

Devi Aparādh Kshamāpan Stotra
Hymn seeking Forgiveness of Sins from the Goddess
[attributed to Shri Ādi Shankarāchārya]

O Mother! I don't know mantras, or tantras. Nor do I know hymns
of praise, invocations, meditations.
Prayerful rituals nor noisy grieving are among my skills.
But, one thing I do know.
Simply following your commands removes all pain.

O Mother,
Who are everyone's salvation.
I neither know worship rituals, nor have wealth.
Born lazy, I cannot offer you *pujā* with all protocols.
Forgive my failures and shortcomings.
For, a son may be unfilial
But a mother can never be unmotherly.

Mother, in the world there may be many sons steadfast in your duty.
But I am insecure, irresolute.
Abandoning me is not like you, O Good Mother,
For, a son may be unfilial
But a mother can never be unmotherly.

O World Mother, sadly I have never worshipped at your feet.
Goddess, I have not surrendered my wealth at your feet.
Even so, you shower incomparable love on such a base one.
For, a son may be unfilial
But a mother can never be unmotherly.

Ma *Pārvati*, who gave birth to Ganesh,
I was preoccupied in worshipping him and all the gods.
Now at an advanced age, I have left them.
I cannot do them right worship
And they will not help any more.
Now, if you do not send succor
Where can I find sanctuary?
O Supreme Giver!
Even a syllable of your mantra
Holds such power that the basest fool
becomes an enchanting orator of delightful speech;
the pauper forever basks in golden luxury.
When a single syllable heard grants such boons,
what might be the supreme benefits for those faithful chanters?
What mortal is lucky enough to see that?

O Mother *Bhavāni*! He who coats his skin with funereal ashes,
who consumes poison, wears no clothes but dreadlocks,
garlands his neck with the Vasuki serpent,
and honors a skull as a begging-bowl,
that lord of departed spirits and creatures,
Pashupati, who alone carries the title of
Lord of the World, how did
He achieve that eminence?
Only because he clasped your hand in marriage;
wedding you gave him primacy.

O Mother, whose face shines with moon-glow,
I do not seek salvation, *moksha*,
nor worldly wealth, nor knowledge of science,
Or pursuit of happiness.
All I ask is that my life be spent in contemplation
of you, *Mrudāni*, *Rudrāni*, *Shivā*, *Shivā*, *Bhavāni*.

O Mother *Shyāmā*! Never have I worshipped
you with all ritual protocols.
What crimes has my rough speech not committed?
Yet, you yourself look compassionately upon
an orphan like me.
Mother! This becomes you.
Such a loving mother as you alone can succor
such an unworthy son.
O *Mātā Durgā*, Ocean of Compassion, *Maheshwari*!
I invoke you now,
caught in calamities, never having done so before.
Do not see this as my churlishness;
the child suffering hunger and thirst always calls for the mother.

O Goddess of the Universe!
Your full compassion blesses me.
What is the surprise in this?
Even from the son steeped in crime
the mother never turns away her face!

Just as there is no sinner greater than me,
so too, there is no one like you
who annihilates all sins.
Knowing this, O Great Goddess!
Do as seems right to you.