

Kali Sañtaraṇa Upaniṣad

(Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda)

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दापारान्ते नारदो ब्रह्माणं जगाम कथं भगवन् गाम् पर्यटन् कलिं संतरेयम् इति ।
स होवाच ब्रह्म साधु पृष्ठोऽस्मि सर्वं श्रुति रहस्यं गोप्यं तत् शृणु येन कलि संसारं
तरिष्यसि । भगवन् आदिपुरुषस्य नारायणस्य नामोच्चारण मात्रेण निधूतो
कलिर्भवति ॥ १ ॥

*dvāparānte nārado brahmāṇaṃ jagāma kathaṃ bhagavan gām paryaṭan kaliṃ
sañtareyam iti / sa hovāca brahma sādhu pṛṣṭo 'smi sarva śruti rahasyaṃ gopyaṃ tat
śṛṇu yena kali saṃsāraṃ tariṣyasi / bhagavat ādipurusaṣya nārāyaṇasya nāmoccāraṇa
mātreṇa nirdhūta kalir bhavatīti ||1 ||*

At the end of the Dvapara [Yuga] Narada¹ went to Brahma and addressed him thus; "O Lord, how shall I, roaming over the earth² be able to overcome the effects of Kali [Yuga]?" Brahma replied thus; " You have asked well. Listen to that which all the Vedas keep secret and hidden, through which one may cross the ocean of mundane existence (samsara) during Kali [Yuga]. It is through the mere recitation of the names of the Primeval Supreme Being — Lord NARAYANA³, that one transcends the evil effects of the Kali Yuga. 1.

नारदः पुनः पप्रच्छ तन्नाम किमिति । स होवाच हिरण्यगर्भः ।

nāradaḥ punaḥ papraccha tan nāma kim iti / sa hovāca hiraṇyagarbhaḥ /

Narada asked again: "What are those names ?" Brahma (Hiranyagarbha) replied;

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे ।

हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ॥

*hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare /
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare //*

इति षोडशकं नाम्नां कलिकल्मष नाशनम् ।

नातः परतरोपाय सर्व वेदेषु दृश्यते ॥ २ ॥

¹ Narada is called *Kali-kāraka* = the generator of kali or conflict, but he is also the adjuster of the Law of Karma. As such he goes to his father Brahma in order to discover the way to overcome the Kali Yuga or Age of Conflict.

² Narada was cursed by the Dakṣa to roam over the earth with a lute in hand.

³ Here Brahma establishes the fact that Nārāyaṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

*iti ṣoḍaśakam nāmnām kali-kalmaṣa nāśanam |
nātaḥ paratara-upāya sarva vedeṣu dr̥śyate || 2 ||*

These sixteen names⁴ destroy the negative effects of Kali. No better means (upaya) than this is to be had in all the Vedas.

इति षोडश कलावृतस्य जविस्य आवरण विनाशनम् ।
ततः प्रकाशते परं ब्रह्म मेघापये रवि रश्मि मण्डलीवेति ॥ २ ॥

*iti ṣoḍaśa kalāvṛtasya jīvasya āvaraṇa vināśanam |
tataḥ prakāśate paraṁ brahma meghāpaye ravi raśmi maṇḍalīveti ||*

These sixteen names destroy the 16 envelopments⁵ (*kala*) in which the *jīva* is enveloped (*avarana*). Then like the Sun which shines forth once the clouds are dispersed, Parabrahman⁶ alone radiates forth. "

पुनर्नारदः पप्रच्छ भगवन्कोऽस्य विधिरिति । तं होवाच नास्य विधिरिति ।
सर्वदा शुचिरशुचिर्वा पठन् ब्रह्मणः सलोकतां समीपतां सरूपतां सायुज्यमेति ।
यदास्य षोडशकस्य सार्धं त्रिकोटिर्जपति तदा ब्रह्महत्यां तरति । तरति वीरहतयाम् ।
स्वर्णस्तेयात् पूतो भवति । वृषलीगमनात् पूतो भवति । सर्व धर्म परित्याग पापात्
सद्यः शुचितामाप्नुयात् । सद्यो मुच्यते सद्यो मुच्यते इत्युपनिषत् ॥ ३

*punar naradaḥ papraccha bhagavan ko 'sya vidhir iti | taṁ hovāca nāsyā vidhir iti |
sarvadā śucir aśucir vā paṭhan brāhmaṇaḥ salokatām samīpatām sarūpatām sāyujyam
eti | yadāsyā ṣoḍaśakasya sārḍha trikoṭir japati tadā brahma-hatyām tarati | tarati vīra-
hatyām | svarṇasteyāt pūto bhavati | vṛṣalī-gamanāt pūto bhavati | sarva dharma
parityāga pāpāt sadyaḥ śucitām āpnuyāt | sadyo mucyate sadyo mucyate ityupaniṣad ||
3 ||*

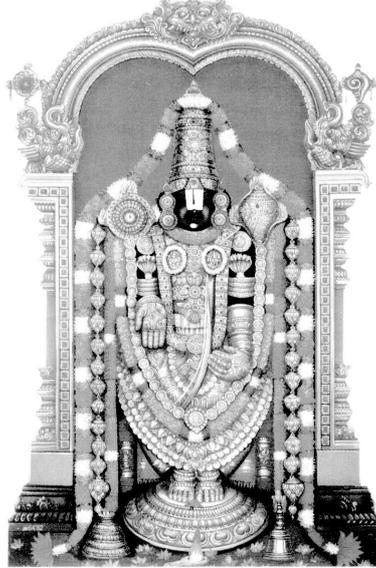
Again Narada asked; "O Lord what are the regulations⁷ (*vidhi*) to be observed?"
Brahma replied: "There are no regulations⁸. Whoever in a pure or impure state chants

⁴ The 16 names are for ridding the *jīva* of its 16 concealing envelopes referred to in the next verse.

⁵ The 16 kalas which comprise the subtle body (*liṅga śarīra*) according to Sāṅkhya, are discussed in the Praśna Upaniṣad, they are:-
prāṇa = life force, *śraddha* = faith, *kham* = ether, *vāyu* = air, *jyotiḥ* = fire/light, *āpaḥ* = water, *pṛthivi* = earth, *indriyam* = sense organs, *manaḥ* = mind, *annam* = the sheath comprised of the food eaten, *vīryam* = vital energy, *tapah* = meditation/inner heat, *mantraḥ* = sonic power, *karma* = actions and their reactions, *lokāḥ* = the realms of existence, and *nāma* = individuation.

⁶ *Parabrahman* here is identified with the *jīva*. As long as the *ātman* or Self is enveloped by the obscuring envelopes it is known as *jīva*. Once the obscurations are removed it becomes known as *parabrahman*.

these names always, attains the same world (*salokya*), proximity to (*samipyā*), the same form as (*sarupyā*) or absorption into Brahman (*sayujya*)⁹. Whoever chants this mantra of sixteen names 35 million times¹⁰ is absolved of the sin of murdering a Brahmin and that of murdering a hero. He is absolved of the sin of the theft of gold. He becomes purified from sexual misconduct¹¹. Having abandoned all Dharmas¹² he is absolved from all sins. He becomes immediately liberated. This is the Upanishad. 3.



⁷ The *Vidhi* are the rules and regulations governing the circumstances and method of chanting a particular mantra.

⁸ All mantras require a knowledge of the name of the Rishi who revealed, the Deity (*Devata*) to which it is directed, the seed mantra (*bija*) and the secret pin (*kilakam*) which obstructs the power flow, the energy force (*śakti*) and the objective (*vinīyoga*); that is the specific number of times the mantra is to be recited, and the conditions under which the *anuṣṭhāna* (practice) is to be undertaken. Furthermore the qualifications of the recipient of the mantra and the procedure of initiation are stipulated. For this mantra none of the above apply. There are no qualifications for receiving the mantra, there is no process of initiation and no rules and regulations for chanting it.

⁹ These are the four forms of ultimate liberation taught in the Upaniṣads.

¹⁰ This number will be reached by chanting the mantra 100,000 times per day for a year, or 10,000 per day for 10 years or 1000 per day for 100 years.

¹¹ Here three of the five *Mahā-pātakas* are mentioned. According to the rules of exegesis any number of a category refers to all of them. The *Pañca Mahā-Pātakas* are the most heinous sins for which there is normally no redemption in the Vedic Law Books. The five are *Brahma-hatya* - the killing or injuring of a brahmin, *svarna-steya* - stealing gold or any object dedicated to a god, *sura-pāṇa* - the imbibing of alcohol, *guru-talpaga* - having intercourse with the wife of the guru (or any one of a prohibited degree) and *śiśu-hatya* — the aiding and abetting of abortion.

¹² Dharmas here refers to penances and religious practices to generate merit in order to counteract the above mentioned Heinous Sins.