

Vishnusahasranama



or
THOUSAND NAMES
of
LORD VISHNU
In Song



By
Swami Suryadevananda

www.suryadevananda.org

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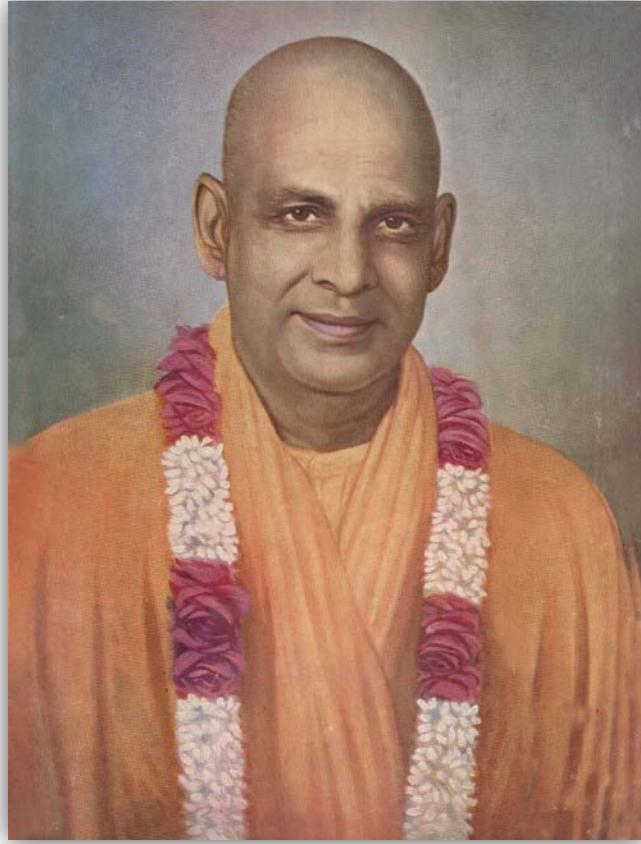
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DEDICATED TO



Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda



PREFACE

It is very significant that the Vishnusahasranama was given as an answer to the questions of Yudishtira by the great Bhishma at the end of the Mahabharata war. The only enemies are the ones within—in our own minds and hearts. It is only after the inner war is won that the field is fertile to cultivate the new.

In the Katha Upanishad, the great master Yama instructs the most worthy disciple Nachiketas: *“Arise. Awake. Staying awake, go to the master and get instruction, or have your doubts cleared.”* Yoga insists on self-control and self-restraint before the other steps of restoration of one’s true nature. In jnana yoga, the fourfold qualifications of a seeker are requisite.

Scriptures are as wide open as the endless skies and one is free to take from the expanse any meaning one feels to. Rather than studying them as events or even as a dialogue from the outside, I have found it most useful to get into the teachings, as true teachings are timeless—they are eternally applicable.

Yudishtira’s six questions boil down to two and then further to one: 1) who or what is the greatest Truth or God?, and 2), what is the highest duty or thing to be done?

Bhishma replies to the questions with the thousand names of the Lord instead of an answer that was specific to Yudishtira’s present situation as a king who won a war. The questions may have been specific, but the grand Bhishma’s answer is universal and eternal. Like the sun, the mighty Bhishma radiates God’s Nature and Glories through the Vishnusahasranama or thousand names of God.

Vishnu means all-pervading, the Divine Omnipresence, the Absolute or God. The thousand names or the Vishnushasranama, like thousand rays from the sun, point back to the sun. If

the heart and mind can be made to feel that we are right now in the bosom of God and none other exists—we will begin to understand how to do all that needs to be done.

Actions are guided by understanding. Our problems stem from wrong understanding of the true nature of all and everything and so we fail to adjust ourselves properly. The thousand names are ways of readjustment or calibration to the natural state. Why a thousand? There could have been more, and one could suffice, but thousand is a grand and big number so it is most inspiring to see that all rays lead to the sun, and all ways or actions are steps in evolution or our journey home.

The two questions of Yudishtira boil down into one question: “What is the highest truth or God?” The question of ‘highest duty’ does not arise if we can somehow feel that we are right now not only amidst the ocean of God, but—God Alone Is! If this greatest of all dictums can etch itself onto the heart tablet, the mind will get clarity on how and what needs to be done. Lack of clarity or changing clarity is our problem. This clarity is not intellectual clarity but the understanding that is the core of your being.

This core of your being feels the need for security, satisfaction and joy, and not understanding the true nature of the interconnectedness of things—it goes about gathering broken shells at the water’s edge—never feeling secure, satisfied or joyful. The burning quest to end all answers of what it is to be ‘fulfilled’ in every way keeps driving one till total fulfillment is reached. Things, relationships and conditions are ever in the process of change and cannot deliver what is needed.

Bhishma’s majestic answer is a reply to everyone’s single question, “What is the Truth?” If you can take a simple mind and heart and listen to the thousand names just like you were listening with rapt attention to your wise and most loving grandfather who was about to depart from life, knowing this would be the last and only opportunity to learn from one whom you most love and respect—the magic can happen.

Like the brilliant effulgence of the sun, the thousand rays of names, or the nature of God, will enter your heart and set ablaze all doubts and the light of clarity will guide you eternally in how to live in light of the great truth—Divine Omnipresence.

Try lighting the lamp of aspiration within. Then, burn the sticks of individuality which at once wafts the sweet fragrance of *incense*. Wash the felt Indwelling Presence of the Lord with *prem* or pure love. Offer the petals of individuality as *archana* or flowers offered unto the Lord—a letting go of ignorance is the immediate realization of truth. Just like water flows as a steady stream, let the thousand names make your journey home unbroken till the small tumbler empties itself in the Divine Ocean. Ignorance cannot reside within if you do not hold onto it. The thousand names are thousand ways to let go of the ego or to effect self-surrender by embracing the truth—God Alone Is.

Here is a simple way to feel the import of the thousand names of God. You may call God by any name—God is God. I have been greatly inspired by the English Philosophical Songs of Gurudev Swami Sivananda in that, like bypass surgery, they bypass the blockages of the mind and connect directly to the heart.

The song can be sung in the commonly known tune as well as other simple tunes, and one does not need any singing ability or talent for these songs. Just as a capsule holds the medicine, the song holds the light of Bhishma.

The first few times you may find yourself concentrating on the words and tune... on the singing. If you continue on without becoming mechanical, you will find yourself listening to the words of the song which is being sung. If you continue to stay alert, you will then find yourself contemplating on the meaning of the song which is being sung and heard. If you are determined and ever alert, finally something wonderful happens!—you will find yourself meditating on that which the words point to, all the while the song is being sung and heard.

I hope to soon have the audio for this song offered on my website as well.

Wishing you a glorious journey through song!

Swami Suryadevananda

14 September 2010

NOTE OF GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

I wish to express my gratitude and deep appreciation to Sivananda-Usha for her invaluable help in the edit, review and preparation of this book.

To all the Great Sages and Saints who have passed on this wisdom, my reverential gratitude.

To the Grand Sage Bhishma, the wisest of the wise, greatest of the great and Grand Father (*Pitamaha*) of all seekers.

Finally, to Gurudev Swami Sivananda, at whose feet this work is offered.

Swami Suryadevananda

14 September 2010

THE VISHNUSAHASRANAMA

OR

THE THOUSAND NAMES OF VISHNU

In Song

INVOCATION

OM

Salutations and prostrations
The mere thought of him does

Unto all-pervading Lord Vishnu
Bestow freedom and liberation

Sri Vaisampayana said:

Hearing a lot about dharma
Doubts still linger in one's heart

Learning spiritual practice too
Yudhishtira therefore asked Bhishma

Yudhishtira asked:

Revered sire kindly instruct
Who should we worship and pray to?
Which is the supreme duty of all?
Kindly do thou please instruct me

Who is the one supreme God?
In whom should we seek shelter?
How to attain final liberation?
I seek refuge at thy holy feet

Bhishma replied:

If one chants full of devotion
Lord of the entire universe
Bestows freedom from suffering
One should also worship and pray

The thousand names of Vishnu
God of gods the unlimited one
Right here in this life itself
Daily and without any break

He does not begin or end
God of gods the only one
All miseries in this life
Chanting his name with devotion

He is the changeless one
He presides over the universe
Will surely be set at naught
And worshipping the God of gods.

He is the lotus eyed one
He is the really the only one
He increases fame and glory
He is master of the universe

Partial to the ancient vedas
Who knows what dharma is
Of those who live in this world
Truth of all and of everything

He decides the life of all living

He is the dharma that is great

He is the greatest light of all
He is the great supreme Brahman
The thousand holy names of who

Of him who is the purest of pure
Thousand holy names which do
He is the holiest of holies
He is the deathless father

Of him were all souls born
In him will all disappear
He is chief of all in the world
Now listen very devoutly

That which is greatest penance¹
The greatest shelter that I know
Washes away all one's sins

Kindly now hear from me
Wash away all one's sins
He is the God of all the gods
Of all that do ever live

At the start of grand creation
At the end during dissolution
World's burden he alone bears
With rapt attention and full of faith

VISHNUSAHASRANAMA STOTRAM

He is the all or the universe
About him are the sacred verses
Master of past, present, future
Supporter and sustainer of all

He develops all elements
He is the only supreme Soul
For him there is no decay
One who witnesses everything

Indestructible is he
Master of the established
Master of pradhana or prakriti
In one body does he dwell

On his chest does always
His hair and locks are beautiful
Omniscient and only existence
Steady, immovable and changeless

Changeless and indestructible
Born of his own free will
Universe's support and substratum
Supreme adept in all the rites

One who is self-existent
Golden-hued in sun's orb
From him does come the sound
Birthless, deathless existence

He alone pervades every thing
Uttered in all the rituals
Creator and destroyer of the universe
Pure existence and only essence

His nature is all purity
Highest goal for liberated ones
He abides in the body with gates
Knower of the field or body

One attainable through yoga
Those steady in the yoga way
Master of purusha and jiva
As man and lion combined

Dwell the Goddess Shri
He is greatest of all purushas
Destroyer who is ever pure
Source of all existing things

Universe rises and falls in him
Source of karma of all jivas
In him do elements take their birth
Unlimited power over everything

Bestower of happiness on devotees
With eyes like petals of lotus
Vedas sacred of eternity
Support of the universe

¹ The formless has assumed all the forms we see without any change. The Aitareya Upanishad calls this becoming without any change in Being—an austerity on the part of God.

He generates karmas and fruits
One who is not measureable
By accepted means of knowledge
In his navel does the lotus

Master of the deathless
He is the supreme thinker
It is he who does excel
The eternal and most ancient

Existence-bliss-knowledge-absolute
He destroys time at dissolution
Support of the three regions
He is supremely auspicious

It is he who activates the prana
He deserves the highest praise
Soul of all even Brahma
Consort of goddess Mahalakshmi

Destroyer of the demon Madhu
Courageous and armed with bow
He transcends all of samsara
There is none greater than he

He knows everything about us
All achievements are him alone
Greatest of bestowers of good
Of the nature of supreme bliss

He is the origin of all beings
Ungraspable as a serpent
With eyes at once everywhere
Birthless and the supreme Lord

Nature of consciousness in all
One who is never lost
He showers all objects of desire
He stands free of all bondage

Possessor of greatest mind
Same to all, unperturbed
His worship never goes in vain
His actions are dharma itself

As Rudra he makes all cry
One with heads everywhere
He is the cause of the world

Ultimate support of everything
One who is not understandable
He is master of all senses
Source of the universe stands

His creation is most wonderful
He shrinks all at dissolution
In everything that is excellent
Ungraspable by the mind

One whose eyes are tinged red
Omnipotent and omnipresent is he
Purifier of all and everything
He is the supreme controller

He is the most ancient one
Master of all living beings—Ishwara
He has the world within himself
Fit to be known through Madhu-Vidya

He is the omnipotent being
He is the supreme intelligence
He helps his devotees to cross over
He none can ever overthrow

Everything that we have done
Self-established and supportless
Remover of all one's sorrows
Seed of the vast universe

Luminous and source of time
Nature of pure consciousness
The sight of all forms are his
Self-established in his own nature

First cause of all elements
One who cannot lose his powers
His nature cannot be determined
All dwell in him, he dwells in all

Serene and without attachment
His very nature is truth
Realized in lotus of the heart
He incarnates for dharma also

During period of dissolution
Supreme governor of the world
His names and glories purify

Both deathless and eternal

His lap gives the highest blessings
All-pervading supreme being is he
Omniscient and self-luminous
Before him does evil scatter

He who is form of the veda
Self-fulfilled knowledge-absolute
Knower of all vedas is he
Witness of the whole universe

He directly sees all merits
Bestower of due rewards
As effect, the form of world
For his sake all forms are assumed

Nisimha is he with fangs
He is pure luminosity
Prakriti is his enjoyment too
He manifested as Hiranyagarbha

He has mastery over the universe
He is superior to all beings
He dwells in bodies of everyone
He incarnated as Indra's brother

He is one of great height
He purifies those who adore him
He is superior to all the gods
Subtle form of the universe is he

He appoints all to their stations
He is the goal of those yogis
He knows all branches of learning
He destroys the evil ones

He is master of all knowledge
Unknowable by the senses
He is ever busy in creation
He is the strongest of the strong

He is the most powerful of all
He is all powerful and all wise
He cannot be objectively known
He is endowed with all greatness

Incarnating as Lord Krishna

Self-established and unchanging

Austerity of cosmic creation
Nature of all material cause
He illumines everything
He inflicts suffering on evil ones

One who knows veda's meaning
To him vedas stand as organs
He is the seer of everything
Overlord of all divinities

He directly sees your demerits too
For merits and demerits too
As non-effect, he is supreme cause
He adopts a fourfold manifestation

One with four arms is he
Maya is enjoyed by the Lord
He suppresses all the asuric
At the beginning of creation

Omnipotent and omniscient is He
Source of the universe is He
Indweller of all bodies is He
And as Vamana the dwarf

His acts never ever go in vain
One of infinite strength is He
Due to his inherent attributes
He is beyond any transformation

Regulating all, remaining one with them
Who aspire for moksha or liberation
Ever experienceable is He
He alone protects dharma

He gives joy to all just like honey
He disillusion the illusionists
Sustentation and dissolution too
Wisest of the wise is He

Ignorance of samsara is his power
Brilliant within and without is He
Supreme subject alone is He
Immeasurable intelligence is He

He held up the mountain Mandara

He is equipped with the great bow
Goddess Shri ever dwells with him
He cannot be obstructed

He is the power in all words
Gau means words and therefore
Self-endowed with supreme power
Those who practice his presence

Dharma and adharma are his wings
Performer of rigorous austerity
Father of all who are his children
He sees the karma of everyone

He unites all with fruits of actions
He is always of the same nature
He subjects oppressors to difficulty
He is signified by truth, knowledge

He is the teacher of all knowledge
He is brilliance and effulgence
One of unfailing valor is He
He is eternally ever-awake

He is master of all knowledge
He leads seekers to the highest
He is the most resplendent of all
He animates all of creation

He is one with thousand heads
He is one with thousand eyes
He whirls the wheel of samsara
Avidya has its place in him too

Like the sun he regulates all
He has no fixed residence
His mercy is uniquely wonderful
Never contaminated is his mind

He is the supreme enjoyer
He offers benefits to everyone
His acts according to justice
He is the soul of all beings

Undifferent in name and form is he
He alone excels as everything
His object is always fulfilled
He fulfils effort by those who strive

He upheld the earth from submerging
Goal of life is bestowed by Him
He bestows joy on divinities

Therefore sages call him Govinda
Master of words is so indicated
He disciplines unrighteous as Yama
Have fear of samsara removed by Him

He rests on the greatest serpents
Lotus-shaped navel has He
Without death or its cause is He
The only destroyer is He

Enjoyer of fruits is He alone
With devotees (not others) is He
He instructs and directs through scriptures
He destroys oppressors of the good

He teaches the divinities too
Embodiment of virtues, specially truth
His eyes are closed in yoga-nidra
Five elements are strung on his necklace

All-perceiving intellect is His
He has command over all beings
Ever consistent is He eternally
As breath he keeps all beings functioning

He is the soul of the universe
He is one with thousand legs
Free of samsara's bondage is He
He acts through his manifestations

Like the fire he carries all offerings
He supports all of creation
He gives salvation to enemies too
The universe is held by his power

The manyness we see is him only
The greatest too adore him only
All dissolve in him at dissolution
He alone directs everything

Ungraspable is his nature
Everything is commanded by him
Fulfilled are all his resolutions
In accordance with their eligibility

He gives fulfillment to the work
He is merit or dharma
Vishnu means all-pervader
All offspring come from him alone

Always untouched, unaffected
His arms protect the worlds
Words of vedas emanate from him
He alone bestows all riches

He does not have exclusive form
He resides in cows during yajna
Ojas or spiritual energy is he
He is dyuti or pure radiance

His power it is that warms the world
He is omkara the primordial sound
Cooling relief of moonlight is he
He is the source of the cooling moon

The shining moon is verily him
He is the cure for samsara
He is full of true qualities
He is the only purifier

He is the food and energy
He fulfills the needs of pure ones
He is value ultimate in all
He surpasses all and everything

He is the cause of four yugas
He consumes all at the end of time
His gross form is this universe
Self-endowed with all powers

He is the one dear to all
He resides within all
Peacock feather adored his crown
He is the form of dharma

He generates anger in evil ones
He alone supports the earth
Free from all transformations
As Hiranyagarbha does he endow

He alone bestows prana on all
He incarnated as dwarf Vamana
He is the seat and support of all

Of those who are deserving
He showers on devotees their needs
Steps to him he has laid out
He multiplies as this universe

All sruti flow unto him
He alone upholds the universe
Supreme Being, God of gods is he
Everything is contained in him

He has manifested in many forms
He alone illumines everything
Tejas or spiritual brilliance is he
All divine qualities are him alone

All excellent qualities abide in him
He is known through all mantras
He gives shelter to afflicted ones
He alone shines in all

Lord of all the good ones is he
His aid enables one to cross over
Eternal master of all beings is he
All movement is caused by him alone

He helps seekers overcome desire
He is extremely beautiful
Desires of devotees does he fulfill
He is the cause of periods of time

Maya's many forms are him alone
He cannot be known by sense knowledge
He achieves victory for all good ones
Victorious at all times is he

As supreme bliss is his nature
He is adored by those who know
All beings are bound by his maya
He eradicates anger from virtuous ones

All beings he has in his arms
All forms of worship go to him alone
Most renowned is the supreme Lord
All beings with life-giving prana

He alone withdraws the prana too
Ocean's collective water is he
Bestower of fruits for all action is he

Ever established in his own greatness

He supports the righteous path
He is the giver of all boons
Both vasu and deva is he
He is the source of all the gods

He is without the six defects²
He liberates all from all fears
He is Krishna, son of Sura⁴
He is the soul of all beings

He has had several incarnations
His eyes resemble the lotus
Worship him in the heart-lotus
Enormous is his prosperity

He is the most ancient soul of all
He has Garuda as his flag
As body, it is always changing
He knows the time for creation

Offerings in yajnas go to him alone
Goddess Lakshmi resides with him
He is ancient and indestructible
He is sought by yogis as moksha

Benevolent because of self-control
He props up the earth like a mountain
He has tremendous speed
He is the material cause of creation

Activities of creation are his sport
Supreme is he of all and everything
He generates this entire universe
He has fashioned this unique universe

With maya he hides his own nature
He regulates the entire universe
All status is given by him only
He possesses true lordliness

Greatest of all without any help
He is the one who fills everything
The yogis find delight in him

He drives everything as air

As birth he bears the birth of all
He vibrates atmosphere's energy
He alone is the great brilliance
Abodes of evil he does destroy

He uplifts beings from samsara
All satisfactions³ of life he does fulfill
He alone is Lord of all beings
Favorable to all, against no one

His hands hold the lotus
He resides in the heart-lotus
He sustains the bodies of all beings
He is seen standing as the world

Many glorious eyes has he
He cannot be compared to anything
He is one of whom all are afraid
For sustention and dissolution too

Supreme Knowledge is he himself
Ever victorious is the supreme Lord
Form of a fish he did assume
Instrumental and material cause is he

He subordinates everything
He incarnates of his own free will
He consumes all at dissolution
Entering, he pervades all creation

Samsara exists in his abdomen
He holds sway over all beings
He is free and his own master
His nature and greatness cannot be known

His nature is wholly of knowledge
In him do all dwell in dissolution
He is the indestructible one
In him does Goddess Lakshmi dwell

Supreme by his own nature
His glance bestows the highest on all
In him do all things end finally

² Sorrow, infatuation, hunger, thirst, birth and death

³ Dharma, artha, kama and moksha

⁴ Vasudeva

He is without any desire

He leads us to the Supreme
There is no leader for him
He is the most powerful one
He is greatest knower of dharma

Vikuntha is bringing together
An agent of bringing together
He existed before everything
He functions as the prana

Prostrations with Om go to him
The world-seed came from him
He pervades all effects as the cause
He never undergoes degeneration

Time and seasons are him only
All limits are set by him
He is everywhere, ungraspable
He does receive all offerings

He is the cause of all fear
All beings do reside in him
He is the most skilled of all
All worlds emanate from him

His nature is pure consciousness
He is the meaning of everything
Self-fulfilled is the supreme Lord
Great koshas are his covering

He enjoys the whole universe
Huge as the cosmic person is he
All offerings are yoked to him
He is the heart of all the stars

He is the expert in everything
He manifests creation expertly
All worship is his alone
Sacrificial rites are yoked to him

Sole support for all holy ones
His eternal insight is infinite
He is naturally free eternally
He is most superior consciousness

He is one of magnanimous vow

He is the path to immortality

Through spiritual realization
Most valorous is the supreme Lord
He alone supports all beings
Srutis are his commandments

The diversified categories
Is known as Vaikuntah
He indwells in all bodies
Destroying prana during pralaya

He has expanded as this world
Enemies of good he does destroy
He is the cause of every smell
His original nature is eternal

Fruit of masha does he bestow
He dwells in sky of the heart
By all who seek refuge in him
Made by sincere devotees

Even to divinities as the Sun
He bestows liberation from samsara
Most proficient in everything
Eternally established is the Lord

He is the only changeless cause
He is the nature of supreme bliss
He has no purpose or end to seek
Unalloyed bliss is his enjoyment

Self-fulfilled is the supreme Lord
Birthless is the supreme Lord
His acceptance makes offerings great
The moon is his form only

He remains forever unchanged
He is the one who is all-knowing
He alone bestows liberation
All ordained dharma comes from him

He alone guides seekers to liberation
He instantly sees the good and evil in all
He is all and the knower of all
Birthless, timeless and cause of all

To protect all refuge-seekers

He has the most pleasant face
Vedas are his auspicious sound
He gives happiness to good people

He blissful nature attracts everyone
His arms are capable of the very best
Dharma is upheld by him only
He alone enfolds all jivas

He is the cause of cosmic process
He interpenetrates everything
All forms are his manifestation
Everything dwells in him alone

He protects those who seek refuge
Expansive ocean is him only
He alone protects and upholds
Truth-Absolute is his very self

Without attributes of jivas
Above dharma and adharma
Nature of truth—Parabrahman
All beings are subject to change

Without any personal attributes
Only support of the universe
In the middle of sun's rays is he
Irresistible power like a lion

Supreme knowledge is his greatness
All gods are ruled by him only
He is untouched by samsara
He cannot be known through karma

Master of five elements is he
He has manifested as a boar too
He receives the essence of sacrifice
Great victory over all is his only

He punishes the evil doers
All his resolves do come to be
Tantra too does come from him
Witness of your spiritual attitude

His three strides cover creation
All gods dwell in him alone

Most subtle without gross causes
Sounds of clouds are his sounds too
He helps without any expectation

He does not ever fall to anger
He destroys evil, protects the good
He destroys those who do not abide
In delusion and self-ignorance

Indomitable is the supreme Lord
Just like pure space everywhere
All activities he alone allows
He has great love for his devotees

Universe's treasures are him only
Lord of all wealth is he alone
Righteousness which is real dharma
Changeless, eternal is the Lord

Dharma's upholder and protector
His involvement is its protection
Manifested as the world, as *asat*⁵
He alone is the changeless one

Like the sun with endless rays
Nature of pure consciousness
In the middle of *sattva* *guna* is he
The supreme Lord of all beings

Greatest of all gods and the best
Indra's guru and controller is he
Like a cowherd he does protect
Timeless, eternal is his existence

Enjoyer of infinite bliss is he
Offerings in all rituals go unto him
He invigorates plants as the moon
Greatest of the great is the cosmic one

Victorious over all beings is he
Charitable offerings he does receive
Supreme knower is him alone
He bestows liberation on worthy ones

Such is his supreme majesty
Beyond space, time, causation is he

⁵ Not having reality

Cosmic dissolution is in him only
End to all beings he only brings

Only one fit to worship is he
All inner enemies he has conquered
Self-absorbed, always joyful
He delights in giving delight

Truth, his knowledge and attributes
As sages he is the great Kapila
Universe's master is him alone
One with great antenna is he

The great cosmic boar is he
As existence, he is self-protected
Hidden meaning of teachings is he
Most profound is his majesty

Very difficult it is to enter him
Never an object of words or thought
He alone regulates everything
Eternally unconquerable is he

His endless capacity is changeless
His greatness can never diminish
To him do great sages associate
He shines as the light of consciousness

Creations' functions does he fulfill
He knows all, is called bhagavan⁷
His nature is of supreme bliss
The plough he used as a weapon

He is the indweller in the sun's orb
Ultimate support and resort is he
As Parasuram he wielded the axe
Beyond the heavens does he reach

Master of all learning is he
Among vedas he is Sama Veda
In him do all miseries cease
He is the cure for samsara

He initiated order of sannyasa
Embodiment of purification is he

In him do universes rise and fall
Indescribably great is the supreme Lord

Without beginning, eternally perfect
External enemies he has none
Ananda or bliss is his nature
Endowed with all perfection is he

Three strides of his cover creation
As effect he is the world you see
Witness of three states⁶ is him alone
Universe's changes are caused by him

Words and teachings are him alone
He is adorned by the best treasures
He is hidden in your heart too
All powers and glories are him only

Witness of three states and absence too
Discus and mace are held by him
Participant in all accomplishments is he
Also known by Krishna-dvaipayana

All are pulled unto him at dissolution
He shines unto himself as the evening sun
Unshakeable as an ancient tree is he
When mediated upon in one's heart

By his infinite mind alone
Withdrawing all into himself at dissolution
Five elements are his floral wealth
As Vamana he was born of Aditi⁸

Opposites do not affect him at all
The greatest bow he does control
His harshness bestows great blessings
He bestows omniscience in great sages

Unborn through a mother's womb
Sama chanters sing his praises
As supreme bliss is his nature
He is the divine physician

For attainment of final liberation
Without desires and always peaceful

⁶ Waking, dreaming and deep sleep

⁷ One who knows origin, dissolution, the bondage and salvation of creatures, knowledge, ignorance

⁸ Born of Aditi and Kasyapa as Vamana

At dissolution all return in him
Highest of all states is he

He is the beauty of beauties
All creation emanates from him
He lies in the waters that surround
He also lies on the great serpent

As Krishna he lifted Govardhana⁹
Lord of the earth is Vishnu
Hidden from all by his maya
His look is verily dharma too

He never retreats from evil
Withdrawn from sense objects is he
He protects those who seek refuge
His chest bears the divine mark

When cosmic waters were churned
She is the great cosmic power
Master of all powers is he
On the good he bestows prosperity

All virtue and power abides in him
He rewards all as they deserve
Seekers of truth are inspired by him
The universe's forms are all in him

His eyes are beauty in themselves
Non-dual and indivisible is he
He is the lord of stars and galaxies
Particulars cannot describe him

Never ever a doubt has he
Superior to all beings is he
He is above all and everything
The sea-beach has been his bed too

Abode and essence of all is he
Free from sorrow, nature of bliss
By his light shine sun, moon and stars
He is the object of all worship

Above gunas¹⁰, pure spirit is he
He is the end of all lineage

Avidya is erased in him completely
There is no return on attaining him

Bestower of peace and freedom is he
He delights in all of creation
All of the earth of creation
Known by the name of Adishesha

Protecting the cows and everyone
He is the only world protector
His glance bestows everything
Most dear to him is dharma

He adheres to dharma tenaciously
All melt into him on dissolution
His name is the greatest purifier
Sri Devi ever abides with him

Goddess Sri chose him eternally
One with the Lord inseparably
He presides over all the deities
Lord of Goddess of wealth is he

Ground of virtues and power is he
Cosmic Power resides in him
He leads the good to the beyond
He supports all of creation

His limbs are most beautiful too
Supreme bliss is his nature
His mind is always well controlled
Nature of truth is his eternal fame

Perfect clarity of all has he
Nature of pure consciousness is he
Eternal and unchanging is he
His incarnations glorify the earth

Source of all glorious manifestations
His remembrance removes all sorrow
He is worshipped by all divinities
All is contained in him only

His remembrance destroys all sins
He cannot be obstructed in any way

⁹ Name of a mountain

¹⁰ Sattva or harmony, rajas or passion and tamas or dullness

No equal to confront in any way
His prowess cannot be obstructed

Most courageous of all is he
Most powerful gods does he control
His will controls all and everything
Wrongdoers he does destroy

He is the end of all desire
He allows all to be fully satisfied
Dissolution begins and ends in him
Far above all gunas is he

His brilliance blankets sky and earth
He is the supreme all-pervader
The bravest of brave are him alone
He is the indicator of everything

As Brahma¹² he creates everything
He alone inspires spiritual seekers
Spiritual instructions come from him
All holy persons are devoted to him

All of creation is his handiwork
The great serpent is verily him
He does sacrifice for the good of all
He offers the all, into the all only

He is the object of all praises
Pleased by hymns or verses
He never hesitates to protect the good
Self-fulfilled in endless excellencies

Hearing of him cleanses the heart
He is never affected in any way
His essence is just as pure gold
Highest wealth of liberation

He incarnated as son of Vasudeva
His mind dwells in all equally
Only the best do attain him
He has equal vision in everything

He is the highest goal of holy ones
Foremost of Yadu¹³ people is he

His treasure and wealth are pure spirit
Evil doers he destroys time after time

In pure families does he incarnate
By indwelling all and everything
All light emanates from him only
He alone can destroy samsara¹¹ too

All values find their end in him
There is great beauty in his majesty
From him do all scriptures emanate
His form can never be determined

The power of movement is his also
There is no limitation for him at all
All power is his manifestation only
He alone performs all austerity

Omnipresence is his eternal truth
He is the meaning of all scriptures
He is source and end of all practices
His gigantic strides bestow joy to all

Sun, moon and stars get light from him
Greatest of sacrifices are him only
The universe is his great offering
All praise, all glory unto him only

There is none else for him to praise
He is most pleased by your simple prayer
He brings fight to all oppressors
Freely sharing excellencies with all

Hearing his glories washes all one's sins
All-pervading like the mind's speed
He bestows wealth in abundance
He bestows on the most sincere

All of creation dwells in him only
All sacrificial offerings does he receive
He protects all as his own duty
He is changeless, eternal, infinity

He has heroic warriors like Hanuman
Resort of the holy ones is he

¹¹ The cycle of birth, death and all its troubles

¹² The creative aspect of the Trinity

Greatest of great surround him
All beings dwell in him only

All dissolve in his energy finally
He cuts the pride of the unrighteous
Self-satisfied in his eternal bliss
Unconquerable by internal enemies

Soul of all and everything is he
Gigantic is his cosmic form
He is luminous knowledge-absolute
He assumes different bodies at will

Even though he has taken many forms
As pure consciousness is his nature
He is one, single, solitary
Distinctions do not exist in him

Different bodies does he assume
The soma yajna he verily is
He overflows in joy and happiness
The sum of all good values is he

He is a self-subsisting entity
Goal of all spiritual seekers is he
He is the highest attainment
He incarnated in the Madhu clan

He has the color and form of gold
His adornments generate joy for all
Incomparable is he in every way
Unfailing are his blessings and grace

His movement is like that of air
His mayic power creates the unreal
He alone is delusion's remedy
He alone is to be adored by all

He is the support for all the worlds
From sacrifices he has arisen
His intelligence is always fruitful
With form of sun, he causes rain

Superior to all bearing arms is he
He is the controller and destroyer

Sacred rivers associate with him
His Maya covers the entire universe

He is omnipotent, limitless
He blesses the path of righteous ones
Very difficult to attain in meditation
Unconquerable by internal enemies too

The whole universe is his body
Stretched out on the bed of Adishesha
Without body caused by karma
To help the world through difficulty

He cannot be described objectively
He assumes many forms temporarily
Hundred faces indicate endless forms
As they exist in different objects

Through the power of his Maya
Numerous are his mayic forms
He is the best to contemplate
He is self-existent by nature

He is infinite expansion
There is nothing beyond him at all
Unto him does the whole world pray
He has endless love for devotees

All of him is most brilliant
He protects dharma eternally
Without attributes, pure emptiness
Immovable in truth and knowledge is he

He is the nature of pure consciousness
From and within unchanging reality
He alone can restore one's true nature
Lord of all the worlds is he

Self-endowed with supreme intelligence
Eternally self-satisfied is he
A fraction of him supports creation
His form is always most brilliant

He accepts offerings delightfully
Without end or limit is he

¹³ One of the five ancient Aryan clans

He is very attentive to devotees
All mantras invoke him only

He is the one with four hands¹⁶
He is the end of the four ashramas¹⁷
Four values of life¹⁸ come from him
A fraction of him supports all creation

All-pervading and inseparable is he
All duties his presence does regulate
Difficult to attain is he
Yogis try to feel him as the indweller

His form is best for meditation
The infinite universe is him only
Like Indra his actions do happen
Fulfilled eternally without desire

He embodies at his own free will
Adorable is his extreme tenderness
He is omniscient with brilliant eyes
He nourishes all who entreat him

He conquers his enemies easily
He has conquered all inner foes
Brilliant like gold are his limbs
Master of masters of all learning

His Maya is most difficult to cross
He is the support for all the elements
The earth rejoices as he protects it
His limbs are beautiful like jasmine too

His remembrance bestows purity
He is ever awake, he never sleeps
His form is deathless and undecaying
He has endless faces everywhere

He enjoys simple pure offerings
He is omnipotent, unobstructable
He destroys enemies of the good

He is the one with four horns¹⁴
The four aspects¹⁵ are him only

All activities are centered on him
Perfect clarity of mind has he
Four vedas come from him alone
He expertly turns samsara's wheel

He is the unconquerable one
He can be attained by pure devotion
He is far because of obstructions
Evil-minded are destroyed by him

Essence of all and everything is he
His will changes the universe
Nature's elements are effects in him
Vedic mantras have come from him

His attractiveness surpasses all beauty
His navel is worthy of concentration
He is worshiped by those who are worshiped
He embodied as a horned fish during dissolution

Eternal and endless is his omniscience
External foes he has conquered too
Undisturbed, unattached and universal
He is sought as an endless lake of bliss

He is undivided by past, present, future
Greatest of all and most precious is he
His blessings are fragrant like jasmine
He quenches everyone with his waters

His actions are always motiveless
Ever satisfied in his immortal bliss
He is the omniscient supreme Lord
He is attained by sincere devotion

Though non-enjoyer and witness of all
All evil forces are conquered by him
Above all though he grows below

¹⁴ Four states of consciousness: waking, dreaming, deep sleep and pure awareness

¹⁵ Includes above four states, four yugas or time periods and four expressions from the cosmic being to the absolute

¹⁶ Mind or manas, intellect of buddhi, subconscious mind (indivisible intelligence) or chitta and ego-sense or ahamkara

¹⁷ Student, householder, retirement and renunciate

¹⁸ Righteousness or dharma, wealth or artha, pleasure or kama and liberation or moksha

He is the supreme cause of all

He is victorious over valiant ones
He expresses as seven tongues of flame¹⁹
His horses are the days of the week
He cannot be known by knowledge

He generates fear in evil doers
He is subtlest of the subtle
He is purest spirit, not material
He is the support of the gunas

He is without gunas of prakriti
His face is radiant like a lotus
He augments all as his offspring
Vedas speak of him as the highest

He is eternally self-established
He is unshaken in yoga
He bestows on all desired fruits
He gives trouble to the careless

He himself is forest of samsara
All vedic passages are verily him
As Rama he wielded the great bow
He is the hardest disciplinarian

He is the greatest enforcer of all
He is undefeated by any enemy
He appoints all to their duties
No appointer or enforcer for him

All heroic qualities abide in him
He abides in the pure and good
Seekers of truth seek him alone
He alone is fit for all offerings

He is the best well-wisher of all
He enhances the joy of the good
His light reveals everything
All offerings are received by him

He absorbs all that is expressed
All brilliance emanates from him
All creation emanates from him
He is endless and all-pervading

In him the finite is infinity too

His brilliance radiates immeasurably
His seven flames are most brilliant
Sinless and sorrowless is he
He is verily Knowledge-Absolute

Fears in good ones he does destroy
He is mighty and huge at the same time
He is the indwelling presence in all
Creation's cycle revolves in him

Self-supported though support of all
He is the beginning of all lineage
He bears the weight of creation
Attainable by yogis in samadhi

He is yogi being the soul of all
He never falls as ordinary yogis
He gives rest to all in samsara
All ends in him at dissolution

Most excellent are all his leaves
Air does his duty because of him
Demonstrating mastery in archery
He punishes even great punishers

His hallmark is self-discipline
Expert in all actions is he
He enforces all his appointments
Even death works in fear of him

Purity and good are his abode
He is in truth and righteousness
He is the highest attainment possible
He alone deserves worship and praise

He does what is best for everyone
He permeates space like the sun
He is most luminous and beautiful
He is the omnipresent one

All that shines is him alone
All fire emanates from him too
The sun is his eye as cosmic being
All rituals' offerings go unto him

¹⁹ Cosmic Being: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and mouth metaphorically enumerated

He is the enjoyer of prakriti²⁰
He incarnates to protect the good
He is free from all limitations
He is patient towards the good

He is the most wonderful being
He is the supreme cause of all
He glows like the brilliant fire
All the worlds get dissolved in him

He is the giver of auspiciousness
His form is of pure supreme bliss
He is free from urges and emotions
He reclines on the serpent ananta²¹

He is the most daring of all
He allows himself to be invoked
For samsara's fire he is relief
He generates darkness for all

He has no cruelty in him²³
He is always alert and ready
He is liberal and magnanimous
He is the wisest of all the wise

Hearing his glories is blessedness
He lifts us from ocean of samsara
He purifies the hearts of devotees
He ends the cycle of samsara

His holiness is felt in the virtuous
All forms are projections of him alone
He has conquered anger completely
He deals with all balanced and just

His giving is most benevolent
He is the supreme guru of all
He supports all, though supportless
His movements are most mysterious

All life is given and sustained by him
He is the sole cause of this universe
His prowess is most irresistible

Bestower of liberation is he
First born of everything is he
Self-fulfilled in himself is he
Self-supported, supporter of all

He is endless time, eternity
Most ancient of all beings is he
Like the sun, he absorbs all water
He takes care of needs of devotees

Auspiciousness is his very nature
Auspiciousness he showers on all
Vices can never abide in him
His discus destroys our impurities

He enforces his law on all
Though he is beyond all invocations
Like cool water for the heat of day
For the wise and the ego-bound²²

He is most tender to devotees
He is most prompt and immediate
He is more patient than the earth
Fears and doubts are absent in him

Singing his glories is real bliss
His remembrance destroys vasanas²⁴
He destroys the sins of devotees
He sustains all of creation

As prana he supports the lives of all
All glories and powers are his alone
He removes fears of samsara
His deeper nature is unfathomable

His powers control gods and deities
He is the first cause, though causeless
All wealth and glory belongs to him
Most attractive are his ornaments

From him has everything arisen
His cosmic form frightens sinners
He frightens those on the wrong path

²⁰ Shakti or Cosmic Power; causal matter

²¹ Thousand-tongues serpent, also signifies kundalini shakti

²² Bhagavad Gita II.69

²³ Bhagavad Gita X.41

²⁴ Subtle impressions that become springs for action

He supports all that does exist

He himself is self-supported
He never sleeps, is eternally awake
He is truth, truth is he himself
Om indicates his absoluteness

Proof of all as pure consciousness
His omnipresence is the supreme law
He is the eternal supreme essence
Supreme reality is his nature

He is beyond change or modification
He helps all cross over samsara
He is the father of all gods too
He protects all sacrifices

Instruments of sacrifice are his limbs
He supports and protects all sacrifice
He protects all that is offered
He performs the final offering

He himself is all offering
He himself is the material cause
His unique forms rescue the earth
As Krishna he was born to Devaki

He is the universes' creator
Meditation on him erases all sin
His divine sword cuts off ignorance
His bow destroys the ego

The chariot wheel is his weapon
He is eternally undisturbable
He is always very well prepared
Lord of all, conqueror of all

He is the only supreme controller

He manifests like blossoming flowers
He is truth's highest summit
His gift of prana sustains all
The universe is managed by him alone

He is the ground of all prana
The giver of life, he is life itself
He is the essence of all realities
He is the omnipresent oversoul

He is the sap of the Tree-of-Life
He alone generates all the worlds
The very form of sacrifice is he
All offerings are received by him alone

All sacrifices he does fulfill
He performs all sacrifices too
Sacrifices attain fulfillment in him
He is the truth of all sacrifice

All offerings are accepted by him
Instrumental cause of all is he
Singer of sama chants is he
His lilas were the joy of Devaki

He is master of the universe too
From his divine conch do elements come
His discus bestows divine vision
His mace gives joy and beauty

Great deeds he does with simple things
As he is the only controller of all
All that is best is his armor
Self-established in his own glory!



VERSE 108

Om, Salutations to the supreme Lord
Wearer of the forest garland
Thou art the one called Vishnu
Om namah iti—Salutations to Him

Protect us, O Lord Narayanaya
Bearer of mace, conch, sword and wheel
Thou art called Vasudeva
Om namah iti—Salutations to Him!

PHALASHRUTI

THE BENEFITS

Traditional prayers end with a section called the *phalashruti*, outlining the benefits reciting the prayer.

Bhishma spoke:

Thus all thousand holy names
He who hears or sings with faith
Will never get into any harm
Learned ones will attain knowledge

Businessmen will get more wealth
He who seeks righteousness
He who seeks to have children
All will get what they really want

These must be sung with devotion
Sing after rising in the morning
Fame and success will come to you
Wealth will come and stay with you

Fear will be vanquished completely
You will never suffer serious ills
All virtues will abide in you
You will attain final freedom

He who chants the thousand names
Will cross over all miseries
One who approaches Vasudeva
Would get rid of all the sins

You will reach the supreme Lord
Devotees of the great Vasudeva
They never suffer in any way
Singing these names with devotion

You will get all that is best
True devotees of the Lord
They are never ever suspicious
They never speak any mean words

The entire universe and galaxies
All that moves or does not move
All those with evil tendencies too
All is Lord Krishna without fail

Of the Lord were revealed to all
Every day and without a break
Either in this life or the next
Warriors will attain victory

Laborers will get more comforts
He who seeks worldly pleasures
All will succeed without fail
Singing thousand names of Vasudeva

Full of faith and regularly
With mind rooted in him always
You will be foremost in everything
You will attain final liberation

You will be filled with confidence
You will have beauty, grace and poise
Your sickness will surely be cured
Fear and danger will be forgotten

With devotion to the omnipresent Lord
Most difficult to cross any other way
One who takes shelter in him
And become purer than the pure

Who alone is eternal existence
Never fall into difficult times
They never fear death or old age
Full of faith and love for God

Virtues, wealth and best qualities
Never have anger or any fear
They never harbor any mean thoughts
They never harbor any ill-will

Are borne by the great Vasudeva
All that is good, bad or different
Everything exists because of Him
Everything is Lord Krishna only

The learned say that all the limbs
All strength, bravery and body
The rule of life or dharma
Sages, ancestors and divinities

All the pleasures of the world
All that moves or remains still
The science of Yoga and Sankhya
All the fine arts and sciences

Vishnu is many, but he is One
He alone is in all the worlds
Deathless and decayless is he
He who desires success in anything

These verses were sung by Vyasas
Sing these verses without fail
Sing the praise of the supreme Lord
Always stable and radiant is he

Mind, wisdom and thought too
The soul too is Vasudeva
Came from the supreme Lord
Including the five elements too

All of what you call good luck
All came from the great Narayana
Treasures of learning and knowledge
All these came from Janardhana

He divides himself, existing in all
He alone rules all and everything
Is the supreme lord Narayana
Should chant these sacred verses

The greatest stotra of lord Vishnu
Sing these verses and you will never fail
Omnipresent Lord of the universe
His glance bestows the highest grace



VERSE 108 (...repeated)

Om, Salutations to the supreme Lord
Wearer of the forest garland
Thou art the one called Vishnu
Om namah iti—Salutations to Him!

Protect us O Lord Narayanaya
Bearer of mace, conch, sword and wheel
Thou art called Vasudeva
Om namah iti—Salutations to Him!

