance of Mantra Pushpam

In Mantra Pushpam, primary Vedic hymns such as the "Narayana Sukdam," "Purusha Sukdam," "Sri Sukdam," and "Durga Sukdam" are chanted. These Suktams describe the universal form (**Vishwarupa**), omnipresence, omnipotence, and immanence of the Divine. In Advaita, Mantra Pushpam is similar to a **Jnana Yajna** (Sacrifice of Knowledge), where internal surrender is paramount alongside external offerings.

1. The Mantra is the Flower – Knowledge is the Offering:

- In a typical puja, we offer flowers to the deity. In Mantra Pushpam, the mantras themselves are the flowers. In Advaita, the true flower is **Knowledge (Jnana)**. The understanding of divinity formed in the mind, internal clarity, and Self-knowledge are the flowers most dear to the Divine.
- Chanting Mantra Pushpam means grasping the Divine principle, Brahman-knowledge, and the unity of the Soul encapsulated in these Vedic mantras, and offering those flowers of wisdom to Parabrahma. It signifies the transition from external worship to internal meditation.

2. The Divine is Omnipresent – "I am That":

- The hymns in Mantra Pushpam declare that the Divine exists everywhere, in all forms, and within all living beings. For instance, the Purusha Sukdam describes the Divine as "**Sahasra-shirsha Purusha**" (the thousand-headed one), stating that the entire universe is the form of the Divine.
- From an Advaitic view, this Purusha (Paramatma) who pervades the entire universe is not different from the Atman (Self) within us. True offering is realizing that the flowers, mantras, and devotion we offer are all to that Supreme Soul, and that the same Supreme Soul resides within oneself. This leads to the realization of "**Aham Brahmasmi**" (I am Brahman).

3. Yajna – Internal Self-Surrender:

- In the Vedic era, Yajnas involved making external offerings into the fire. Mantra Pushpam symbolizes the Jnana Yajna. Here, instead of external offerings, one burns away their own ignorance, ego, and sense of duality in the fire of knowledge. Chanting these mantras while meditating on their meaning and offering them with the conviction that

"everything is Divine, and I too am Divine" is the highest form of self-surrender (**Atmarpana**).

4. Relinquishing the Sense of Agency and Enjoyment:

- The conclusion of Mantra Pushpam contains great proclamations like "**Om Tat Sat**" (That alone is the Truth). This is the realization that the entire creation is the truthful Brahman, and nothing exists separate from it.
- In Advaita, the soul's perception of itself as the 'doer' (**Kartrutva**) and the 'enjoyer' (**Bhoktrutva**) is the cause of bondage. Through Mantra Pushpam, one learns that they are merely an instrument, everything is the Divine will, and they learn to surrender the fruits of their actions to the Divine. This signifies the sacrifice of agency and enjoyment, which is a stepping stone to Knowledge.

5. Purification and Liberation (Moksha):

- Mantra Pushpam comes at the end of ritualistic worship, signifying the surrender of the fruits of the puja to the Divine. In Advaita, all karmas are burnt away through Knowledge, and the soul attains liberation.
- Through the chanting of Mantra Pushpam, the seeker purifies themselves, emerges from ignorance, recognizes their true nature as Brahman, and attains the bliss of Moksha.

Conclusion

From an Advaitic standpoint, **Mantra Pushpam** is not merely a ritual; it is an internal **Jnana Yajna**. Here, Vedic mantras transform into flowers of knowledge. By offering them to Parabrahma, one reinforces the sense of unity—that everything in the universe is Divine, and I too am that Divine. Through this realization, the seeker sheds ego and ignorance, becomes free from all fears, gets established in their true nature as **Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman**, and attains the unsurpassed bliss of liberation. This is the ultimate goal of all worship, mantras, and spiritual practice.

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