.. 16 names of Lord SubrahmaNya ..
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॥ श्रीसुबह्यमण्य षोडशनामानि ॥

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(1) VS - Vishnu sahasranamam.
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(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.

This prayer addressed to Lord Vishnu says specially extol Your name. Swami Bodhendra, who was a great advocate of chanting of the Lord’s name points out that 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 sahas-
ranAmam

are popular. Their recitation with devotion is guaranteed to confer
immense benefits to the person. The Vishnu sahasranamam has the follow-
ing

... 16 names of Lord SubrahmaNya ...

|| श्रीमुखगण्य पोडशनामामि ||
| त्रानाशक्तिकरः सकन्त: देवसेनापतिस्तथा ||
| सुव्रहण्यो गजारुद्ध्स: शरकाननस्मभव: || १ ||
| कार्तिकेय: कुमारशष्मुखस्तारकान्तकः ||
| सेनानीश्रीवासस्ता च वज्रिक्लयाणसुन्दरः || २ ||
| वालश्रकोवस्ता च शिशिवाहन एव च ||
| पतानि स्वामिनामामि पोडश प्रत्यः नरः ||
| च: पंथत सवपापेर्ष्य: स मुच्यते महामुने || ३ ||

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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.

च इदं श्रणुयाग्नियान्व चतुष्पाप परिक्रियायेत 

नामयाृत्राणु त्रिभुतविषुष्ठ च मानवः।

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

य: शताब्दीयमधीते सोऽषिपूतो भविताः सुरापानात्मुत्तो भविताः।
ब्रह्मद्वायापूतो भविताः कृत्याकृत्यापूतो भविताः।

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.

इदं हि पुंसांपतस: श्रुतस्य वा स्विविधस्य सूक्तस्य च बुक्खिद्वः।
अखिन्तुतोर्थ: कविविभिन्निहुपितो यस्यमश्चक-गुणानुवर्णनम्।

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 trishats 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!

पार्भ्यमुपराण -
केनोपायेन रघुनानविष्णुनामसहस्कम्।
पठयते पवित्त्रात्मक श्रैतृमिन्द्रश्चरवह प्रमो॥

ईश्वरोभाव -
श्रीराम राम रामेति रमे रामे मनोरमे॥

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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 पापनाशनः - कीर्तितः पूजितो 

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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.

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.

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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 Ashwatthatha 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 prescence 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.

अणोराणीया भवतो महीयान् आत्मास्य जन्तोत्तिरं गुहायाम् ।
तमकंतं पश्यति वीतशोको धातुसादानमितामातमम् ॥

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

गुह: सकन्दः, तदृपत्यात। यद्य गुहा बुधः,
सांस्करितस्यान्तेवेनास्तित मत्तथ्यायाप्रत्ययात्: शब्दः ।
“ यो वेद निहितं गुहाया” मिति श्रुति:। “ यो वै रुद्रः स
भगवान्यश्च सकन्दः” इति श्रुति: ॥

Devi Lalita also has the name Guhya (गुह्या - गुह्या गुह्या गुह्या:).

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).

The late Paramacharya of Kanchi math pointed out that the name swami (स्वामी) 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.

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).

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.

मुनीनामुताहो नृणां भक्तिभाजामामीष्टदा: सन्नि सर्वंत् देवता:।
नृणामन्त्यजानामपि स्वार्थदाने गुहादेवमन्यं न जाने न जाने॥

Let us pray to Lord Subrahmanya and seek His grace.

॥ ऋ तत्सत् ॥

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