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JAPA YOGA

A COMPREHENSIVE TREATISE ON MANTRA-SASTRA

by [Swami Sivananda](#)

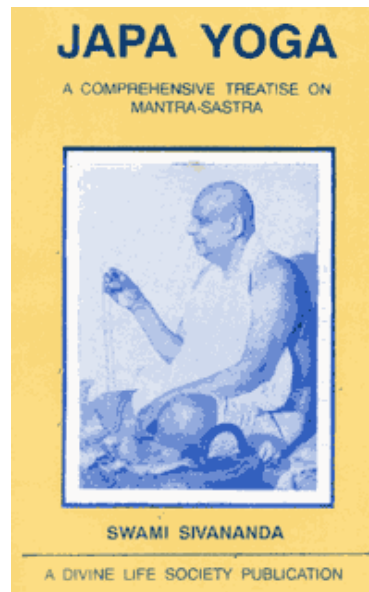


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DEDICATION

Dedicated

To

Devarshi Narada, Dhruva, Prahlada, Valmiki,

Tukaram, Ramdas, Sri Ramakrishna

and all Yogis who realised God

through the Divine Name

PREFACE

The present edition of this immensely useful work 'Japa Yoga' by His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is brought out in response to several requests that we have received from devotees everywhere. We need not emphasise the importance of this work as its subject matter forms the foundation of spiritual Sadhana. *Yajnanam Japayajnosmi*—I am the sacrifice of Japa among all sacrifices, says the Lord in the Gita. It is the continuous recitation of the Divine Name that forms the first rung in the ladder of Yoga, as also the undercurrent that flows beneath the different processes of Yoga.

The subject of this book is such that it will become a *vade mecum* for all seekers on the path. We cannot think of another book on the subject so handy and exhaustive to be placed in the hands of Sadhakas. The chapters are methodically arranged to suit the conveniences of readers and provide a graduated series of lessons on this significant aspect of Bhakti Yoga.

We have no doubt that this incomparable treatise will be received by one and all with the rich approbation and the commendation that it deserves. May the Grace of Almighty be upon us all.

—*The Divine Life Society.*

SATGURU STOTRAM

सद्गुरुस्तोत्रम्

ॐ ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानामूर्तिं

द्वन्द्वातीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ॥

एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं

भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥ १ ॥

1. I prostrate myself before that Sat-Guru, the Brahman, who is Bliss, who is the giver of supreme happiness, who is the Absolute, who is the Form of Knowledge, who is beyond the pairs of opposites, who is (vast) like ether, who is attainable through assertions like "Tat Tvam Asi", who is one, eternal, pure and changeless, who is the witness of all the states of the mind, who transcends modifications, who is devoid of the three modes (of Prakriti).

चैतन्यं शाश्वतं शान्तं व्योमातीतं निरञ्जनम्।

नादबिन्दुकलातीतं तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥ २ ॥

2. Prostrations to that Sri-Guru, who is Consciousness, eternal, peaceful, beyond ether, spotless and beyond Nada, Bindu and Kala.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुर्गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।

गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥ ३ ॥

3. Prostration to that Sri-Guru, who is himself the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara, and who is verily the supreme Absolute itself.

ॐ नमः शिवाय गुरवे सच्चिदानन्दमूर्तये।

निष्प्रपञ्जाय शान्ताय निरालम्बाय तेजसे ॥ ४ ॥

4. Om! Prostration to the Guru, who, is Siva (bliss and auspiciousness), who is the embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, who is free from world consciousness, who is peaceful, without (any other) support, and self-effulgent.

DHYANA SLOKAS

ॐकारस्तोत्रम्

ॐकारं निगमैकवेद्यमनिशं वेदान्ततत्त्वास्पदं

चोत्पत्तिस्थितिनाशहेतुममलं विश्वस्य विश्वात्मकम्।

विश्वत्राणपरायणं श्रुतिशतैः संप्रोच्यमानं विभुं

सत्यज्ञानमनन्तमूर्तिममलं शुद्धात्मकं तं भजे ॥

I always contemplate upon the ever-pure, all-pervading Omkara (Pranava), which can be known only through the Vedas, which is the essence and the support of the Vedanta, which is taintless, which is the cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, which includes the whole universe within itself, which is the saviour of the universe, which is proclaimed by countless Srutis, and which is the Pure Truth, Knowledge and Infinity in one.

गणपतिस्तोत्रम्

गजाननं भूतगणादिसेवितं कपित्थजम्बूफलसार भक्षणम्।

उमासुतं शोकविनाशकारणं नमामि विघ्नेश्वरपादपङ्कजम् ॥

I prostrate myself before the lotus-feet of Vighnesvara, the son of Uma, the cause of the destruction of sorrow, who is served by the host of Bhuta-Ganas, etc., who has the face of an elephant, who partakes of the essence of Kapittha and Jambu fruits.

विष्णुस्तोत्रम्

शान्ताकारं भुजगशयनं पद्मनाभं सुरेशं

विश्वाधारं गगनसदृशं मेघवर्णं शुभाङ्गम्।

लक्ष्मीकान्तं कमलनयनं योगिभिर्ध्यानगम्यं

वन्दे विष्णुं भवभयहरं सर्वलोकैकनाथम् ॥

I adore Vishnu, the embodiment of Peace, who sleeps on the serpent, whose navel is the lotus (of the universe), who is the Lord of gods, who is the support of the universe, who is of the form of (the omnipresent) ether, whose colour resembles that of clouds, whose body is auspicious, who is the Lord of Lakshmi, whose eyes are like lotuses, who is attainable by Yogis through meditation, who is the destroyer of the fear of birth and death, and who is the One Lord of all the worlds.

शिवस्तोत्रम्

शान्तं पद्मासनस्थं शशधरमकुटं पञ्चववत्रं त्रिनेत्रं

शूलं वज्रं च खड्गं परशुमभयदं दक्षभागे वहन्तम्।

नागं पाशं च घण्टां डमरुकसहितं साङ्कुशं वामभागे

नानालङ्कारदीप्तं स्फटिकमणिनिभं पार्वतीशं नमामि ॥

I prostrate myself, before the Lord of Parvati, who is peaceful, who is seated in the Lotus-pose, whose crown is adorned with moon, who has five faces, who has three eyes, who holds the trident, bolt, sword and the fearlessness-giving axe on the right side, who holds the noose, bell, Damaru and spear on the left side, who shines with various ornaments and who is luminous like the crystal-jewel.

देवीस्तोत्रम्

विघ्नुहामसमप्रभां मृगपतिस्कन्धस्थितां भीषणां

कन्याभिः करवालखेटविलसद्धस्ताभिरासेविताम्।
 हस्तैश्चक्रदरालिखेटविशिखंश्चापं गुणं तर्जनीं
 विभ्राणामनलात्मिकां शशिधरां दुर्गां त्रिनेत्रां भजे ॥

I worship the three-eyed Durga, whose lustre is like that of a streak of lightning, who is seated on the lord of animals (lion), who is the dreadful, who is served by maidens holding weapons and clubs in their hands, who holds with her hands discus, conch, liquor clubs, arrows, bow with its string drawn in with the fingers, who is blazing like fire and who wears the moon (on the crown).

लक्ष्मीस्तोत्रम्

लक्ष्मीं क्षीरसमुद्रराजतनयां श्रीरङ्गधामेश्वरीं
 दासीभूतसमस्तदेववनितां लोकैकदीपाङ्कुराम्।
 श्रीमन्मन्दकटाक्षलब्धविभवब्रह्मेन्द्रगङ्गाधरां
 त्वां त्रैलोक्यकुटुम्बिनीं सरसिजां वन्दे मुकुन्दप्रियाम् ॥

I worship that Lakshmi, the daughter of the king of the milk-ocean, the queen of the abode of Lord Vishnu, whose servants are the wives of all the gods, who is the one light and the sprout of the universe, through a side glance of whose benign grace Brahma, Indra and Siva have attained their high positions, who is the mother of the three worlds, who is called Kamala, and who is the consort of Bhagavan Vishnu.

सरस्वतीस्तोत्रम्

या कुन्देन्दुतुषारहारधवला या शुभ्रवस्त्रावृता
 या वीणावरदण्ड मण्डितकरा या श्वेतपद्मासना।
 या ब्रह्माच्युतशङ्करप्रभृतिभिर्देवैस्सदा पूजिता
 सा मां पातु सरस्वती भगवती निःशेषजाड्यापहा ॥

May that goddess Sarasvati, who wears a garland white like the Kunda-flower on the moon or the snow, who is adorned with pure white clothes, whose hands are ornamented with the Vina and the gesture of blessings, who is seated on a white lotus, who is always worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and other gods, who is the remover of all inertness and laziness protect me.

रामस्तोत्रम्

ध्यायेदाजानुबाहुं धृतशरधनुषं बद्धपद्मासनस्थं
पीतं वासो वसानं नवकमलदलस्पर्धिनेत्रं प्रसन्नम्।
वामाङ्कारूढसीतामुखकमलमिलल्लोचनं नीरदाभं
नानालङ्कारदीप्तं दधतमुरुजटामण्डलं रामचद्रम् ॥

One should meditate upon Sri Ramachandra, with hands reaching the knees, holding the bow and the arrows, seated in the locked-up lotus-posture, wearing a yellow clothe, with eyes vying with the newly blossomed lotus-petals, with a pleasant gait, with his eyes mixing with the lotus-face of Sita seated on his left thigh, who is blue like the clouds, who is shining with various kinds of ornaments, and who has a big circle of Jata on the head.

कृष्णस्तोत्रम्

वंशीविभूषितकरान्नवनीरदाभात्
पीताम्बरादरुणबिम्बफलाधरोष्ठात्।
पूर्णेन्दुसुन्दरमुखादरविन्दनेत्रात्
कृष्णात्परं किमपि तत्त्वमहं न जाने ॥

I know not any other reality than the lotus-eyed Krishna, with hands adorned with the flute, looking like a newly laden cloud in lustre, wearing a yellow silk garment, with his lips like a ruddy Bimba-fruit, and with his face beautiful like the full-moon.

सुब्रह्मण्यस्तोत्रम्

षडाननं कुङ्कुमरक्तावर्णं
महामतिं दिव्यमयूरवाहनम्।
रुद्रस्य सूनुं सुरसैन्यनाथं
गुहं सदाऽहं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥

I always take refuge in Guha of six faces, who is of deep red colour like Kumkuma, who is possessed of great knowledge, who has the divine peacock to ride on, who is the son of Rudra, and who is the leader of the army of gods.

भगवत्स्तोत्रम्

यं ब्रह्मावरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवै-
 र्वेदैः साङ्गपदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं सामगाः ।
 ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो
 यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥

Salutations to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra, and the Maruts praise with divine hymns, whom the Sama-chanters sing by Vedas with their Angas and in the Pada and Krama methods and by the Upanishads, whom Yogis see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose end the hosts of Devas and Asuras know not.

PRAYERS TO THE LORD

I

O Adorable Lord of Compassion! Salutations unto Thee. Give me inner spiritual strength to resist temptation and melt in Thee this ego which is harder than granite or diamond. Let me always be Thy chosen playmate in the wonderful game You play in all the worlds. Let me understand Thy mysterious Lila or sporting. Let me be a perennial channel of Thy sweet love to all Thy children. Utilise my body, the senses and the mind for Thy unhampered play. O hidden Love! O undecaying beauty! Let my soul rest peacefully in Thee for ever and ever.

O Light of lights! O shining One! I live for Thee. I behold Thee in the smiles of children, in the tears of the afflicted, in my thoughts, emotions, sentiments, in the morning dew of the Himalayan land-scape and in the rays of the sun. My room is filled with Thy sweet Presence. I eat Thy benign grace in my daily food. I taste Thy radiant love in my daily drink. Thou art the ocean of love and compassion. Let my love for Thee become a roaring flame. Withdraw from me whatever evil there is. Fill my heart with purity, goodness, love and sublime virtues. Make me Immortal.

O Lord! Reveal unto me Thy enchanting Form. Make me feel Thy living Presence. Fill my heart with love. Let me merge myself in Thee. Let me walk in the path of righteousness. Cleanse my mind of all evil thoughts. Help me to concentrate my mind on Thy lotus-feet. Embrace me and make me pure. Teach me to be still and enjoy Thy magnificent Vision. Illumine my mind with the light of true Knowledge. Make my stony heart melt and flow towards Thee.

II

Thou art, O Lord, the creator of this universe. Thou art the protector of this world. Thou art in the grass and in the rose. Thou art in the sun and the stars. Salutations unto Thee. O Bestower of joy and bliss!

Sweet Lord! Let me be free from the clutches of death. Let me be able to look upon all beings with equal vision. Let me be free from impurity and sin. Give me strength to control the mind. Give me strength to serve Thee and the humanity untiringly. Make me Thy fit instrument for Thy work. Make me pure and strong.

I bow to Thee, O Indweller of all hearts! O Secret of secrets! Remove my weaknesses, defects and evil thoughts. Make me pure, so that I may be able to receive Thy grace and blessings. O Lord! Thou art the thread-soul that connects all beings. Thou pervadest all, permeatest and interpenetratest all things of this Universe.

Thou art the Light Divine. Thou art the Dispeller of ignorance. Thou art the All-merciful Lord. Give me a life without disease. Let me remember Thee always. Let me develop all the sublime virtues.

Thou art self-luminous. Thou art my Father, Mother, Brother, Friend, Relative and Guide. Let me realise the Truth. Let me be free from greed, lust, egoism, jealousy and hatred. Prepare me as Thy sweet messenger on this earth, so that I may radiate joy; peace and bliss to the whole world. Let me utilise my body, mind and senses in Thy service and in the service of Thy creatures. Breathe into me Thy breath of Immortality. Let me recognise the Universal Brotherhood of Man. Let me love all as my own Self. Salutations unto Thee! O Lord of Compassion!

III

O Adorable Lord of Compassion! Salutations unto Thee! Thou art Infinite Beauty, Joy, Bliss and Peace! Thou art Perfect, Independent and ever Free! Give me the spirit of sacrifice, strength and indomitable will to serve humanity! Vouch safe to me Thy grace and mercy!

O Almighty! Thou art my Redeemer and Saviour. Free me from the bondage of this body and round of births and deaths. Make me drink the nectar of Immortality!

O Supreme Being! Fill my heart with unflinching devotion unto Thee. Let the flame of devotion to Thee grow brighter every day!

O Infinity! O Eternity! O Immortality! Free me from all sorrows, dependence, delusion, weakness and defects! Grant me equal vision, balanced mind, divine virtues, such as courage, tolerance, forbearance, humility, mercy, purity, cosmic love, etc.

O Omnipotent Lord! Strengthen my resolve to stick to the spiritual path and to do my daily spiritual routine vigorously and regularly. Forgive my sins. Free me from the obstacles in the path and from all temptations. Give me inner strength to resist temptations!

O Indwelling Presence! Thou art my sole prop, support, refuge and solace! Thou art the Life of my life. Thou art the Soul of my soul. Thou art Transcendental Bliss, Peace and Joy. Thou art the one homogeneous essence. Let me be established in Non-violence, Truthfulness, Devotion and Purity. Teach me to be steadfast in my devotion unto Thee. Give me Light and Wisdom.

O Supreme Love! Salutations unto Thee! Thou art the Indweller of my heart. Give me the inner third eye of intuition or wisdom. May Self-realisation be my inexhaustible spiritual wealth, dispassion my crown, virtuous deeds my asset in the divine bank, and renunciation the jewel of my heart! Crores of prostrations unto Thee, O Lord, I am Thine. Save me, protect me, guide me and enlighten me. Make me pure, perfect and free! Through Thy grace may all attain health, long life, prosperity and Self-realisation!

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient;
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.

Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy Glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

विश्वप्रार्थना

(Sanskrit)

हे वन्दनीय प्रेमाधार हे कृपानिधे
नमोऽस्तु ते साष्टाङ्ग नमोऽस्तु ते।
भगवान् सर्वव्यापी सर्वशक्तिमान् सर्वज्ञः
भगवान् सच्चिदानन्दः सर्वान्तर्यामी।

विवेकं च समदर्शनं च मनसस्समत्वं च
अथ श्रद्धां च भक्तिं च ज्ञानं च देहि नः।
आध्यात्मिकान्तः शक्तिमपि देहि नः
येनोपायेन मायां विहाय मनो वशं कुर्महे।
कामक्रोधलोभाहंकारेभ्यो मोचयास्मान्
दैवीसंपद्भिरस्माकं हृदयानि पूरय।
सर्वनामरूपेषु त्वां ईक्षामहे
तेषु नामरूपेषु त्वां ईक्षामहे
तेषु नामरूपेषु त्वां सेवामहे
सर्वदा त्वामेव स्मरामः।
सर्वदा तव महिम्नां गानं करवामहे।

अस्माकं ओष्ठेषु तव नामैव भूयात्।
सर्वदा भवत्प्राणा एव भूयास्म।

विश्व-प्रार्थना

(Hindi)

हे स्नेह और करुणा के आरध्यदेव।
तुम्हें नमस्कार है नमस्कार है।
तुम सच्चिदानन्दघन हो।
तुम सर्वव्यापक सर्वशक्तिमान् और सर्वज्ञ हो।
तुम सब के अन्तर्वासी हो।
हमें उदारता समदर्शिता और मन का समत्व प्रदान करो।

श्रद्धा भक्ति और प्रज्ञा से कृतार्थ करो।
हमे आध्यात्मिक अन्तःशक्ति का वर दो
जिससे हम वासनाओं का दमन कर मनोजय को प्राप्त हों।
हम अहङ्कार काम लोभ और द्वेष से रहित हों।
हमारा हृदय दिव्य गुणों से पूर्ण करो।

सर्व-नाम रूपों में तुम्हारा दर्शन करें।
तुम्हारी अर्चना के ही रूप में इन नाम-रूपों की सेवा करें।
सदा तुम्हारा ही स्मरण करें।
सदा तुम्हारी महिमा का गायन करें।
केवल तुम्हारा ही कलिकल्मषहारी नाम हमारे अघर-पूट पर

हो।

सदा हम तुममें ही निवास करें।

॥ महामृत्युञ्जयमन्त्रः ॥

MAHA-MRITYUNJAYA MANTRA

ॐ त्र्यंबकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।

उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय माऽमृतात् ॥

*Om Tryambakam yajamahe
Sugandhim pushtivardhanam;*

*Urvarukamiva bandhanaan-
Mrityormuksheeya maamritaat.*

"We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Siva) who is fragrant and who nourishes all beings; may He liberate me from death, for the sake of Immortality, even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (of the creeper)."

1. This Maha-Mrityunjaya Mantra is a life-giving Mantra. In these days, when life is very complex, accidents are an everyday affair; this Mantra wards off deaths by snake-bites, lightning, motor-accidents, fire-accidents, cycle-accidents, water-accidents, air-accidents and accidents of all descriptions. Besides, it has a great curative effect. Again, diseases pronounced incurable by doctors are cured by this Mantra, when chanted with sincerity, faith and devotion. It is a weapon against all diseases. It is a Mantra to conquer death.

2. It is also a Moksha-Mantra. It is Lord Siva's Mantra. It bestows health (Arogya), long life (Deergha-Ayus), peace (Santi), wealth (Aisvaryaya), prosperity (Pushti), satisfaction (Tushti) and Immortality (Moksha).

3. On your birthday, repeat this Mantra one lakh times, or at least 50,000 times, perform Havan and feed Sadhus, the poor and the sick. This will bestow on you health, long life, peace, prosperity and Moksha.

PRAYER TO THE SUN

ॐ सूर्य सुन्दरलोकनाथममृतं वेदान्तसारं शिवं

ज्ञानं ब्रह्ममयं सुरेशममलं लोकैकचितं स्वयम्।

इन्द्रादित्यनराधिपं सुरगुरुं त्रैलोक्यचूडामणिं

ब्रह्माविष्णुशिवस्वरूपहृदयं वन्दे सदा भास्करम् ॥

*"Om Suryam sundarlokanathamamritam vedantasaram sivam,
Jnanam brahmamayam suresamamalam lokaikochittam svayam;
Indradityanaradhipam suragurum trailokyachudamanim,
Brahmavishnusivasvarupahridayam vande sada bhaskaram."*

I always adore Surya, the sun, the beautiful Lord of the world, the immortal, the quintessence of the Vedanta, the auspicious, the absolute knowledge, of the form of Brahman, the Lord of the gods, ever-pure, the one true consciousness of the world himself, the Lord of Indra, the gods and men, the preceptor of the gods, the crest-jewel of the three worlds, the very heart of the forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, the giver of light.

ॐ हिरण्मयेन पत्रेण सत्यस्यपिहितं मुखम्।

तत्त्वं पूषत्रपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्यं प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह।

तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि

योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥

*Om Hiranmayena palrenn satyasyapihitam mukham,
Tattvam pushan apavrinu satyadharmaya drishtaye.
Pushan ekarshe yama surya prajapatya vyuha rasmin samuha,
Tejo yatte rupam kalyanatamam tatte pasyami yosavasau purushah sohamasmi.*

"The face of Truth is covered by a golden vessel. Remove Thou, O sun, that covering, for the law of Truth to behold (It)."

"O Pushan (sun, nourisher), the only Seer (sole traveller of the heavens), controller of all (Yama), Surya, son of Prajapati; disperse Thy rays and gather up Thy burning light; I behold Thy glorious resplendent form; I am He, the Purusha within Thee."

१. ॐ मित्राय नमः (Om Mitraya Namah)

Prostration to Him who is affectionate to all.

२. ॐ रवये नमः (Om Ravaye Namah)

Prostration to Him who is the cause for change.

३. ॐ सूर्याय नमः (Om Suryaya Namah)

Prostration to Him who induces activity.

४. ॐ भानवे नमः (Om Bhanave Namah)

Prostration to Him who diffuses Light.

५. ॐ खगाय नमः (Om Khagaya Namah)

Prostration to Him who moves in the sky.

६ ॐ पूषणे नमः (Om Pushne Namah)

Prostration to Him who nourishes all.

७. ॐ हिरण्यगर्भाय नमः (Om Hiranyagarbhaya Namah)

Prostration to Him who contains everything.

८. ॐ मरीचये नमः (Om Marichaye Namah)

Prostration to Him who possesses rays.

९. ॐ आदित्याय नमः (Om Adityaya Namah)

Prostration to Him who is God of gods.

१०. ॐ सवित्रे नमः (Om Savitre Namah)

Prostration to Him who produces everything.

११. ॐ अर्काय नमः (Om Arkaya Namah)

Prostration to Him who is fit to be worshipped.

१२. ॐ भास्कराय नमः (Om Bhaskaraya Namah)

Prostration to Him who is the cause of lustre.

In the words of Yajurveda:

"O Sun! O Sun of suns! Thou art All-energy, give me energy; Thou art All-strength, give me strength; Thou art All-powerful, give me power."

Repeat the above Mantras and Names of the Sun at sunrise. He who repeats these before sunrise, early in the morning, will possess wonderful health, vigour and vitality. He will be free from every kind of disease of the eye. He will have wonderful eye-sight. Pray to the sun in the early morning, before sunrise: "O Lord, Suryanarayana, the eye of the world, the eye of the Virat-Purusha; give me health, strength, vigour and vitality." Offer Arghya to the sun during the three Sandhyas (morning, noon and evening). Offer prostrations to the sun, with these Mantras and Names.

PRAYER TO HARI

सर्वस्मिन् सर्वभूतस्त्वं सर्वः सर्वस्वरूपधृक्।

सर्वं त्वत्तस्ततश्च त्वमेवं सर्वात्मने नमः ॥

सर्वात्मकोऽसि सर्वेश सर्वभूतस्थितो यतः।

कथयामि ततः किं ते सर्वं वेत्सि हृदि स्थितम् ॥

Thou abidest in all. Thou hast become all beings. Thou art the all. Thou assumest all forms; all are from Thee; hence Thou art the all, the Soul of all. Glory unto Thee, the Self of all beings.

As Thou art the Soul of all, the Lord of all, and present in all beings, what shall I speak unto Thee? Thou knowest everything in (my) mind (being scaled in the hearts of all beings).



Dear brothers,

Japa is the repetition of any mantra or name of the Lord. In this iron age Japa is the easiest and surest way for God-realisation.

Repeat 200 malas of Japa daily. Mala or rosary is a whip to goad the mind towards God. Wear a mala on your neck. It is the most precious jewel or ornament as it reminds you of God.

Practice of Japa removes the impurities of the mind, destroys sins and brings the devotee face to face with God. Japa must become habitual. Be regular in your Japa.

Sivananda



Friends,

The glory of the name of God cannot be established through reasoning. It can certainly be experienced through faith, devotion and constant repetition. Have reverence and faith for the name. Do not argue.

Every name is filled with countless powers. Just as fire has the natural property of burning things, so also the name of God has the power of burning the sins and desires.

O Man! Take refuge in the name and cross this formidable ocean of birth and death. Name and Nami are inseparable. Glory to the Lord. Glory to His name. Hari OM. Sri Ram.

Sivananda

INTRODUCTION

I

In this Kali Yuga (iron age) Japa alone is the easy way to the realisation of God. The famous author of a commentary on the Gita and of the Advaita-Siddhi, Swami Madhusudana Saraswati, had direct Darsan of Lord Krishna through Japa of the Mantra of Lord Krishna. The reputed Swami Vidyananda, the author of the Panchadasi had direct Darsan of Mother Gayatri through Japa of Gayatri Mantra.

At the present moment many educated persons and college-students have lost faith in the power of Mantra, owing to the morbid influence of the study of science. They have entirely given up

Japa. It is highly deplorable indeed. When the blood is warm they become hot-headed, proud and atheistic. Their brains and minds need a thorough overhauling and drastic flushing.

Life is short. Time is fleeting. The world is full of miseries. Cut the knot of Avidya, and drink the Nirvanic Bliss. That day on which you do not perform any Japa is simply wasted. Those who simply eat, drink and sleep and do not practise any Japa are horizontal beings only.

A Mantra, in the Hindu religion, has a Rishi who gave it to the world; a metre which governs the inflection of the voice; and a Devata or a supernatural being, higher or lower, as its informing power. The Bija, seed, is a significant word, or series of words, which gives it a special power. Sometimes this word is a sound which harmonises with the key-note of the individual using it and varies it with individuals; sometimes this word expresses the essence of the Mantra, and the result of the Mantra is the flower springing from this seed. The Sakti is the energy of the form of the Mantra, i.e., the vibration-forms set up by its sounds. These carry the man to the Devata that is worshipped. The Kilaka, the pillar, is that which supports and makes strong the Mantra, or the pin which fastens the Mantra together; this is the ceasing of sorrow, by the freeing of oneself from imperfections.

Do not bother yourself about Mantra, Para and Pasyanti, etc. Do Japa of your Ishta Mantra mentally with its meaning and right Bhava. You will realise the spiritual benefits. Why do you waste your time in counting the pebbles on the bank? Take a dip immediately in the Ganges and enjoy the bath. Become wise.

All Mantras have equal potency or power. It is incorrect to say that Om Namō Narayanaya is superior to Om Namah Shivaya or Radhesyam or Sri Ram, and so on. You can attain God-realisation by doing Japa of any Mantra. Valmiki attained God-consciousness by repeating even Mara-Mara. Some people think that Om or Soham is superior to Om Namō Narayanaya, or vice versa. This also is wrong. The state gained by doing Japa of Om or Soham can be attained by doing Japa of Sri Ram or Radhesyam also.

You should not doubt the teachings of the scriptures. Flickering faith will lead to downfall. A man of weak will, who has no faith in Japa, cannot expect to have progress in the spiritual path. If he says, "I am practicing 'who am I' enquiry"—this is all wild imagination. Few are fit for "who am I" enquiry.

You must have the Bhava that Atman, Isvara, Devata, Mantra are one. With this Bhava you will have to repeat your Guru Mantra or Ishta Mantra. Then alone you will have Mantra Siddhi or God-realisation quickly.

The Japa of a Mantra can bring to the practitioner realisation of his highest goal though he may not possess knowledge of the meaning of the Mantra. Such a mechanical Japa may take a little more time in realisation than when it is practiced with a knowledge of the meaning. There is an indescribable power or Achintya Sakti in the Mantras. If you repeat the Mantra with concentration on its meaning, you will attain God-consciousness quickly.

Form a strong habit of repeating the Name of the Lord. Then only it will be easy for you to remember Him at the time of death.

To define God is to deny God. You can give the definition of a finite object. How can you define limitless or the Infinite Being who is the source and ultimate cause for everything? If you define God you are limiting the limitless one, you are confining Him with concepts of mind. God is beyond the reach of the gross mind, but He can be realised through Japa and meditation with a pure, subtle and one-pointed mind.

II

Manasika Puja (mental worship) is more powerful than external Puja with flowers, etc. Arjuna thought that Bhima was not doing any kind of worship. He was proud of his external worship of Lord Siva. He offered plenty of Bael leaves. But Bhima offered to the Lord mentally the Bael

leaves of all the Bael trees of the whole world. He was doing Manasika Puja of Lord Siva. The attendants of Lord Siva were not able to remove from the head of Lord Siva the Bael leaves offered by Bhima. Arjuna once saw a large band of people carrying baskets of Bael leaves. He thought within himself that the leaves must be those offered by him to Lord Siva and questioned them thus: "Brothers, from where do you carry these Bael leaves?" They replied: "O Arjuna, these leaves are offered to our Lord Siva by Bhima through Manasika Puja." Arjuna was struck with wonder. He came to know that Manasika Puja was more powerful than external worship and that Bhima was a better devotee than he.

Manasika Puja can be done by advanced students. Beginners should certainly do worship with flowers, sandal paste, incense, etc. You will have more concentration when you do Manasika Puja. Mentally enthrone the Lord in Simhasana set with diamonds, pearls, emeralds, etc. Offer Him a seat. Apply sandal paste to His forehead and body. Offer Arghya, Madhuparka and various sorts of flowers, clothes, etc. Burn incense. Wave lights. Burn camphor. Offer various kinds of fruits, sweetmeats and Maha-Naivedya. Offer to the Lord the fruits of the whole world. Do not be miserly even in Manasika Puja. In Manasika Puja one man offered only one stale plantain fruit and a handful of gram. A miserable miserly man! Even in Manasika Puja he cannot be very generous and liberal! This world abounds with such deplorable misers! In the end mentally repeat: "*Kayena vacha manasendriyairva buddhyatmana va prakritessvabhavat karomi yadyat sakalam parasmai narayanayeti samparpayami*—Whatever action I do by the body, by the speech, by the mind, by the senses, by the intellect or by my own nature, I offer all of them to the supreme Lord Narayana." Also say in the end, "*Om Tat Sat Brahmarpanamastu*." This will purify your heart and remove the faint of expectation of reward.

III

Without love man's life is empty. Without love man lives in vain. Love is vital. It is all-pervading. Love is a greater power. Love is the sap of life. Give love. Cultivate this love through service, Japa, Satsanga and meditation.

God is always with you. He will protect and deliver you. Take refuge in Him. His blessings will overflow into your life and transform your mind and body. Develop your consciousness of spiritual things. Make a special effort daily to exercise control over your thoughts, words and actions. Feel His presence in your room. Pray and meditate daily.

Prayer elevates the mind. It fills the mind with purity. It is associated with praise of God. It keeps the mind in tune with God. Prayer can reach a realm where reason does not dare to enter. Prayer can move mountains. It can work miracles. It frees the devotee from the fear of death. It brings him nearer to God and makes him feel the divine consciousness and his essential, immortal and blissful nature.

Surrender everything to Him. Place your ego at His feet and be at ease. He will take complete charge of you. Let Him mould you in any way He likes. Let Him do exactly as He wills. He will remove all defects and weaknesses. He will play beautifully on this body-flute. Hear this marvellous music of His flute, the mysterious music of the Soul, and rejoice.

Make your offerings to the Lord with the same mental attitude as that of Bhilini Sabari. Call the Lord with the same Bhava of Draupadi or with the Bhava which Gajendra had when he called Lord Hari. You will surely meet your Beloved. Develop this Bhava. You will have the Darsan of the Lord immediately.

Feel his Presence everywhere. Strive ceaselessly to fix your mind on the Lord. Try to constantly behold your Beloved in all these forms. Silently repeat His Names. Sometimes sing His Names. Silently do Kirtan. Melt the mind in Him. Rejoice in silence in Him.

If you get up at Brahmamuhurta, at 4 a.m., you will have a clear mind. There is a spiritual influence and mysterious silence in the early morning hours. All saints and Yogis practise meditation at this period and send their spiritual vibrations to the whole world. You will be highly benefited by their vibrations if you start your prayer, Japa and meditation at this period.

You need not exert much. The meditative state of mind will come by itself.

Gaze at the picture of the Lord, your Ishta-Devata, for a few minutes, and close your eyes. Then try to visualise the picture mentally. You will have a well-defined or clear-cut picture of the Lord. When it fades, open your eyes and gaze. Repeat the process 5 or 6 times. You will be able to visualise clearly your Ishta-Devata or tutelary deity mentally, after some months' practice.

If you find it difficult to visualise the whole picture, try to visualise any part of the picture. Try to produce at least a hazy picture. By repeated practice the hazy picture will assume a well-defined, clear-cut form. If you find this to be difficult, fix the mind on the effulgent light in the heart and take this as the form of the Lord or your Ishta.

The thoughts you create in your mind and the images you form in your daily life help you in making what you are or what you would become. If you constantly think of Lord Krishna, you will become identical with the Lord. You will abide in Him for ever. You will become one with the Deity you meditate upon.

In Bhava-Samadhi the mind of the devotee is highly elevated through pure emotion and devotion. He forgets the body and the world. His mind is wholly absorbed in the Lord.

Contentment, unruffled state of the mind, cheerfulness, patience, decrease in excretions, sweet voice, eagerness and steadiness in the practice of meditation, disgust for worldly prosperity and success and company, desire to remain alone in a quiet room or in seclusion, desire for association with Sadhus and Sannyasins, Ekagrata or one-pointedness of mind, are some of the signs that indicate that you are growing in purity, that you are progressing in the spiritual path.

When you enter the silence through deep meditation the world outside and all your troubles will drop away. You will enjoy supreme peace. In the silence is the Supreme Light of lights. In the silence is undecaying bliss. In this silence is real strength and perennial Joy.

Shut out the doors of the senses. Still the thoughts, emotions and feelings. Sit motionless and calm in the early morning hours. Ignore the visions and coloured lights. Have a receptive attitude. Go alone with God. Commune with Him. Enjoy the abiding peace in silence.

In the Srimad Bhagavata the Lord Sri Krishna says to Uddhava, "I am not so easily attainable by Yoga, Sankhya or discrimination, Dharma, study of the Vedas, Tapas, renunciation, liberal gifts, charitable acts, rites such as Agnihotra, fasts, vows, secret Mantras, resort to pilgrimages, Yamas, Niyamas (moral rules), as by Satsanga (company of Sadhus or the wise) which puts an end to all attachments. It is only by association with the wise and the righteous, that many who were of Rajasic or Tamasic nature—such as Vritra, son of the sage Tvashtri; Prahlada, the Daityas, the Asuras and the Rakshasas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nagas, Siddhas, Charanas, Guhyakas and Vidyardharas, many beasts and birds, and among mankind Vaisyas, Sudras, women and outcastes who are of the lowest birth, have attained Me. Vrishaparva, Bali, Bana, Maya, Vibhishana, Sugriva, Hanuman; Jambavan, the bear; Gajendra, the elephant; Jatayu, the vulture; Tuladhara, the merchant; Dharmavyadha, the fowler; Kubja, the hunch-backed perfume-seller; the Gopis in Vraja, the wives of the Brahmanas engaged in sacrifices in Brindavana, and others—all these did not study the Vedas did not sit at the feet of great men of learning for the sake of knowledge. They did not observe any vows or fasts. They did not perform Tapas but they attained Me through association with saints and Sadhus. Through love alone, developed through the company of saints, the Gopis and even the cows, trees, beasts, serpents and others of dull-witted nature, became perfected and easily attained Me whom one does not attain by making great endeavours through Yoga or Sankhya, charily, vows, Tapas, sacrifices, teaching and study of the Vedas or renunciation.

Satsanga or association with the sages removes the darkness of the heart. It is a safe boat to cross the ocean of Samsara. Satsanga elevates the mind and fills it with Sattva or purify. It eradicates vicious thoughts and impressions in the heart. It leads one to the right path and causes the Sun of Wisdom to shine upon one's mind.

You may do Japa of 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra if you are a votary of Lord Siva, or 'Om Namo Narayanaya' if you are a devotee of Lord Vishnu. These are very powerful Mantras. None can explain the benefits of Japa, Sadhana and Satsanga. Japa is the rod in the hands of the blind Sadhakas to plod on the road to realisation. Japa is the philosopher's stone or divine elixir that makes one God-like. Through Japa alone one can realise God in this life.

This book will throw much light on the important subject of Mantra Yoga and the method of attaining perfection through Japa. The First Chapter gives the definition of Japa. The Second Chapter deals with the glory and importance of the Name of God. Different kinds of Mantras are given in the Third Chapter. The Fourth Chapter contains many practical and useful instructions on Sadhana. The Fifth Chapter gives a short sketch of the lives of some of the saints who realised God through Japa.

May God give you inner strength to control the Indriyas and the mind and to practice Japa Yoga and worship uninterruptedly! May you have unshakable faith in the miraculous powers and marvellous benefits of Japa Yoga! May you all realise the glory of Nama, the Name of God! May you all spread the glory of Nama throughout the length and breadth of the land! Victory to Hari and His Name! Glory to Hari and His Name! May the blessings of Lord Siva, Hari, Rama and Krishna be upon you all!

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