

ଶ୍ରୀସୁବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟ ଷୋଡଶନାମାନ୍ତି

{॥ ଶ୍ରୀସୁବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟ ଷୋଡଶନାମାନ୍ତି ॥}

ଜ୍ଞାନଶକ୍ତିଧରଃ ସ୍ଵୟଃ ଦେବସେନାପତିସ୍ତଥା ।

ସୁବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟା ଗଜାରୂତଃ ଶରକାନନସମ୍ଭବଃ ॥ ୧ ॥

କାର୍ତ୍ତିକେୟଃ କୁମାରଃ ସଶୁଖସ୍ତାରକାନ୍ତକଃ ।

ସେନାନୀର୍ବ୍ରହ୍ମଣାସ୍ତା ଚ ବଲ୍ଲୀକଲ୍ୟାଣସୁନ୍ଦରଃ ॥ ୨ ॥

ବାଲଃ କ୍ରୌଞ୍ଚଭେରୀ ଚ ଶିଖିବାହନ ଏବ ଚ ।

ଏତାନ୍ତି ସ୍ଵାମିନାମାନ୍ତି ଷୋଡଶ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟହଃ ନରଃ ।

ଯଃ ପଠେତ୍ ସର୍ବପାପେଭ୍ୟଃ ସ ମୃତ୍ୟୁତେ ମହାମୁନେ ॥ ୩ ॥

COMMENTS:

In the following comments some abbreviations are used. They are –

(1) VS – Vishnu sahasranama. (2) SS – Siva sahasranama (Padma Purana).

(3) BG – Bhagavad Giata (4) BH – Shrimad Bhagavatam

(5) LS – Lalita sahasranamam.

Our religion lays great emphasis on the purificatory power of the Lord's name.

Our vedas talk about this. The following verse from the Yajur Veda will serve as an instance.

ପ୍ରତତ୍ତେ ଅଧ୍ୟ ଶିପିବିଷ୍ଣୁ ନାମାର୍ଯ୍ୟଃ ଶଂସାମି ବୟୁନାମି ବିଦ୍ବାନ୍ ।

ତଂ ତ୍ଵା ଗୁଣାମି ତବ ସମତର୍ବାୟାନ୍ ଶୟନ୍ତମସ୍ୟ ରଜସଃ ପରାକେ ॥

This prayer addressed to Lord Vishnu says "I specially extol Your name".

Swami Bodhendra, who was a great advocate of chanting of the Lord's name points out that ଶଂସାମି indicates repeating the name several times.

The vedas themselves contain many hymns that extol the Lord. Shri Rudram, Shrisuktam etc., give the names of the Lord. The puranas also contain many compilation of names (nAmAvali) which are very suitable for recitation. Among these the Vishnu sahasranamam, Shiva sahasranamam and Lalita sahasranAmam are popular. Their recitation with devotion is guaranteed to confer immense benefits to the person. The Vishnu sahasranamam has the following verse towards the end. This says that the one who listens to it or recites it daily will not encounter misfortunes in this life or the life hereafter.

ଯ ଇଦଂ ଶୁଣୁଯାନ୍ନିତ୍ୟଂ ଯଶ୍ଚାପି ପରିକୀର୍ତ୍ତୟେତ୍ ।

ନାଶୁଭଂ ପ୍ରାପ୍ନୁଯାତ୍ କିଞ୍ଚିତ୍ ସୋଂମୁଦ୍ରେହ ଚ ମାନବଃ ॥

Similarly the Kaivalyopanishad says that one who recites Shri Rudram is absolved from great sins.

ଯଃ ଶତରୁଦ୍ରୀୟମଧୀତେ ସୋଂଗ୍ନିପୁତୋ ଭବତି । ସୁରାପାନାପୁତୋ ଭବତି ।

ବ୍ରହ୍ମହତ୍ୟାପୁତୋ ଭବତି । କୃତ୍ୟାକୃତ୍ୟାପୁତୋ ଭବତି ।

Sage Naradha told sage Vyasa (BH 1-5-22) that wise men declare that the abiding purpose of man's austere penance, sacred knowledge, sacrificial performances, recitation of the Vedas with correct intonation, enlightenment and offering of gifts is to recount the virtues of the Lord.

ଇଦଂ ହି ପୁଂସସ୍ତପସଃ ଶୁଭସ୍ୟ ବା ସ୍ଵିଷ୍ଟସ୍ୟ ସୁକ୍ରସ୍ୟ ଚ ବୁଦ୍ଧିଦତ୍ତୟୋଃ ।

ଅବିରୁ୍ୟତୋଽର୍ଥଃ କବିଭିର୍ନିରୁପିତୋ ଯଦୁତ୍ତମଶ୍ଳୋକ-ଗୁଣାନୁବର୍ଣନମ୍ ॥

In view of such statements many have the habit of reciting these hymns daily after completing their worship. But in these days, when time has become a scarce commodity, many have given up performing daily puja and even sandhyavandanam. For the benefit of such people, our kindly sages have provided shorter version of the hymns. In addition to sahasranamas that contain 1000 names, they have given us trishatis that contain 300 names, ashtottarashatams that list 108 names and even lists containing 16 and 12 names. If someone was to claim that he has not the time even to say these abridged versions, our puranas suggest repeating any of Lord's names that one prefers. Towards the end of the Vishnu sahasranama stotram, there is a verse in which Parvati asks Lord Shiva if there is an easy method to recite the lengthy sahasranamam. In reply Lord Shiva says that repeating the name Rama is equivalent to reciting the entire sahasranamam!

ପାର୍ବତ୍ୟୁକ୍ତ -

କେନୋପାୟେନ ଲଘୁନା ବିଷ୍ଣୋର୍ନାମସହସ୍ରକମ୍ ।

ପଠ୍ୟତେ ପଶ୍ଚିତୈର୍ନିତ୍ୟଂ ଶ୍ଳୋକୂମିଛମ୍ୟହଂ ପ୍ରଭୋ ॥

ଉତ୍ତରୋକ୍ତ -

ଶ୍ରୀରାମ ରାମ ରାମେତି ରମେ ରାମେ ମନୋରମେ ।

ସହସ୍ରନାମ ତତ୍ତୁଲ୍ୟଂ ରାମନାମ ବରାନନେ ॥

The stotram that is given herein contains sixteen names of Lord Subrahmanya who is a very popular deity worshipped in the country. The last verse says that one who recites these names daily will be absolved from all sins. So, the Lord has the name ପାପନାଶନଃ - କୀର୍ତ୍ତିତଃ ପୂଜିତୋ

ଧ୍ୟାତଃ ସ୍ତୁତଃ ପାପରାଶିଂ ନାଶୟତି । VS(992). Reciting a short poem that contains few names looks very easy and because of this reason one may entertain some doubt if repeating few names can free one from sins. Shrimad Bhagavatam gives the example of one taking a medicine. A tablet may weigh only few milligrams, but it can work even in the body of a burly person and can give great relief. Also a medicine will do its work even one takes it by mistake! (Eg.) a laxative tablet even when swallowed by mistake will make the person run to the toilet within a short time. Similarly, the Lord's names will purify a person in whatever manner it is uttered. The Padma Purana says this as follows.

ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟେ ବା ଭୟେ ଶୋକେ କ୍ଷୁତେ ବା ମମ ନାମ ଯଃ ।
ବ୍ୟାଜେନ ବା ସ୍ମରୋଦ୍ୟସ୍ତୁ ସ ଯାତି ପରମାଂ ଗତିମ୍ ॥

That is why in the introduction to Vishnu shasranama stotram Shri Bhishma says that worshipping the Lord by reciting hymns (stotras) is the best and easiest form of worship by which one can get over the problem of samsara or cyclic births.

ଏଷ ମେ ସର୍ବଧର୍ମାଣାଂ ଧର୍ମୋ ଧ୍ୟାୟିତମୋ ମତଃ ।
ଯଦ୍ଭକ୍ତ୍ୟା ପୁଣ୍ଡରୀକାକ୍ଷଂ ସ୍ତୁତ୍ୱେରଚ୍ଚେନ୍ନୁରଃ ସଦା ॥

We should note an important point here. The stotras may be named after different forms of gods such as Vishnu or Shiva or Lalita Devi etc.

But when we go through the names we find that there are some that clearly say that the god that is praised is the Supreme Being. So, there is no question of one being superior or inferior to the others.

They all are in praise of one and the same Being.

Where is the Supreme Being and how to worship it – one may wonder.

It is everywhere and every thing according to the scriptures.

ସର୍ବଃ - ସର୍ବ ସ୍ୱରୂପଃ । କ୍ଷିତି-ସଲିଲ-ଦ୍ରୁତବହ-ପବନ-ଗଗନ-ହିମକର-

ଦିନମଣି-ଯଜମାନାମ୍ଭିର୍ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିଭିଃ ସର୍ବଂ ବ୍ୟାପ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥିତଃ ॥

।ଦ୍ ସର୍ବୋ ବୈ ରୁଦ୍ରାଦ୍ ଇତି ଶ୍ରୁତିଃ । SS(802)

We find the name in the Vishnu sahasranama (25) also. For the convenience of those who want to worship the Lord, He has assumed various forms such as Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Devi etc. We may worship Him in anything as He is every thing. So, we have the habit of worshipping Ashwattha tree, rivers like Ganga, books like the Gita or Ramayana and so on. But for the sake of convenience we have the practice of worshipping Him in idols, shaligrama and lingam. It is known that the mind is wavering by nature and so is difficult to concentrate for a long time during the worship. This kind of worship is easy and most suitable for those who require an external object to help them to focus their mind during the worship. After proper installation with mantras the idol is no more an inanimate idol, but the living presence of the Lord. As the worship of the Lord in such a consecrated idol has to be done with great deal of devotion the external object helps in paying attention to the Lord in the object. So, one may say that it is most suited during the early stages of worship for one whose mind is not steady. But as one continues with the worship he progresses steadily on the spiritual path. Devotion swells in the heart

and the Lord slowly creeps into his mind. The mind is gradually purged of undesirable traits such as likes, dislikes, anger, lust that pollute and distract the mind. In such a mind that is pure and steady the Self within reveals Itself. Such a devotee who has made great progress on the spiritual path may worship the Lord within himself – in the space (called 'cave' or गुहा). The Katha upanishad (1-2-20)says this as follows.

ଅଶୋରଣୀୟାନ୍ନହତୋ ମହୀୟାନ୍ ଆତ୍ମାଂସ୍ୟ ଜନ୍ତୋନିହିତଂ ଗୁହାୟାମ୍ ।
ତମକ୍ରତୁଃ ପଶ୍ୟତି ବୀତଶୋକୋ ଧାତୁପ୍ରସାଦାନ୍ନହିମାନମାତ୍ମନଃ ॥

For this reason, Lord Subrahmanya is also known as Guha (ଗୁହାଃ). SS(865).

ଗୁହଃ ସ୍କନ୍ଦଃ, ତଦୁପତ୍ତବାତ୍ । ଯଦ୍ବା ଗୁହା ବୁଦ୍ଧିଃ,
ସାଂସ୍ୟାଭିବ୍ୟକ୍ତିସ୍ଥାନତ୍ବେନାସ୍ତୁତି ମତ୍ବର୍ଥୀୟାତ୍ପ୍ରତ୍ୟୟାନ୍ତଃ ଶବ୍ଦଃ ।
।ଦ୍ ଯୋ ବେଦ ନିହିତଂ ଗୁହାୟାଦ୍ ମିତି ଶୁତିଃ ।।ଦ୍ ଯୋ ବୈ ରୁଦ୍ରଃ ସ
ଭଗବାନ୍ୟସ୍ତ ସ୍କନ୍ଦାଦ୍ ଇତି ଶୁତିଃ ॥

Devi Lalita also has the name Guhya (ଗୁହ୍ୟା - ଗୁହାଂ ପ୍ରବିଷ୍ଟା ଗୁହ୍ୟା ॥)

LS(624)

Sage Vishvamitra narrates the story of the birth of Subrahmanya to Shri Rama and Laxmana as he is taking them through the forests. In the end, he gives the benefits that will accrue to one who listens to the story and says that if one is devoted to Lord Subrahmanya he will have longevity and an abode in the divine world of Skanda along with his sons and grandsons. (Balakanda-37-32).

ଭକ୍ତସ୍ତ ଯଃ କାର୍ତ୍ତିକେୟେ କାକୁତ୍ସ୍ଥ ଭୁବି ମାନବଃ ।

ଆନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ପୁତ୍ରପୌତ୍ରେଷୁ ସ୍ଵାମୀଲୋକ୍ୟତାଂ ବ୍ରଜେତ୍ ॥

The late Paramacharya of Kanchi math pointed out that the name swami (ସ୍ଵାମୀ) occurring in the third verse is unique to Lord Subrahmanya and identifies Him with the Supreme Being. He quotes the verse from Amarakosha in support. ଦେବସେନାପତିଃ ଶୂରଃ ସ୍ଵାମୀ ଗଜମୁଖାଦୁଜଃ। The word swami (ସ୍ଵାମୀ) means the owner. What does the Lord own? He owns the entire universe and so is the Supreme Being. The name Subrahmanya may be split as su (ସୁ) and brahmanya (ବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟ). Brahmanya means protector of dharma. The name appears in the Vishnu and Siva sahasranamas. The commentators Shankaracharya define the word as follows. ବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟଃ - ।ଦ୍ ତପୋ ବେଦାଶ୍ଚ ବିପ୍ରାଶ୍ଚ ଜ୍ଞାନଂ ଚ ବ୍ରହ୍ମସଂଜ୍ଞିତମ୍ । ।ଦ୍ ତେଜୋ ହିତତ୍ଵାତ୍ ବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟଃ। VS (661). Tapas or austerities, the vedas, those who study and abide by the vedic injunctions and have got the knowledge of the Self, and the spiritual wisdom are known as brahma (not the creator Brahma). The Lord supports them. The name is defined similarly in SS(562).

ବ୍ରହ୍ମରୂପାଣଂ ଜ୍ଞାନିନାଂ ହିତକାରୀ ବ୍ରହ୍ମଣ୍ୟଃ ।
।ଦ୍ ତସ୍ୟୈବ ଆତ୍ମା ବିବୃଣୋତି ତନୁମ୍ । ।ଦ୍ ଇତି ଶ୍ରୁତିଃ ।
ଜ୍ଞାନୀତ୍ଵାତ୍ତୈବ ମେ ମତମିତି ଭଗବଦ୍ବଚନାତ୍ । (Gita-7-18)

We find from the Skanda Purana that Lord Subrahmanya incarnated to quell the asuras and bring the dharma back on its feet. This is in accordance with what the Lord said in the Bhagavad Gita in the following verses that are quite popular. (4-7 and 8).

ଯଦା ଯଦା ହି ଧର୍ମସ୍ୟ ଗୁଣିର୍ଭବତି ଭାରତ ।

ଅଭ୍ୟୁତ୍ଥାନମଧର୍ମସ୍ୟ ଚଦାମ୍ନାନଂ ସ୍ତୃଜାମ୍ୟହମ୍ ॥ ୭ ॥

ପରିତ୍ରାଣାୟ ସାଧୁନାଂ ବିନାଶାୟ ଚ ଦୁଷ୍ଟତାମ୍ ।

ଧର୍ମ-ସଂସ୍ଥାପନାର୍ଥାୟ ସଂଭବାମି ସୁଗେ ସୁଗେ ॥ ୮ ॥

But we should notice one difference with Lord Subrahmanya's fighting the asuras like Shura and Taraka. According to the puranas, He no doubt fought with them, but did not kill them (unlike in other avatars). He subdued them and made them His servants in the form of the peacock etc. This shows His extraordinary kindness. Shri Sankaracharya points this out in his Subrahmanya Bhujanga stotram. He says that there are gods who shower their grace on the sages and their devotees. But I do not know of a god who showers His grace even on one belonging to the lowest category.

ମୁନୀନାମୁତାହୋ ନୃଣାଂ ଭକ୍ତିଭାଜାମଭୀଷ୍ମପ୍ରଦାଃ ସନ୍ତି ସର୍ବତ୍ର ଦେବତାଃ ।

ନୃଣାମନ୍ତ୍ୟଜାନାମପି ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥଦାନେ ଗୁହ୍ୟାଦେବମନ୍ୟଂ ନ ଜାନେ ନ ଜାନେ ॥

Let us pray to Lord Subrahmanya and seek His grace.

॥ ଓଂ ଚକ୍ରେ ॥

Encoded, proofread, and commentary by N.Balasubramanian bbalu@satyam.net.in

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