

108 Names of **Gaṇeśa**

॥ श्रीः ॥

Om gaṅg gaṇapataye namaḥ

ॐ गं गणपतये नमः

The above mantra is one of many that may be utilized for the practice of japa.* This particular mantra indicates Gaṇapati. Om invokes Īśvara (God),** which protects the one who chants it. Gaṅg is the bīja or seed mantra associated with Gaṇapati. Namaḥ, in this context, means 'that which is surrendered to.' This mantra can be unfolded to mean, 'I surrender to Īśvara, who manifests in the form of Gaṇeśa.'

Gaṇapati is Gaṇeśa, the elephant-headed boy, son of Śiva and Pārvatī (Śakti). He is the presiding deity of wisdom. Gaṇapati is associated with the mūlādhāra cakra, which is located at the base of the spine. Just like the spine, Gaṇapati supports everything (every thing). He is 'the infinite-support,' which indicates sat (an 'attribute' of Īśvara). Sat can be 'understood' as that which exists; the nature of existence; the immutable essence of everything. This is the 'nature' of Īśvara. Īśvara may be seen from numerous angles. Primarily, Īśvara is 'existence-awareness-fullness.' Īśvara is also the presiding deity over all 'cause-effects.'

In the context of this booklet, Īśvara takes the form of Gaṇapati as the 'giver of the fruits of action' and 'the giver and remover of obstacles.' By earning the grace of Īśvara as Gaṇapati, we can neutralize potential obstacles which may obstruct us from our desired objective. These obstructions can be seen in a relative material sense, but may also be seen as obstacles which could

*Repetition of the Lord's name; e.g., Om namaḥ śivāya, (often done with a rosary/mālā).

In the vision of the Vedas there is neither one god nor many gods; only **God.

Compiled and edited under the guidance of
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potentially obstruct us from gaining knowledge (freedom). These obstacles can be moderated through the grace of Īśvara/Gaṇapati.

In prayer, Gaṇapati is invoked first. He is the majestic elephant. By moving ever-forward, nothing will stop him from his objective. The elephant goes forth in majesty and removes all obstacles; Īśvara in the form of elephant. *Yad bhāvaṃ tad bhavati*; as one worships, so one becomes. When one admires the qualities of Gaṇapati, one begins to see these same qualities in oneself. Gaṇapati is a vegetarian; very powerful but gentle. That means that there is a dharma quality about him: dharma, in this context meaning 'the conscious application of Vedic and universal values.'

We invoke Īśvara in the form of Gaṇapati: 'gaṇa patiḥ.' Gaṇa means 'groups; countable things; all material objects.' Pati means 'father; lord; leader.' Gaṇapati may be unfolded to mean 'the Lord of all groups; the Lord of anything that can be counted;' from amoebas to blue whales; from the Higgs boson to black holes.

Gaṇapati does not try to control anything but is simply giving existence-awareness; very much like the sun. That is why Gaṇapati is *sūrya koti samap prabhā*; like the brilliance of a thousand suns. That is Gaṇapati's effulgence. In truth, Gaṇapati is self-effulgent. He is the Sun of suns. His face is bright and shiny. He is happy in and by himself for no reason. Gaṇapati's nature is that of unconditioned-happiness; untouched by time and space. He is happy because he is *ānanda svarūpaḥ* (of the nature of absolute-fullness).

With his massive ears, Gaṇapati is a great listener. One may acquire the ability of focused listening by invoking Gaṇapati while listening to a qualified teacher unfold Vedic scripture. One learns to profoundly listen, always looking for the implied meaning. Like Gaṇapati, we go beyond mere words, because words are limited. The implied meaning of the words being spoken may even be the opposite of what is actually being said. Yet, one 'sees' the implied

meaning when one deeply focuses on the intention. Gaṇapati is listening to Vedāntic texts. He loves to listen to the Vedas being unfolded because he is reveling in the implied meaning of the Upaniṣads (Vedic scriptures). It is said that an elephant never forgets. Because Gaṇapati remembers everything, he represents the power of cognition and retention. He has the ability to listen to the words of the Upaniṣads; to grasp not only the surface meaning but also the deeper, implied meaning.

His 'mind' covers all of time and space. Every attribute of Gaṇapati represents our qualities in absolute measure. His 'form' represents all 'forms.'** His 'head' is all 'heads.' His 'eyes' are all 'eyes:' 'sahasra-śīrṣā-puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ-sahasrapāt.'^^ Īśvara with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. In this context, the literal meaning of sahasra is one thousand, but the implied meaning is infinite. All 'heads' are Īśvara's 'head,' including my 'head.' There is no 'me;' there is only Īśvara.

There are many types of Gaṇapatis. This particular mantra invokes Jñāna Gaṇapati, who is shown indicating *tattvamasi* (the oneness between the individual and the total). He indicates this with his right hand in the form of the *cinmudrā*. The *cinmudrā* also indicates absolute fear-less-ness. If we understand that our intrinsic nature is 'one without a second,' fear becomes impossible. I cannot fear any thing because there is no other thing to fear. That is absolute protection. That is what is invoked through Gaṇapati's grace; through Īśvara's grace. The one thing that will always protect me is knowledge. Specifically, the knowledge that my intrinsic nature, and the intrinsic nature of Īśvara are one and the same.

Extracted and edited from the lecture 'Gaṇapati Motif', given by Śrī Svāmī Vāgīśānanda Sarasvatī.

*Īśvara as a sacred mirror; a 'place-holder' where one can deliberately superimpose any object as an *upāsana* (action of meditation).

**Puruṣa Sūktam - Ṛg Veda, hymn 10.90.

108 Names of Gaṇeśa

Invocation

Vighneśvara Prārthanā

Om śuklāmbāradharaṁ viṣṇuṁ śaśivarṇaṁ caturbhujaṁ
prasannavadanaṁ dhyāyet sarvavighnopaśāntaye

ॐ शुक्लांबरधरं विष्णुं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजम् ।

प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत् सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये ॥

Lord Gaṇeśa, who dons a white vesture –
who is all-pervasive – who has a bright complexion
(like the full moon) – who has four hands (representing
infinite power) – who is ever-smiling in
reason-less fullness – I invoke You to remove all
obstacles (in my desire for knowledge).

Om atha gaṇeśaṣṭottaraśatanāmāvaliḥ

॥ ॐ अथ गणेशष्टोत्तरशतनामावलिः ॥

1) Salutations to the majestic, elephant-faced one.

Om gajānanāya namaḥ

ॐ गजाननाय नमः ।

2) Salutations to the commanding general of Lord Śiva's armies; overseer of all countable things.

Om gaṇādhyakṣāya namaḥ

ॐ गणाध्यक्षाय नमः ।

3) Salutations to the giver of and protector from all obstacles.

Om vighnarājāya namaḥ

ॐ विघ्नराजाय नमः ।

4) Salutations to He who is the embodiment of absolute humility; the leader of leaders.

Om vināyakāya namaḥ

ॐ विनायकाय नमः ।

5) Salutations to He with two mothers (Pārvatī and Gaṅgā).

Oṃ dvaimātuāya namaḥ

ॐ द्वैमातुराय नमः ।

6) Salutations to He whose face shows pure contentment.

Oṃ sumukhāya namaḥ

ॐ सुमुखाय नमः ।

7) Salutations to the one most fit for respect.

Oṃ pramukhāya namaḥ

ॐ प्रमुखाय नमः ।

8) Salutations to the one whose inner focus is always on sat; pure existence.

Oṃ sanmukhāya namaḥ

ॐ सन्मुखाय नमः ।

9) Salutations to the one manifest as the music of the universe.

Oṃ kṛtine namaḥ

ॐ कृतिने नमः ।

10) Salutations to He, flame of knowledge, who destroys the darkness of ignorance.

Oṃ jñānadīpāya namaḥ

ॐ ज्ञानदीपाय नमः ।

11) Salutations to the one who is the infinite source of limitless-fullness.

Oṃ sukhanidhaye namaḥ

ॐ सुखनिधये नमः ।

12) Salutations to He who is most exalted among the gods.

Oṃ surādhyakṣāya namaḥ

ॐ सुराध्यक्षाय नमः ।

13) Salutations to He who neutralizes the ignorance in every person who follows dharma.

Oṃ surāribhīde namaḥ

ॐ सुरारिभिदे नमः ।

14) Salutations to the limitless leader of all countable things.

Oṃ mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ

ॐ महागणपतये नमः ।

15) Salutations to He who is most fit to be adored.

Oṃ mānyāya namaḥ

ॐ मान्याय नमः ।

16) Salutations to the one most fit to be revered.

Oṃ mahanmānyāya namaḥ

ॐ महन्मान्याय नमः

17) Salutations to the one born from the absolute fullness of Śiva and Śaktiḥ.

Oṃ mṛḍātmajāya namaḥ

ॐ मृडात्मजाय नमः ।

18) Salutations to He who is ancient and yet ever new.

Oṃ purāṇāya namaḥ

ॐ पुराणाय नमः ।

19) Salutations to He who is absolute-fullness.

Oṃ puruṣāya namaḥ

ॐ पुरुषाय नमः ।

20) Salutations to He who, like the sun, is the-auspicious nourishment.

Oṃ pūṣṇe namaḥ

ॐ पूष्णे नमः ।

21) Salutations to He who overflows with lotus flowers.

Oṃ puṣkariṇe namaḥ

ॐ पुष्करिणे नमः ।

22) Salutations to the one who blesses all with grace; earned through prayer and virtuous action.

Oṃ puṇyākṛte namaḥ

ॐ पुण्यकृते नमः ।

23) Salutations to the one fit to be counted first.

Oṃ agragaṇyāya namaḥ

ॐ अग्रगण्याय नमः ।

24) Salutations to He who is fit to be invoked first.

Oṃ agrapūjyāya namaḥ

ॐ अग्रपूज्याय नमः ।

25) Salutations to the one fit to lead.

Oṃ agragāmine namaḥ

ॐ अग्रगामिने नमः ।

26) Salutations to the one manifest as all Vedic mantras.

Oṃ mantrakṛte namaḥ

ॐ मन्त्रकृते नमः ।

27) Salutations to He who is effulgent; polished like gold.

Oṃ cāmīkaraprabhāya namaḥ

ॐ चामीकरप्रभाय नमः ।

28) Salutations to the one manifest as the entire known and unknown universe.

Oṃ sarvasmai namaḥ

ॐ सर्वस्मै नमः ।

29) Salutations to the one fit to be worshipped during upāsana yoga by all beings.

Oṃ sarvopāsyāya namaḥ

ॐ सर्वोपास्याय नमः ।

30) Salutations to He who is manifest in all actions; creator, sustainer and destroyer of all the cosmos.

Oṃ sarvakartre namaḥ

ॐ सर्वकर्त्रे नमः ।

31) Salutations to the one whose eyes are all eyes.

Oṃ sarvanetre namaḥ

ॐ सर्वनेत्रे नमः ।

32) Salutations to He who grants all accomplishments and mastery.

Oṃ sarvasiddhipradāya namaḥ

ॐ सर्वसिद्धिप्रदाय नमः ।

33) Salutations to He who gracefully wields all powers.

Oṃ sarvasiddhāya namaḥ

ॐ सवसिद्धाय नमः ।

34) Salutations to the one fit to be worshipped and adored by all beings.

Oṃ sarvavandyāya namaḥ

ॐ सर्ववन्द्याय नमः ।

35) Salutations to He who is the death of death.

Oṃ mahākālāya namaḥ

ॐ महाकालाय नमः ।

36) Salutations to the one wielding infinite power.

Oṃ mahābalāya namaḥ

ॐ महाबलाय नमः ।

37) Salutations to the one always in Lord Śiva's service.

Oṃ herambāya namaḥ

ॐ हेरंबाय नमः ।

38) Salutations to He who digests the entire universe as himself.

Oṃ lambajatharāya namaḥ

ॐ लंबजठराय नमः ।

39) Salutations to the one whose neck is all necks;
the neck-less wonder.

Om hrasvagrīvāya namaḥ

ॐ ह्रस्वग्रीवाय नमः ।

40) Salutations to He whose belly is
bigger than the biggest.

Om mahodarāya namaḥ

ॐ महोदराय नमः ।

41) Salutations to the one with the majestic,
shining forehead.

Om madotkaṭāya namaḥ

ॐ मदोत्कटाय नमः ।

42) Salutations to Thee who has great courage;
embodying all the qualities of a student of Vedānta.

Om mahāvīrāya namaḥ

ॐ महावीराय नमः ।

43) Salutations to He who knows all Vedic mantras.

Om mantriṇe namaḥ

ॐ मन्त्रिणे नमः ।

44) Salutations to He who favors all with auspiciousness.

Om maṅgaladāya namaḥ

ॐ मङ्गलदाय नमः ।

45) Salutations to the one invoked first and foremost.

Om pramthārcyāya namaḥ

ॐ ब्रमथार्च्याय नमः ।

46) Salutations to He who is all-knower.

Om prājñāya namaḥ

ॐ प्राज्ञाय नमः ।

47) Salutations to the one overflowing
with reasonless fullness.

Om pramodāya namaḥ

ॐ प्रमोदाय नमः ।

48) Salutations to He who relishes special sweets (modaka).

Om modakapriyāya namaḥ

ॐ मोदकप्रियाय नमः ।

49) Salutations to He whose intellect is ever-resolved in *Śiva*.

Om dhṛtimate namaḥ

ॐ धृतिमते नमः ।

50) Salutations to the one whose intellect includes all intellects.

Oṃ matimate namaḥ

ॐ मतिमते नमः ।

51) Salutations to the one who fulfills all desires.

Oṃ kāmīne namaḥ

ॐ कामिने नमः ।

52) Salutations to the one who relishes kapittha (wood-apple) fruit.

Oṃ kapitthapriyāya namaḥ

ॐ कपित्थप्रियाय नमः ।

53) Salutations to the well-disciplined jijñāsuḥ.

Oṃ brahmacāriṇe namaḥ

ॐ ब्रह्मचारिणे नमः ।

54) Salutations unto He whose essence is limitless existence-awareness-fullness; Brahman.

Oṃ brahmarūpiṇe namaḥ

ॐ ब्रह्मरूपिणे नमः ।

55) Salutations to the one who 'knows' Brahman.

Oṃ brahmavide namaḥ

ॐ ब्रह्मविदे नमः ।

56) Salutations to the one worshipped by the four-faced creator; Brahmā jī.

Oṃ brahmavanditāya namaḥ

ॐ ब्रह्मवन्दिताय नमः ।

57) Salutations to the self-effulgent sun.

Oṃ jiṣṇave namaḥ

ॐ जिष्णवे नमः ।

58) Salutations to the one adored by Lord Viṣṇu.

Oṃ viṣṇupriyāya namaḥ

ॐ विष्णुप्रियाय नमः ।

59) Salutations to He who gives love to his devotees.

Oṃ bhaktajīvitāya namaḥ

ॐ भक्तजीविताय नमः ।

60) Salutations to he who has conquered manmatha (kāma-deva); the lord of desire.

Oṃ jitamanmathāya namaḥ

ॐ जितमन्मथाय नमः ।

61) Salutations to the one who gives overlord-ship in complete measure to all who gain knowledge of him.

Oṃ aiśvaryaḍāya namaḥ

ॐ ऐश्वर्यदाय नमः ।

62) Salutations to the elder brother of Subramanya (Skanda).

Oṃ guhajyāyase namaḥ

ॐ गुहज्यायसे नमः ।

63) Salutations to He whom the Ṛṣi's worship; who is adored by all who have understood reality.

Oṃ siddhasevitāya namaḥ

ॐ सिद्धसेविताय नमः ।

64) Salutations to He who presides over all causes and effects.

Oṃ vighnakartre namaḥ

ॐ विघ्नकर्त्रे नमः ।

65) Salutations to the destroyer of all obstacles (as karmaphaladātā).

Oṃ vighnahartre namaḥ

ॐ विघ्नहर्त्रे नमः ।

66) Salutations unto the eye of the universe.

Oṃ viśvanetre namaḥ

ॐ विश्वनेत्रे नमः ।

67) Salutations to the one shining in myriad names, forms and functions.

Oṃ virāje namaḥ

ॐ विराजे नमः ।

68) Salutations to He who is the Emperor of emperors.

Oṃ svarāje namaḥ

ॐ स्वराजे नमः ।

69) Salutations to the protector of infinite wealth.

Oṃ śrīpataye namaḥ

ॐ श्रीपतये नमः ।

70) Salutations to the master of speech, words and meanings.

Oṃ vākpataye namaḥ

ॐ वाक्पतये नमः ।

71) Salutations to the one blessed by the infinite wealth of self-knowledge.

Oṃ śrīmate namaḥ

ॐ श्रीमते नमः ।

72) Salutations to the most attractive one in the form of the infinite-sacred-erotic.

Om śṛṅgārine namaḥ

ॐ शृङ्गारिने नमः ।

73) Salutations to the abode of the Divine Feminine.

Om śritavatsalāya namaḥ

ॐ श्रितवत्सलाय नमः ।

74) Salutations to He who is most beloved by Lord Śiva.

Om śivapriyāya namaḥ

ॐ शिवप्रियाय नमः ।

75) Salutations to the one who quickly manifests the results of our prayers and actions.

Om śighrakāriṇe namaḥ

ॐ शीघ्रकारिणे नमः ।

76) Salutations to the eternal one, unbounded by time.

Om śāśvatāya namaḥ

ॐ शाश्वताय नमः ।

77) Salutations to the pride and joy of Śiva.

Om śivanandanāya namaḥ

ॐ शिवनन्दनाय नमः ।

78) Salutations to He who gently wields māyā śaktiḥ.

Om baloddhatāya namaḥ

ॐ बलोद्धताय नमः ।

79) Salutations to the priceless treasure of all devotees.

Om bhaktanidhaye namaḥ

ॐ भक्तनिधये नमः ।

80) Salutations to He who is fit to be focused upon with devotion during meditation.

Om bhāvagamyāya namaḥ

ॐ भावगम्याय नमः ।

81) Salutations to the one who appears from limitless-existence (Śiva).

Om bhavātmajjāya namaḥ

ॐ भवात्मजाय नमः ।

82) Salutations unto He who manifests as all subtle bodies.

Om mahate namaḥ

ॐ महते नमः ।

83) Salutations to the one who blesses all devotees with mokṣa (freedom from suffering).

Oṃ maṅgaladāyine namaḥ

ॐ मङ्गलदायिने नमः ।

84) Salutations to the limitless protector.

Oṃ maheśāya namaḥ

ॐ महेशाय नमः ।

85) Salutations to the one fit to be revered.

Oṃ mahitāya namaḥ

ॐ महिताय नमः ।

86) Salutations to the one ever-established in Dharma (Vedic and universal values).

Oṃ satyadharmiṇe namaḥ

ॐ सत्यधर्मिणे नमः ।

87) Salutations to He who timelessly supports the entire universe as existence-awareness.

Oṃ sadādhārāya namaḥ

ॐ सदाधाराय नमः ।

88) Salutations to He who is self-existence as existence itself.

Oṃ satyāya namaḥ

ॐ सत्याय नमः ।

89) Salutations to the one who is fearless and resolute in the face of all obstacles.

Oṃ satyaparākramāya namaḥ

ॐ सत्यपराक्रमाय नमः ।

90) Salutations to the one whose limbs are all limbs.

Oṃ śubhāṅgāya namaḥ

ॐ शुभाङ्गाय नमः ।

91) Salutations to He whose shining, single tusk is one without a second.

Oṃ śubhradantāya namaḥ

ॐ शुभ्रदन्ताय नमः ।

92) Salutations to the giver of all that is conducive for gaining knowledge.

Oṃ śubhadāya namaḥ

ॐ शुभदाय नमः ।

93) Salutations to the one whose form is manifest grace.

Oṃ śubhavigrahāya namaḥ

ॐ शुभविग्रहाय नमः ।

94) Salutations to He who removes all inhibiting factors for gaining self-knowledge.

Oṃ pañcapātakanāśīne namaḥ

ॐ पञ्चपातकनाशिने नमः ।

95) Salutations to the pride and joy in the heart of Pārvatī.

Oṃ pārvatīpriyanandanāya namaḥ

ॐ पार्वतीप्रियनन्दनाय नमः ।

96) Salutations to the protector of the cosmos.

Oṃ viśveśāya namaḥ

ॐ विश्वेशाय नमः ।

97) Salutations to the one whose lotus feet are timelessly worshipped by the wise.

Oṃ vibudhārādhyapadāya namaḥ

ॐ विबुधाराध्यपदाय नमः ।

98) Salutations to the leader of the most powerful generals.

Oṃ vīravārāgragāya namaḥ

ॐ वीरवराग्रगाय नमः ।

99) Salutations to He, worshipped by Subramanya (Skanda).

Oṃ kumārāguruvandyāya namaḥ

ॐ कुमारगुरुवन्द्याय नमः ।

100) Salutations to He who destroyed the asura Kuñjara.

Oṃ kuñjarāsuraḥhañjanāya namaḥ

ॐ कुञ्जरासुरभञ्जनाय नमः ।

101) Salutations to He who is most beloved.

Oṃ vallabhāvallabhāya namaḥ

ॐ वल्लभावल्लभाय नमः ।

102) Salutations to the one who, with lotus-hands, gives the gift of fearlessness to his devotees.

Oṃ varābhayakarāmbujāya namaḥ

ॐ वराभयकरांबुजाय नमः ।

103) Salutations to the one who blesses his devotees with the waters of grace contained in his five-metal pot.

Oṃ sudhākalaśahastāya namaḥ

ॐ सुधाकलशहस्ताय नमः ।

104) Salutations to He who, from the crescent moon on his left side, showers all with cooling light.

Om sudhākarakalādhārāya namaḥ

ॐ सुधाकरकलाधराय नमः ।

105) Salutations to the five-handed one.

Om pañcahastāya namaḥ

ॐ पञ्चहस्याय नमः ।

106) Salutations to the one who gracefully wields māyā.

Om pradhāneśāya namaḥ

ॐ प्रधानेशाय नमः ।

107) Salutations to the one most ancient but ever new.

Om purātanāya namaḥ

ॐ पुरातनाय नमः ।

108) Salutations to the one who, ever-relaxed in humility, leads all devotees on the path to self-mastery

Om varasiddhivināyakāya namaḥ

ॐ वरसिद्धिविनायकाय नमः ।

Om tatsat iti gaṇeśaṣṭottaraśatanāmāvaliḥ sampūrṇam

॥ ॐ तत्सत् इति गणेशष्टोत्तरशतनामावलिः संपूर्णम् ॥

Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

श्री स्वामी वागीशानन्द सरस्वती

Śrī Svāmī Vāgīśānanda Sarasvatī

Śrī Svāmī Vāgīśānanda Sarasvatī is a senior disciple of Pūjya Śrī Svāmī Dayānanda Sarasvatī, and has been studying and teaching Vedānta since 1975.

Svāmī jī was in his teens when he became fascinated with mystical poetry and non-dualistic philosophies. In 1975, at the age of 19, he left his home in the United States and traveled to India to study in a traditional gurūkulam. After graduating from a three-year residential course in Vedānta and Sanskrit, he attended four subsequent three-year courses in the United States and in India.

Using the traditional methodology called saṁpradāya, Svāmī Vāgīśānanda 'unlocks' the scriptures of Vedānta, thereby removing the veil of ignorance; the cause of all human suffering. He is a traditional saṁnyāsi (a renunciant who is committed to a life of knowledge and has taken a vow of non-injury). A master of the South Indian Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda style of chanting, Svāmī jī has traveled the world teaching Sanskrit, Vedic chanting and Vedānta.

॥ हरिः ॐ ॥

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