

“Om Sri Lakshmi Narashimhan Nahama”

Maha Narayana Upanishad

*Hari Om! May Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman, Indra, Brihaspati
And all-pervading Vishnu be propitious to us
And grant us welfare and bliss.
I bow down to Brahman in reverence.
O Vayu, I bow down to Thee in adoration.
Thou verily art perceptible Brahman.
I shall declare: Thou art right.
Thou art the true and the good.
May that – the Supreme Being adored as Vayu – preserve me.
May He preserve the teacher.
Me, may He protect; My teacher, may He protect.
Om! May He protect us both together; may He nourish us both together;
May we work conjointly with great energy,
May our study be vigorous and effective,
May we not mutually dispute (or may we not hate any).
Om! Let there be Peace in me!
Let there be Peace in my environment!
Let there be Peace in the forces that act on me!*

I-1: The Lord of creation, who is present in the shoreless waters, on the earth and above the heaven and who is greater than the great, having entered the shining intelligences of creatures in seed form, acts in the foetus (which grows into the living being that is born).

I-2: That in which all this universe exists together and into which it dissolves. That in which all the gods remain enjoying their respective powers – That certainly is whatever that has been in the past and whatever indeed is to come in the future. This cause of the universe, Prajapati, is supported by His own imperishable nature described as absolute ether.

I-3: He by whom the space between heaven and earth as well as the heaven and the earth are enveloped. He by whom the sun burns with heat and gives light, and He whom the sages bind in the ether of their hearts (with the string of meditation), in whom – The Imperishable One – all creatures abide.

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I-4-5: From whom the creatrix of the world, Prakriti, was born, who created in the world creatures out of elements such as water, who entered beings consisting of herbs, quadrupeds and men as the inner controller, who is greater than the greatest, who is one without a second, who is imperishable, who is of unlimited forms, who is the universe, who is ancient, who remains beyond darkness or Prakriti and who is higher than the highest – nothing else exists other than, or subtler than, Him.

I-6: Sages declare: That alone is right and That alone is true: That alone is the venerable Brahman contemplated by the wise. Acts of worship and social utility also are that Reality. That alone being the navel of the universe, sustains manifoldly the universe which arose in the past and which springs to existence at present.

I-7: That alone is Fire: That is Air; That is Sun; That verily is Moon; That alone is shining Stars and Ambrosia. That is Food; That is Water and He is the Lord of creatures.

I-8-9: All nimesas, kalas, muhurtas, kasthas, days, half-months, months, and seasons, were born from the self-luminous Person. The year also was born from Him. He milked water and also these two, the firmament and the heaven.

I-10: No person ever grasped by his understanding the upward limit of this Paramatman, nor His limit across, nor His middle portion. His name is ‘great glory’ for no one limits His nature by definition.

I-11: His form is not to be beheld; none whosoever beholds Him with the eye. Those who meditate on Him with their minds undistracted and fixed in the heart know Him; they become immortal.

I-12: This Self-luminous Lord renowned in the scriptures pervades all the quarters of heaven. Having been born as Hiranyagarbha in the beginning He indeed is inside the universe represented as the womb. He alone is the manifold world of creation now springing into existence and causing the birth of the world of creation yet to come. As one having face everywhere, He dwells also as the inner most Self leading all creatures.

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I-13: The Self-luminous Reality is one without a second and is the creator of heaven and earth. (Having created the universe by Himself and out of Himself.) He became the possessor of the eyes, faces, hands and feet of all creatures in every part of the universe. He controls all of them by dharma and adharma (merit and demerit) represented as His two hands and the constituent elements of the universe which have supplied the Souls with the material embodiment represented as patatra or legs.

I-14-15: He in whom this universe originates and into whom it is absorbed; He who exists as the warp and woof in all created beings; He by whom the three states (of waking, dream and deep sleep) are appointed in the intellects hidden in creatures; He in whom the universe finds a single place of rest – having seen that Paramatman, the Gandharva named Vena became a true knower of all the worlds and proclaimed (to his disciples for the first time) that Reality as immortal. He who knows that all-pervasive One becomes worthy of receiving the honour due to a father even from his own natural father.

I-16: Through whose power the gods who have attained immortality in the third region of heaven got allotted their respective places, He is our friend, father and ordainer. He knows the proper places of each because He understands all created beings.

I-17: They (i.e. those who have realized their identity with the Highest Lord) immediately spread over heaven and earth. They pervade other worlds, the quarters of heaven and the heavenly region called Suvarloka. Whosoever among created beings sees that Brahman named Rita or ‘the True’, unintermittently pervading the creation like the thread of a cloth, by contemplation in mind, truly becomes That.

I-18: Having pervaded the worlds and the created beings and all the quarters and intermediate quarters, the first born of Brahman known as Prajapati or Hiranyagarbha became by His own nature as Paramatman, the ruler and protector of individual souls.

I-19: I pray I may attain to the marvellously excellent Lord of the unmanifest cause of the universe who is dear to Indra and my own Self, who is covetable, who is worthy of reverence and who is the bestower of intellectual powers.

I-20: O Jatavedas, shine brilliantly in order to destroy the sins connected with me. Confer on me enjoyments of various kinds including cattle. Give me sustenance and longevity and appoint a suitable dwelling for me in any direction.

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I-21: O Jatavedas, through Thy grace may not the evil one slay our cows, horses, men and other belongings in the world. O Fire, come to succour us without holding weapons in Thy hand or thoughts of our offences in Thy mind. Unite me on all sides with wealth.

I-22: May we know the Supreme Person and for the attainment of His Knowledge may we meditate upon Him, the thousand-eyed Great God. May Rudra, the giver of Knowledge, impel us towards such meditation and keep us in it.

I-23: May we know or realize the Supreme Person. For that, may we meditate upon Mahadeva and to that meditation may Rudra impel us.

I-24: May we know the Supreme Person. For that, may we meditate upon Vakratunda. May Dantin impel us towards it.

I-25: May we know the Divine Person. For that, may we meditate upon Chakratunda. May Nandi impel us towards it.

I-26: May we know that Divine Person. For that, may we meditate upon Mahasena. May Shanmukha impel us towards it.

I-27: May we know that Divine Person. For that, may we meditate on Suvarnapaksha. May Garuda impel us towards it.

I-28: May we know the Veda, embodied as the four-faced Brahma. For that, may we meditate upon Hiranyagarbha. May Brahman impel us towards it.

I-29: May we know Narayana. For that, may we meditate upon Vasudeva. May Vishnu impel us towards it.

I-30: May we know Vajranakha. For that, may we meditate upon Tikshnadamstra. May Narasimha impel us towards it.

I-31: May we know Bhaskara. For that, may we meditate upon the great-light-producer. May Aditya impel us towards it.

I-32: May we know Vaishvanara. For that, may we meditate upon Lalila. May Agni impel us towards it.

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I-33: May we know Katyayana. For that, may we meditate upon Kanyakumari. May Durgi impel us towards it.

I-34: May durva (the panic grass), who represents the divine Spirit, who is superior to a thousand purifying agencies, who has innumerable nodes and sprouts and who destroys the effects of evil dreams, remove all my impurities.

I-35: O durva, just as thou growest farther and farther multiplying at every node putting forth roots and fresh stalks, so also help us to grow in progeny by hundreds and thousands.

I-36: O Devi, worshipped by devotees, may we worship thee with oblations – thou who multipliest thyself by hundreds and growest in thousands.

I-37: O earth that is traversed by a horse, a chariot and Vishnu, I shall keep thee on my head; protect me at every step.

I-38: The earth is the giver of happiness like the milch cow, the sustainer of life and support for all living beings. (Represented as such the earth is addressed): Thou wert raised up by Krishna in His incarnation of the boar having hundred hands.

I-39: O excellent earth, destroy my evil deeds as well as sins connected with me. O excellent earth, thou art a gift from God to creatures. Thou art prayed over by Kashyapa. O excellent earth grant me prosperity, for everything depends on thee.

I-40: O excellent earth, on which all creatures are supported, cleanse all that (sin) from me. O excellent earth, my sins having been destroyed by thee, I attain to the highest goal.

I-41: O Indra, make us fearless of those (causes such as sin, enemies and hell) of which we are afraid. O Maghavan, destroy that, i.e. the cause of fear, that is in us (thy devotees). For our protection destroy our harassing enemies.

I-42: May Indra come to our succour – Indra who is the giver of welfare on earth and bliss in the next world, who is the lord of people, who is the slayer of Vritra, who is the subduer of enemies and giver of rain, who is peaceable and giver of safety.

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I-43: May Indra who is profusely praised by the devotees through sacred hymns, or frequently worshipped with oblations, vouchsafe to us safety and well-being. May the all-knowing or all-possessing Pusan vouchsafe to us well-being. May Garuda, the son of Triksha, whose chariot is not injured by anyone, vouchsafe to us safety. May Brihaspati, the preceptor of gods, grant us well-being.

I-44: Soma who is of mild anger, who strikes with stones, who shakes enemies, who has many deeds, who wields weapons and who delights in soma juice kept over, causes the jungles of dried up trees and bushes (to grow by the downpour of rains). Counter-weights do not weigh down making Indra light.

I-45: Vena, the noon sun who was born at the beginning of creation as the first effect of the Supreme Reality, Brahman, and who is of excellent brilliance, spreads over the whole world up to its boundary. He illumines also the heavenly bodies. He remains manifoldly in his own limited forms which are like himself. He also spreads over and permeates the causal substance out of which the visible and the invisible universe emerges.

I-46: Being the producer of creatures including men and their settler in respective regions and also far-famed for forbearance, O earth, be to us an ender of sorrows and giver of bliss here and hereafter.

I-47: I invoke in this act of worship Sri, the support of all, who is known through smell, who is unassailable, perpetually prosperous, rich in cowdung and the mistress of all created beings.

I-48: May Sri favour me. May Alakshmi connected with me and mine be destroyed. The gods having Vishnu for their chief (who is the perpetual abode of Sri) by the help of (the means prescribed in) the Vedas won these worlds for themselves free from the fear of enemies. May Indra armed with thunderbolt and worshipful moon grant us happiness.

I-49: May Indra grant us welfare. May he destroy the evil one hostile to us.

I-50: O Lord of prayers, make me the presser of soma juice, well known among the gods like Kakshivan, the son of Usik. Make me physically capable of performing sacrifices. Let those who are hostile to us remain ‘there’ long, in the hell.

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I-51: He who is rendered holy by the ancient, widespread, sanctifying feet (or by virtuous conduct) crosses over evil deeds and their effects. Having been rendered holy by that naturally pure and purifying feet of the Lord (or conduct) may we overcome our enemies, the sins.

I-52: O Indra, O slayer of Vritra, O valorous one and all-knowing one, accept with pleasure our soma oblation in the company of your retinue and troop of gods. Slay our enemies, give us victory in battle and grant us safety and fearlessness from every quarter.

I-53: For us may (the regents of) water and herbs be friendly and to those who dislike us and whom we dislike let them be unfriendly.

I-54: O waters, verily you are bliss-conferring. Being such, grant us food, and great and beautiful insight (of the Supreme Truth). Further make us in this very life participators of that joy of yours which is most auspicious, just like fond mothers (who nurse their darlings with nourishment). May we attain to that satisfactory abode of yours which you are pleased to grant us. Generate for us also the waters of life and pleasures on earth (during our sojourn here).

I-55: I take refuge in Varuna, who is of golden lustre or who has a golden diadem. O Varuna, being entreated by me, grant me the saving grace. For I have enjoyed what belongs to bad people and accepted gift from sinners.

I-56: May Indra, Varuna, Brihaspati and Savitur completely destroy that sin committed by me and my people in thought, word and act.

I-57: Salutation to fire hidden in water. Salutation to Indra. Salutation to Varuna. Salutation to Varuni, the consort of Varuna. Salutation to the deities of waters.

I-58: (Through the power of this mantra) let all that is injurious, impure and troublesome in water be destroyed.

I-59: May the King Varuna efface by his hand whatever sin I have incurred by unlawful eating, unlawful drinking and accepting gifts from an unlawful person.

I-60: Thus being sinless, stainless and unbound by evil and bondage, may I ascend to the happy heaven and enjoy equality of status with Brahman.

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I-61: May the sin-effacing Varuna who dwells in other sources of water like rivers, tanks and wells also purify us.

I-62: O Ganga, O Yamuna, O Sarasvati, O Sutudri, O Marudvrudha, O Arjikiya, come together and listen to this hymn of mine along with Parushni, Asikni, Vitasta and Sushoma.

I-63: From the all-illuminating Supreme, by His resolve, the right and the true were generated. From Him night and day were generated. And from Him again was generated the sea with different waters.

I-64-65: Then, after the creation of the vast ocean the year was generated. Afterwards the ruler of the world of sentient and non-sentient beings who made day and night ordained sun and moon, sky and earth and the atmosphere and blissful heaven, just as they were in the previous cycles of creation.

I-66: May the sin-effacing Varuna, the deity presiding over the waters, purify the taint of sin that attaches to the beings dwelling on the earth, in the atmospheric region and in the space between the earth and heaven and also connected with us (the performers of religious work). May the Vasus purify us. May Varuna purify us. May Aghamarshana, the sage called by that name, purify us. He, Varuna, is the protector of the world that was and also the world that exists at present between the past and the future worlds. He grants to the doers of meritorious deeds the worlds which they deserve and to the sinful the world of death called Hiranmaya. Again Varuna who is the support of heaven and earth, having become the sun is wholesome and attractive. Being such, blissful in nature, thou O Varuna, grant us thy favours and purify us.

I-67: That Supreme Light which projected Itself as the universe like a soaked seed which sprouts (or that Supreme Light which shines as the substratum of the liquid element) – I am that Supreme Light. I am that supreme light of Brahman which shines as the inmost essence of all that exists. In reality I am the same infinite Brahman even when I am experiencing myself as a finite self owing to Ignorance. Now by the onset of knowledge I am really that Brahman which is my eternal nature. Therefore I realise this identity by making myself, the finite self, an oblation into the fire of the infinite Brahman which I am always. May this oblation be well made.

I-68: He who is a transgressor of the scriptural conduct, a recreant, a thief, a feticide or an outrager of his preceptor's honour is released from his sins; for Varuna, the regent of waters and effacer of sins (absolves them from sins by the repetition of this mantra).

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I-69: I am the ground of sins. Therefore you cause me to weep. Wise men say (don't make me weep, but favour me by destroying my sins).

I-70: The Supreme represented as the ocean has overflowed to the whole creation. He has created at first creatures according to the deserts of their various past deeds. He is the ruler of the universe and the munificent giver of gifts to the devotees. He dwells together with Uma (His power giving spiritual illumination) in the hearts of devotees which are holier than other parts of their body (the seat of the Divine) and therefore superior and elevated like a peak and affording protection. The Jiva who is his abode grows to be infinite. He is the Lord who delights the individual souls by guiding according to their deeds and conferring on them fruits of their actions.

Paramatma-sukta or Hiranyagarbha-sukta – from Yajur-Veda-Samhita:

1. The universe arose from Visvakarman through water, earth, fire and other elements. He excelled Aditya, Indra and other gods. The sun called Tvasta rises in the morning embodying His brilliance. In the beginning of creation the mortal world enveloped in gloom received its divine brilliance from the sun shining in the glory of Paramatman.

2. I know this Great Person who is beyond ignorance and darkness and whose splendour is comparable to that of the sun. Knowing Him thus in this life itself, one transcends death. There is no other path leading to the attainment of liberation.

3. The sun who is the Lord of creatures moves about in the space between heaven and earth causing day and night. Although He is unborn, being the Self of all, He manifests Himself as the manifold universe. Wise men realize the source of the universe, the all-pervading Paramatman. Prajapati, the first patriarchs, sought the position, which Marichi and other sages attained.

4. Salutation to the resplendent Sun-God who is the son of Para-Brahman, who shines for the benefit of gods, who is invoked as the beneficent leader of the gods, and who was born as the eldest among the gods.

5. When the gods instituted the Knowledge of Brahman they declared thus teaching about the Supreme reality. – That sage who knows the Supreme as described before will have sovereignty over gods, for he has become the Inmost Self of all.

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6. O Sun, Hri and Lakshmi are Thy consorts, Thyself being Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. Day and night are Thy two sides. Asterisms in the sky are Thine own form. The Ashvins are Thy mouth. Being such, grant me whatever I desire, spiritual illumination, happiness here and other objects of desire.

Hymn to Hiranyagarbha – from Taittiriya-Samhita IV-1-8:

1. The resplendent Prajapati was born at the beginning of creation from the Supreme potent with the power of Maya. Having been born He became the one sustainer and nourisher of all beings. The same Paramatman, here designated as Hiranyagarbha, supports the earth as well as heaven. May we worship that shining One with offerings – who is of the nature of bliss or whose characteristic nature cannot be interrogated.

2. Who became the sovereign ruler of all beings living and existing on the earth; who controls as the indwelling Spirit all the bipeds and quadrupeds evident on the earth;

3. Who is the giver of Self (all Selves in reality being Himself); who is the bestower of strength (as nourisher through food); whose command even gods are eager to receive; whom immortality and death obey like shadow;

4. Whose glory the mountains, the Himalayas and the rest, declare; whose greatness the ocean along with rivers proclaim; to whose hands engaged in dispensing justice may be compared the eight directions;

5. Whom the dual deity, heaven and earth, shining by light and established for the protection of the world view in mind as the source of their greatness; supported by whom the sun moves gloriously after rising;

6. By whom the powerful sky and the terrestrial region were made firm; by whom the blissful heaven was awarded to the virtuous, by whom Release was appointed for the virtuous; who is the maker of Rajasa creation in the mid-region;

7. Through the power of whom the great Causal Waters holding within it the power of unfoldment and the capacity to produce fire transformed itself into the form of the world and from whom the one Breath of all gods came into existence;

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8. Who – the Hiranyagarbha – viewed the waters which create fire and support the Vedic acts of worship (in order to endow it with such potency); who is the one God ruling over all the rest.

Reference

Swami Vimalananda. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai. “Maha Narayana Upanishad.”

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