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## 16 names of Lord SubrahmaNya

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ஸ்ரீஸுப்<sup>3</sup>ரஹ்மண்ய ஷோட<sup>3</sup>ஸநாமாநி

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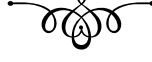
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## 16 names of Lord SubrahmaNya

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ஸ்ரீஸுப்³ரஹ்மண்ய ஷோட³ஸநாமாநி

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ஜ்ஞாநஸக்தித<sup>4</sup>ர: ஸ்கந்த:³ தே³வஸேநாபதிஸ்ததா<sup>2</sup> |  
ஸுப்³ரஹ்மண்யோ க³ஜாருட:⁴ ஸரகாநநஸம்ப⁴வ: || 1 ||  
கார்திகேய: குமாரஸ்ச ஷண்முக²ஸ்தாரகாந்தக: |  
ஸேநாநீர்ப்³ரஹ்மஸாஸ்தா ச வல்லீகல்யாணஸுந்த³ர: || 2 ||  
பா³லஸ்ச க்ரௌஞ்சபேத்தா ச ஸிகி²வாஹந ஏவ ச |  
ஏதாநி ஸ்வாமிநாமாநி ஷோட³ஸ ப்ரத்யஹ: நர: |  
ய: படே²த் ஸர்வபாபேப்⁴ய: ஸ முச்யதே மஹாமுநே || 3 ||

### 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.

ப்ரதத்தே அத்³ய ஸிபிவிஷ்ட நாமார்ய: ஸம்ஸாமி வ்யநாநி வித்³வாந் |  
தம் த்வா க்³ரு'ணமி தவ ஸமதவீயாந் கூயந்தமஸ்ய ரஜஸ: பராகே ||

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 ஸம்ஸாமி 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.

ய இத<sup>3</sup>ம் ஸ்ரு<sup>3</sup>ணுயாந்நித்யம் யஸ்சாபி பரிகீர்தயேத் |

நாஸூப<sup>4</sup>ம் ப்ராபந்யாத் கிஞ்சித் ஸோ<sup>5</sup>முத்ரேஹ ச மாநவ: ||

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

ய: சாதருத்<sup>3</sup>ரீயமதீ<sup>4</sup>தே ஸோ<sup>5</sup>க<sup>3</sup>நிபூதோ ப<sup>4</sup>வதி | ஸூராபாநாத்யூதோ ப<sup>4</sup>வதி |  
ப்<sup>3</sup>ரஹ்மஹத்யாத்யூதோ ப<sup>4</sup>வதி | க்ரு<sup>3</sup>த்யாக்ரு<sup>3</sup>த்யாத்யூதோ ப<sup>4</sup>வதி |

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.

இத<sup>3</sup>ம் ஹி பும்ஸஸ்தபஸ: ஸ்ருதஸ்ய வா ஸ்விஷ்டஸ்ய ஸுலக்தஸ்ய ச  
பு<sup>3</sup>த்<sup>3</sup>தி<sup>4</sup>த்<sup>3</sup>த்யோ: |

அவிச்யுதோ<sup>5</sup>ர்த: <sup>2</sup> கவிபி<sup>4</sup>ர்நிரூபிதோ யது<sup>3</sup>த்தமஸ்லோக-கு<sup>3</sup>ணுவர்ணநம் ||

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!

பார்வத்யுவாச -

கேநோபாயேந லக்<sup>4</sup>நா விஷ்ணோர்நாமஸஹஸ்ரகம் |

பட்<sup>2</sup>யதே பண்டி<sup>3</sup>தைர்நித்யம் ஸ்ரோதுமிச்ச<sup>2</sup>ம்யஹம் ப்ரபோ<sup>4</sup> ||

ஈஸ்வரோவாச -

ஸ்ரீராம ராமராமேதி ரமே ராமே மநோரமே |

ஸஹஸ்ரநாம தத்துல்யம் ராமநாம வராநநே ||

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 பாபநாஸந: - கீர்தித: பூஜிதோ த்யாத: ஸ்ம்ரு<sup>3</sup>த: பாபராஸிம் நாஸயதி | 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.

ஆஸ்சர்யே வா ப<sup>4</sup>யே ஸோகே க்ஷு<sup>4</sup>தே வா மம நாம ய: |

வ்யாஜேந வா ஸ்மரேத்<sup>3</sup>யஸ்து ஸ யாதி பரமாம் க<sup>3</sup>திம் ||

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.

ஏஷ மே ஸர்வத<sup>4</sup>ர்மாணாம் த<sup>4</sup>ர்மோ<sup>5</sup>தி<sup>4</sup>கதமோ மத: |

யத்<sup>3</sup>ப<sup>4</sup>க்த்யா புண்ட<sup>3</sup>ரீகாக்ஷம் ஸ்தவைரர்சேந்நர: ஸதா<sup>3</sup> ||

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.

ஸர்வ: - ஸர்வ ஸ்வரூப: | க்ஷிதி-ஸலில-ஹு<sup>4</sup>தவஹ-பவந-க<sup>3</sup>க<sup>3</sup>ந-ஹிமகர-  
தி<sup>3</sup>நமணி-யஜுமாநாத்மபி<sup>4</sup>ர்மூர்திபி: |<sup>4</sup> ஸர்வம் வ்யாப்ய வ்யவஸ்தி<sup>2</sup>த: ||

“ ஸர்வோ வை ருத்<sup>3</sup>ர ” இதி ஸ்ருதி: | 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 கு³ஹா). The Katha upanishad (1-2-20)says this as follows.

அனோரணீயாந்மஹதோ மஹீயாந் ஆத்மாஸ்ய ஜந்தோர்நிஹிதம் கு³ஹாயாம் |  
தமக்ரது: பஸ்யதி வீதஸோகோ தா⁴துப்ரஸாதா³ந்மஹிமாநமாத்மந: ||

For this reason, Lord Subrahmanya is also known as Guha (கு³ஹ:|). SS(865).

கு³ஹ: ஸ்கந்த:³, தத்³ருபத்வாத்| யத்³வா கு³ஹா பு³த்³தி:⁴,  
ஸாஸ்யாபி⁴வ்யக்திஸ்தா²நத்வேநாஸ்தீதி மத்வர்தீ²யாச்ச்ப்ரத்யயாந்த: ஸப்³த:³ |

“ யோ வேத³ நிஹிதம் கு³ஹாயா” மிதி ஸ்ருதி: |

“ யோ வை ருத்³ர: ஸ ப⁴க³வாந்யஸ்ச ஸ்கந்த³” இதி ஸ்ருதி: ||

Devi Lalita also has the name Guhya (கு³ஹ்யா - கு³ஹாம் ப்ரவிஷ்டா கு³ஹ்யா ||)  
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).

ப⁴க்தஸ்ச ய: கார்திகேயே காகுத்ஸ்த² பு⁴வி மாநவ: |

ஆயுஷ்மாந் புத்ரபௌத்ரௌஸ்ச ஸ்கந்த³ஸாலோக்யதாம் வ்ரஜேத் ||

The late Paramacharya of Kanchi math pointed out that the name swami (ஸ்வாமீ) 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. தே³வஸேநாபதி: ஸூர: ஸ்வாமீ க³ஜமுக்²நுஜ: | The word swami (ஸ்வாமீ) 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 (ஸு) and brahmanya (ப்³ரஹ்மண்ய). Brahmanya means protector of dharma. The name appears in the Vishnu and Siva sahasranamas. The commentators Shankaracharya define the word as follows. ப்³ரஹ்மண்ய: - “ தபோ வேதா³ஸ்ச விப்ராஸ்ச ஜ்ஞாநம் ச ப்³ரஹ்மஸம்ஜ்ஞிதம் |” தேப்⁴யோ ஹிதத்வாத் ப்³ரஹ்மண்ய: | 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).

ப்³ரஹ்மருபாணம் ஜ்ஞாநிநாம் ஹிதகா³ ப்³ரஹ்மண்ய: |

“ தஸ்யைவ ஆத்மா விவ்ரு³ணேதி தநாம் |” இதி ஸ்ருதி: |

ஜ்ஞாநீத்வாத்மைவ மே மதமிதி ப⁴க³வத்³வசநாஸ்ச | (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).

யதா³ யதா³ ஹி த⁴ர்மஸ்ய க்³லாநி³ப்⁴வதி பா⁴ரத |

அப்⁴யுத்தா²நமத⁴ர்மஸ்ய ததா³த்மாநம் ஸ்ரு³ஜாம்யஹம் || 7 ||

பரித்ராணய ஸாதூ⁴நாம் விநாஸாய ச து³ஷ்க்ரு³தாம் |

த⁴ர்ம-ஸம்ஸ்தா²பநார்தா²ய ஸம்ப⁴வாமி யுகே³ யுகே³ || 8 ||


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.


முநீநாமுதாஹோ ந்ரு<sup>1</sup>ணம் ப<sup>4</sup>க்திபா<sup>4</sup>ஜாமபீ<sup>4</sup>ஷ்டப்ரதா:<sup>3</sup> ஸந்தி ஸர்வத்ர தே<sup>3</sup>வதா: |  
ந்ரு<sup>1</sup>ணமந்த்யஜாநாமபி ஸ்வார்த<sup>2</sup>தா<sup>3</sup>நே கு<sup>3</sup>ஹாத்<sup>3</sup>தே<sup>3</sup>வமந்யம் ந ஜாநே ந ஜாநே ||  
Let us pray to Lord Subrahmanya and seek His grace.

|| ஓ தத்ஸத் ||

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