

सूर्य नमस्कार

sūrya namaskāra

Salutations to the Sun



The 12 Names of Surya { the Sun God }

- 1 om mitrāya namaḥ (The friend of all)
- 2 om ravaye namaḥ (Praised by all)
- 3 om sūryāya namaḥ (The guide of all)
- 4 om bhānave namaḥ (The bestower of beauty)
- 5 om khagaya namaḥ (Stimulator of the senses)
- 6 om pūṣṇe namaḥ (The nourisher of all)
- 7 om hiraṇyagarbhāya namaḥ (The creator)
- 8 om marīcaye namaḥ (Destroyer of disease)
- 9 om ādityāya namaḥ (The inspirer)
- 10 om savitre namaḥ (The purifier)
- 11 om arkāya namaḥ (The radiant)
- 12 om bhāskarāya namaḥ (The illuminator)

- Surya Namaskar -
Obeisances to Surya, the Sun God



"O Lord Surya! O Sun of suns, the eye of the world, the eye of the Virat-Purusha. Thou art All-energy, All-strength, All-powerfu, please give me health, strength, vigour and vitality."



ॐ मित्राय नमः

om mitrāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who is affectionate to all.



ॐ रवये नमः

om ravaye namaḥ

Prostration to Him who is the cause for change.



ॐ सूर्याय नमः

om sūryāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who induces activity.



ॐ भानवे नमः

om bhānave namaḥ

Prostration to Him who diffuses Light.



ॐ खगय नमः

om khagaya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who moves in the sky.



ॐ पूषणे नमः

om pūṣṇe namaḥ

Prostration to Him who nourishes all.



ॐ हिरण्यगर्भाय नमः

om hiraṇyagarbhāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who contains everything.



ॐ मरीचये नमः

om marīcaye namaḥ

Prostration to Him who possesses rays.



ॐ आदित्याय नमः

om ādityāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who is God of gods.



ॐ सवित्रे नमः

om savitre namaḥ

Prostration to Him who produces everything.



ॐ अर्काय नमः

om arkāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who is fit to be worshipped.

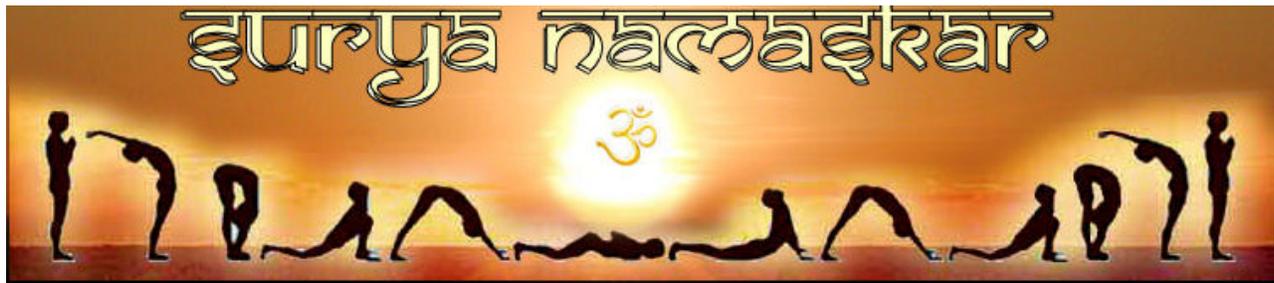


ॐ भास्कराय नमः

om bhāskarāya namaḥ

Prostration to Him who is the cause of lustre.

Repeat the above Mantras and Names of the Sun at sunrise. He who repeats these before sunrise, early in the morning, will possess wonderful health, vigour and vitality. He will be free from every kind of disease of the eye. He will have wonderful eye-sight. Offer Arghya to the sun during the three Sandhyas morning, noon and evening. Offer prostrations to the sun, with these Mantras and Names.



Surya Namaskar: A Great Exercise Routine

Many people look for the best exercise routine to help them stay in good shape. Here is something that has been around for thousands of years and has withstood the test of time. It strengthens the body, circulation, the breathing, and keeps the body limber and in shape. And you can have this completely free of charge, without a fitness coach, by simply using the following instructions.

"Surya Namaskar" is Sanskrit which means obeisance or prostrations (Namaskar) to the sun (Surya). It implies that one rise before sun rise in order to do this exercise or pay obeisance to the rising sun. This is around 5 to 5:30 AM. Of course, this exercise is good no matter what time you may use it, but it is best done while the stomach is empty, before eating. It is a yogic exercise which consists of ten particular postures, one following another, in a fixed, cyclic order to ensure improvement and good health in one's digestion, agility, rejuvenation, beauty and longevity. It will also help one lose weight and trim the waist. There is no equipment to buy, or membership to a gym or fitness club that must be purchased. You just need a little space in your apartment or home. If, however, you begin to feel short-breathed or dizzy, then take a break. Also, pregnant women should not practice it, but can continue it during their period because it can help digestion and the flow of energy and outflow of waste needed at this time.

POSTURE 1:

First you stand erect, ready to face the early morning sun. Stand straight with chest out and spine erect, looking forward with hands folded in front of the chest where the heart is located. It is like a stance of prayer in respect for the sun. Once you start doing the routine, you spend about one second in this pose, and the others that follow. Of course, if one is weak or aged, or if you are new to the routine, you may take this a little slower.



POSTURE 2:

Now, while inhaling, raise your arms up in the air while keeping the hands together, and arch your self backwards as far as you can go, forming a crescent-like curve from your feet to the hands. This posture helps retain the flexibility of the spine.



POSTURE 3: Now, while exhaling, bring your hands down to your feet so that you quickly bend forward at the waist, while keeping the legs as straight as possible. The best position is to bring the hands flat to the floor on either side of your feet, while keeping the head as close to the knees as you can. If you are not that flexible, then just do the best you can. The most important aspect of this pose is that it squeezes the stomach and assists in digestion to extract any vitamins and nutrients in one's food, which helps turn it into blood. It also loosens any fat that has accumulated there. Postures 2 and 3 are actually the easiest to do, so if you cannot do the others, at least do these.





POSTURE 4: From position three, while inhaling, put your hands on the floor and lower your hips and stretch your left leg back as far as you can, letting the foot rest on the toes and the knee touch the ground, while you bend your right leg in a crouching stance, letting the right knee come up to your chest. Keeping your hands flat on the ground, your arms straight, arch your head upward and back so you are looking at the ceiling or sky.

This forms a crescent shape from the left heel up to the top of your head. This position helps ensure flexibility of the spine and immunity from diseases in the left leg muscles and ligaments.



POSTURE 5: While exhaling, now keep your hands flat on the ground and carry the right leg back to parallel the left leg, sided by side, both feet pressing firmly flat against the floor, while bringing your hips up into the air as high as they will go. Keep your arms and back in a straight line as your head faces the ground, and bring the chin to the chest, making you look at your knees. This makes your body form an upside down "V" or a triangle between you and the floor.



POSTURE 6: Now, while keeping the hands and feet in the same places, having fully exhaled hold the breath and bring your hips down while moving the head and shoulders forward, straightening the whole body near the floor. Keep the face downward with the forehead, the chest and knees lightly touching the ground, and the hips slightly raised. With the forehead, chest, and two palms, knees, and feet touching the floor, it is called Sashtang Namaskar, or prostrations with eight points touching the floor. Do not touch abdomen or nose.



POSTURE 7: The next posture, while inhaling, flows from position 6, which is done merely by straightening your arms and lifting your chest upward and arching your head back so that you are looking at the ceiling. Your feet and knees rest on the floor while your arms hold the rest of your body a little above it. Again you form a body-length crescent, from your feet up to your head. This yogic position is known as "the cobra".



POSTURE 8: Now exhale and let your body flow into position 5 again by lowering your head and chest, keep your arms and legs straight, and raise your hips as high as they will go. As your head faces the ground, keep your arms and back in a straight line and bring the chin to the chest, making you look at your knees, which forms an upside down "V" again.



POSTURE 9: Now, while inhaling, we flow into the same position as number four, but stretch the other leg. So we first bend the left leg and bring the left foot forward on the floor. Keeping your hands flat on the ground, bring your hips down while moving the chest and head forward, allowing the left knee to reach up to the chest, and then arch your head up and back. The right foot stays in its place, letting the foot rest on the toes, which makes the right leg get stretched backward when your chest moves forward. This gives the body a crescent shape from the right heel up to the top of your head. This position helps ensure flexibility of the spine and immunity from diseases in the right leg muscles and ligaments.

POSTURE 10: Now we go back into posture three. Keep your hands in place as you bring your right leg forward to be parallel with the left leg. With both feet flat on the floor (if you can keep them that way), and the legs kept straight, the body is bent at the waist, while exhaling, with the forehead touching the knees (if you can bend this much).



If you are not this flexible and cannot bend like this, then simply do it as best you can and keep the head as close to the knees as possible.

POSTURE 11 - 12: Now, while inhaling, stand up and raise your arms up in the air while keeping the hands together, and arch your self backwards as in posture number two.



Hold this for a second and then go back into posture number one and join the palms in front of your chest as in prayer. Now the whole cycle of postures is complete and can start again for the next Surya Namaskar.

You may want to do each posture separately the first time you do this to familiarize yourself with each one. Then begin to do it as a flowing movement from one to the other, through all ten postures. Do it as a cycle of 100 Surya Namaskars, or even more, if you want. You will certainly notice the difference in your health, weight, flexibility, energy level, and even overall attitude.



The idea is that you do about 100 Surya Namaskars every morning, and the time to do them should not be a consideration. With practice, these poses will flow more smoothly and quickly. If each pose lasts about a second, then the full Surya Namaskar can be done in about 10 seconds or so.

Prayers to the Sun

*hiranmayena patrena / satyasyapihitam mukham
tat tvam pushann apavrinu / satya-dharmaya drishtaye*

O my Lord, sustainer of all that lives, Your real face is covered by Your dazzling effulgence. Kindly remove that covering and exhibit Yourself to Your pure devotee. O Pushan, nourisher of all, please remove your glaring effulgence. (*Isopanishad, Verse 15*)

*pushann ekarshe yama surya prajapatya
vyuha rasmin samuha
tejo yat te rupam kalyana-tamam
tat te pasyami yo 'sav asau purushah so 'ham asmi*

"O my Lord, O primeval philosopher, maintainer of the universe, O regulating principle, destination of the pure devotees, well-wisher of the progenitors of mankind, please remove the effulgence of Your transcendental rays so that I can see Your form of bliss. You are the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead, like unto the sun, as am I." (*Isopanishad, Verse 16*)

*Om Suryam Sundar Loka Natham / Amritam Vedanta Saram Sivam
Jnanam Brahmamayam Suresham / Amalam Lokaika Cittam Swayam
Indraditya Naradhipam Sura Gurum / Trailokya Chudamanim
Brahma Vishnu Siva Swarupa Hridayam / Vande Sada Bhaskaram*

"I eternally adore Surya, the sun, the beautiful Lord of the world, the immortal, the quintessence of the Vedanta, the auspicious, the absolute knowledge, of the form of Brahman, the Lord of the gods, ever-pure, the one true consciousness of the world himself, the Lord of Indra, the gods and men, the preceptor of the gods, the crest-jewel of the three worlds, the very heart of the forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, the giver of light."

"I eternally salute the Maker of Light, the beautiful Lord of all the world Surya who energizes all, who lives forever, the very essence of Vedanta He is truly auspicious, the embodiment of knowledge His nature is Brahman and He is absolute purity Lord and Master of the Gods, the consciousness of this world Ruler even over Indra, the King of the Gods and all men and sun deities He is the crowning jewel of the three worlds The Heart of the Lords Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva."

PURPORT Sri Isopanishad, Verse15: In the Bhagavad-gita (14.27), the Lord explains His personal rays (brahmajyoti), the dazzling effulgence of His personal form, in this way:

*brahmano hi pratishthaham / amritasyavyayasya ca
sasvatasya ca dharmasya / sukhasyaikantikasya ca*

"I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable and eternal and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness." Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan are three aspects of the same Absolute Truth. Brahman is the aspect most easily perceived by the beginner; Paramatma, the Supersoul, is realized by those who have further progressed; and Bhagavan realization is the ultimate realization of the Absolute Truth. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (7.7), where Lord Krishna says that He is the ultimate concept of the Absolute Truth: mattah parataram nanyat. Therefore Krishna is the source of the brahmajyoti as well as the all-pervading Paramatma. Later in the Bhagavad-gita (10.42) Krishna further explains:

*atha va bahunaitena / kim jnatena tavarjuna
vishtabhyaham idam kritsnam / ekamsena sthito jagat*

"But what need is there, Arjuna, for all this detailed knowledge? With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire universe." Thus by His one plenary expansion, the all-pervading Paramatma, the Lord maintains the complete material cosmic creation. He also maintains all manifestations in the spiritual world. Therefore in this sruti-mantra of Sri Isopanishad, the Lord is addressed as pushan, the ultimate maintainer.

The Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, is always filled with transcendental bliss (ananda-mayo 'bhyasat). When He was present at Vrindavana in India five thousand years ago, He always remained in transcendental bliss, even from the beginning of His childhood pastimes. The killings of various demons -- such as Agha, Baka, Putana and Pralamba -- were but pleasure excursions for Him. In His village of Vrindavana He enjoyed Himself with His mother, brother and friends, and when He played the role of a naughty butter thief, all His associates enjoyed celestial bliss by His stealing. The Lord's fame as a butter thief is not reproachable, for by stealing butter the Lord gave pleasure to His pure devotees. Everything the Lord did in Vrindavana was for the pleasure of His associates there. The Lord created these pastimes to attract the dry speculators and the acrobats of the so-called hatha-yoga system who wish to find the Absolute Truth.

Of the childhood play between the Lord and His playmates, the cowherd boys, Sukadeva Gosvami says in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.12.11):

*ittham satam brahma-sukhanubhutyā / dasyam gatanam para-daivatena
mayasritanam nara-darakena / sakam vijahruh krita-punya-punjah*

"The Personality of Godhead, who is perceived as the impersonal, blissful Brahman by the jnanis, who is worshiped as the Supreme Lord by devotees in the mood of servitorship, and who is considered an ordinary human being by mundane people, played with the cowherd boys, who had attained their position after accumulating many pious activities."

Thus the Lord is always engaged in transcendental loving activities with His spiritual associates in the various relationships of santa (neutrality), dasya (servitorship), sakhya (friendship), vatsalya (parental affection) and madhurya (conjugal love).

Since it is said that Lord Krishna never leaves Vrindavana-dhama, one may ask how He manages the affairs of the creation. This is answered in the Bhagavad-gita (13.14-18): The Lord pervades the entire material creation by His plenary part known as the Paramatma, or Supersoul. Although the Lord personally has nothing to do with material creation, maintenance and destruction, He causes all these things to be done by His plenary expansion, the Paramatma. Every living entity is known as atma, soul, and the principal atma who controls them all is Paramatma, the Supersoul.

This system of God realization is a great science. The materialistic sankhya-yogis can only analyze and meditate on the twenty-four factors of the material creation, for they have very little information of the purusha, the Lord. And the impersonal transcendentalists are simply bewildered by the glaring effulgence of the brahmajyoti. If one wants to see the Absolute Truth in full, one has to penetrate beyond the twenty-four material elements and the glaring effulgence as well. Sri Isopanishad points toward this direction, praying for the removal of the hiranmaya-patra, the dazzling covering of the Lord. Unless this covering is removed so one can perceive the real face of the Personality of Godhead, factual realization of the Absolute Truth can never be achieved.

The Paramatma feature of the Personality of Godhead is one of three plenary expansions, or vishnu-tattvas, collectively known as the purusha-avatars. One of these vishnu-tattvas who is within the universe is known as Kshirodakasayi Vishnu. He is the Vishnu among the three principal deities -- Brahma, Vishnu and Siva -- and He is the all-pervading Paramatma in each and every individual living entity. The second vishnu-tattva within the universe is Garbhodakasayi Vishnu, the collective Supersoul of all living entities. Beyond these two is Karanodakasayi Vishnu, who lies in the Causal Ocean. He is the creator of all universes. The yoga system teaches the serious student to meet the vishnu-tattvas after going beyond the twenty-four material elements of the cosmic creation. The culture of empiric philosophy helps one realize the impersonal brahmajyoti, which is the glaring effulgence of the transcendental body of Lord Sri Krishna. That the brahmajyoti is Krishna's effulgence is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (14.27) as well as the Brahma-samhita (5.40):

*yasya prabha-prabhavato jagad-anda-koti- / kotishv asesha-vasudhadi vibhuti-bhinnam
tad brahma nishkalam anantam asesha-bhutam / govindam adi-purusham tam aham bhajami*

"In the millions and millions of universes there are innumerable planets, and each and every one of them is different from the others by its cosmic constitution. All of these planets are situated in a corner of the brahmajyoti. This brahmajyoti is but the personal rays of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, whom I worship." This mantra from the Brahma-samhita is spoken from the platform of factual realization of the Absolute Truth, and the sruti-mantra of Sri Isopanishad under discussion confirms this mantra as a process of realization. The Isopanishad mantra is a simple prayer to the Lord to remove the brahmajyoti so that one can see His real face. This brahmajyoti effulgence is described in detail in several mantras of the Mundaka Upanishad (2.2.10-12):

*hiranmaye pare kose / virajam brahma nishkalam
tac chubhram jyotisham jyotis / tad yad atma-vido viduh
na tatra suryo bhati na candra-tarakam / nema vidyuto bhanti kuto 'yam agnih
tam eva bhantam anu bhati sarvam / tasya bhasa sarvam idam vibhati
brahmaivedam amritam purastad brahma / pascad brahma dakshinatas cottarena
adhas cordhvam ca prasritam brahmai- / vedam visvam idam varishtham*

"In the spiritual realm, beyond the material covering, is the unlimited Brahman effulgence, which is free from material contamination. That effulgent white light is understood by transcendentalists to be the light of all lights. In that realm there is no need of sunshine, moonshine, fire or electricity for illumination. Indeed, whatever illumination appears in the material world is only a reflection of that supreme illumination. That Brahman is in front and in back, in the north, south, east and west, and also overhead and below. In other words, that supreme Brahman effulgence spreads throughout both the material and spiritual skies."

Perfect knowledge means knowing Krishna as the root of this Brahman effulgence. This knowledge can be gained from such scriptures as Srimad-Bhagavatam, which perfectly elaborates the science of Krishna. In Srimad-Bhagavatam, the author, Srila Vyasadeva, has established that one will describe the Supreme Truth as Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan according to one's realization of Him. Srila Vyasadeva never states that the Supreme Truth is a jiva, an ordinary living entity. The living entity should never be considered the all-powerful Supreme Truth. If he were the Supreme, he would not need to pray to the Lord to remove His dazzling cover so that the living entity could see His real face.

The conclusion is that one who has no knowledge of the potencies of the Supreme Truth will realize the impersonal Brahman. Similarly, when one realizes the material potencies of the Lord but has little or no information of the spiritual potencies, he attains Paramatma realization. Thus both Brahman and Paramatma realization of the Absolute Truth are partial realizations. However, when one realizes

the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, in full potency after the removal of the hiranmaya-patra, one realizes vasudevah sarvam iti: [Bg. 7.19] Lord Sri Krishna, who is known as Vasudeva, is everything -- Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan. He is Bhagavan, the root, and Brahman and Paramatma are His branches.

In the Bhagavad-gita (6.46-47) there is a comparative analysis of the three types of transcendentalists -- the worshipers of the impersonal Brahman (jnani), the worshipers of the Paramatma feature (yogi) and the devotees of Lord Sri Krishna (bhakta). It is stated there that the jnani, those who have cultivated Vedic knowledge, are better than ordinary fruitive workers, that the yogi is still greater than the jnani, and that among all yogis, those who constantly serve the Lord with all their energies are the topmost. In summary, a philosopher is better than a laboring man, a mystic is superior to a philosopher, and of all the mystic yogis, he who follows bhakti-yoga, constantly engaging in the service of the Lord, is the highest. Sri Isopanishad directs us toward this perfection.

PURPORT Sri Isopanishad, Verse 16: The sun and its rays are one and the same qualitatively. Similarly, the Lord and the living entities are one and the same in quality. The sun is one, but the molecules of the sun's rays are innumerable. The sun's rays constitute part of the sun, and the sun and its rays conjointly constitute the complete sun. Within the sun itself resides the sun-god, and similarly within the supreme spiritual planet, Goloka Vrindavana, from which the brahmajyoti

effulgence is emanating, the Lord enjoys His eternal pastimes, as verified in the Brahma-samhita (5.29):

*cintamani-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vriksha-
lakshavriteshu surabhir abhipalayantam
lakshmi-sahasra-sata-sambhrama-sevyamanam
govindam adi-purusham tam aham bhajami*

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, the first progenitor, who is tending the cows fulfilling all desires in abodes filled with spiritual gems and surrounded by millions of wish-fulfilling trees. He is always served with great reverence and affection by hundreds of thousands of Lakshmis, or goddesses of fortune."

The brahmajyoti is described in the Brahma-samhita as the rays emanating from that supreme spiritual planet, Goloka Vrindavana, just as the sun's rays emanate from the sun globe. Until one surpasses the glare of the brahmajyoti, one cannot receive information of the land of the Lord. The impersonalist philosophers, blinded as they are by the dazzling brahmajyoti, can realize neither the factual abode of the Lord nor His transcendental form. Limited by their poor fund of knowledge, such impersonalist thinkers cannot understand the all-blissful transcendental form of Lord Krishna. In this prayer, therefore, Sri Isopanishad petitions the Lord to remove the effulgent rays of the brahmajyoti so that the pure devotee can see His all-blissful transcendental form.

By realizing the impersonal brahmajyoti, one experiences the auspicious aspect of the Supreme, and by realizing the Paramatma, or all-pervading feature of the Supreme, one experiences an even more auspicious enlightenment. But by meeting the Personality of Godhead Himself face to face, the devotee experiences the most auspicious feature of the Supreme. Since He is addressed as the primeval philosopher and maintainer and well-wisher of the universe, the Supreme Truth cannot be impersonal. This is the verdict of Sri Isopanishad. The word pushan ("maintainer") is especially significant, for although the Lord maintains all beings, He specifically maintains His devotees. After surpassing the impersonal brahmajyoti and seeing the personal aspect of the Lord and His most auspicious eternal form, the devotee realizes the Absolute Truth in full.

In his Bhagavat-sandarbha, Srila Jiva Gosvami states: "The complete conception of the Absolute Truth is realized in the Personality of Godhead because He is almighty and possesses full transcendental potencies. The full potency of the Absolute Truth is not realized in the brahmajyoti; therefore Brahman realization is only partial realization of the Personality of Godhead. O learned sages, the first syllable of the word bhagavan (bha) has two meanings: the first is 'one who fully maintains,' and the second is 'guardian.' The second syllable (ga) means 'guide,' 'leader' or 'creator.' The syllable van indicates that every being lives in Him and that He also lives in every being. In other words, the transcendental sound bhagavan represents infinite knowledge, potency, energy, opulence, strength and influence -- all without a tinge of material inebriety."

The Lord fully maintains His unalloyed devotees, and He guides them progressively on the path toward devotional perfection. As the leader of His devotees, He ultimately awards the desired results of devotional service by giving Himself to them. The devotees of the Lord see the Lord eye to eye by His causeless mercy; thus the Lord helps His devotees reach the supermost spiritual planet, Goloka Vrindavana. Being the creator, He can bestow all necessary qualifications upon His devotees so that they can ultimately reach Him. The Lord is the cause of all causes. In other words, since there is nothing that caused Him, He is the original cause. Consequently He enjoys His own Self by manifesting His own internal potency. The external potency is not exactly manifested by Him, for He expands Himself as the purushas, and it is in these forms that He maintains the

features of the material manifestation. By such expansions, He creates, maintains and annihilates the cosmic manifestation.

The living entities are also differentiated expansions of the Lord's Self, and because some of them desire to be lords and imitate the Supreme Lord, He allows them to enter into the cosmic creation with the option to fully utilize their propensity to lord it over nature. Because of the presence of His parts and parcels, the living entities, the entire phenomenal world is stirred into action and reaction. Thus the living entities are given full facilities to lord it over material nature, but the ultimate controller is the Lord Himself in His plenary feature as Paramatma, the Supersoul, who is one of the purushas.

Thus there is a gulf of difference between the living entity (atma) and the controlling Lord (Paramatma), the soul and the Supersoul. Paramatma is the controller, and the atma is the controlled; therefore they are in different categories. Because the Paramatma fully cooperates with the atma, He is known as the constant companion of the living being.

The all-pervading feature of the Lord -- which exists in all circumstances of waking and sleeping as well as in potential states and from which the jiva-sakti (living force) is generated as both conditioned and liberated souls -- is known as Brahman. Since the Lord is the origin of both Paramatma and Brahman, He is the origin of all living entities and all else that exists. One who knows this engages himself at once in the devotional service of the Lord. Such a pure and fully cognizant devotee of the Lord is fully attached to Him in heart and soul, and whenever such a devotee assembles with similar devotees, they have no engagement but the glorification of the Lord's transcendental activities. Those who are not as perfect as the pure devotees -- namely, those who have realized only the Brahman or Paramatma features of the Lord -- cannot appreciate the activities of the perfect devotees. The Lord always helps the pure devotees by imparting necessary knowledge within their hearts, and thus out of His special favor He dissipates all the darkness of ignorance. The speculative philosophers and yogis cannot imagine this, because they more or less depend on their own strength. As stated in the Katha Upanishad (1.2.23), the Lord can be known only by those whom He favors, and not by anyone else. Such special favors are bestowed upon His pure devotees only. Sri Isopanishad thus points to the favor of the Lord, which is beyond the purview of the brahmajyoti.

The Sun is also called Surya-Narayana, the Supreme Lord of the Universe.

He is the Self of all the gods and most effulgent. He is the abode of all the glorious rays of purity and knowledge. It is he who rules and protects the whole universe through his unflinching and penetrating beams. He is the Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, that is Parameshwara or the Supreme Lord who assumes the creation, preservation and dissolution of the world. He is the formless and nameless Godhead who has taken the forms of Skanda, Prajapati, Mahendra, Kubera, Kala, Yama, Soma and Varuna. He is the Pitrus, the Vasus, the Sadhyas, the two Aswins, the Maruts and the lawgiver Manu. He is also Vayu, Agni, all beings, Hiranyagarbha or the Cosmic Prana, the maker of seasons and the light-maker.

His celebrated names are Aditya, Savitar and Surya, the son of Aditi, the impeller and the creator. He is seen dwelling in the sky outside, and he should be realized as the inner Self seated in the space of the heart inside. For, it is said in the Taittiriya Upanishad, "He who is here in the human being, and he, who is there in the sun, are one and the same." (*sa yas-cayam purushe, yas-chasavaditye, sa ekah*). Nourishing all beings, he is Pushan, the nourisher, Possessed of sparkling

rays, he shines like gold. Being ever effulgent and golden by nature, it is always daytime for him. He is far away from the darkness of ignorance

Seven coloured Ray horses draw his chariot, and he is possessed of thousands of fire tongues. His splendor is outshining, and he dispels all darkness. He bestows happiness on his devotees, and he withdraws all beings into himself at the time of cosmic dissolution. Though possessed of parching heat, he is like the cool season for the worshippers who are scorched by sufferings. And as couched in poetical terms by Kalidasa, the Sun God Ravi absorbs water to pour it back a thousand fold (*sahasragunam-utstrashtum-adat te hi rasam ravih*). He looks like a shell, and he removes all frost from the mind.

Being the Lord of the sky and the knower of the three vedas, he scatters away the darkness of ignorance. He showers the rain- clouds of virtue and divine grace, as the friend of waters. And he jumps over the skyline easily. He gives heat by his powerful rays. His form is that of an orb. In due time, he is even death for the mortals. Yet his golden luminousness pervades one and all, since he is omniscient, omnipresent and supremely radiant. In fact he is the origin for the existence of all, and the Lord of all planets, constellations and stars. The Light even of lights, he is the creator of all, and the Self of the twelve solar deities presiding over the year. He is both the eastern and the western skylines. He is the ruler of all heavenly bodies and of the day.

Being most powerful, he is victorious over all beings and highly auspicious. He is a source of fear for the ignorant, and the gold jewel of the wise. By his radiance, the lotus is made to blossom. The Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, he is the wisest. Most brightful, he is the supreme glory of the solar deities. Having an impetuous bodily form, he consumes everything. He destroys all darkness and makes the snow melt. He defeats evil forces, and his nature is boundless. He inspires gratefulness as the divine ruler of all luminaries. His divine nature is such that he sports in creation, he wishes to conquer the enemies of gods, he functions in all beings, he shines as the Self, he is praised by the most praiseworthy and he resides everywhere.

His brilliance is like that of refined gold warding off the recurring circle of birth and death along with its cause ignorance, as well as all sins, he is one with the Lord Hari. As the agent of all acts, as the world creator possessed of wonderful powers of creation, and as the celestial architect, he is known as Viswakarma. Unlike the individual soul who becomes self-identified with worldly and other - worldly objects, he is free from all kinds of nescience, and he is the glorious witness of the worlds. That means he cognizes everything directly by his own awareness without help of any sense organs. Yet, due to the limiting adjuncts body, senses and mind, and as their indwelling Self, it seems as if he were the agent of acts, but truly speaking he is mere onlooker, not being involved in actions.

This is taught in Mundaka Upanishad through the simile of two birds, viz. The jivatma and paramatma : “Two birds that are ever associated and have similar names, cling to the same tree (the body). Of these, one eats the fruit of divergent tastes, and the other looks on without eating. On the same tree, the individual soul remains drowned as it were, and so it moans, being worried by its impotence. When it sees thus the other, the adored Lord, and his glory, then it becomes liberated from sorrow. When the enlightened seer sees the Purusha, the golden-hued, creator, lord and the source of the inferior Brahman, then that sage completely shakes off both virtue and vice, becomes taintless and attains supreme equality.” So the eyewitness of the worlds is the immutable consciousness permeating the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, which are ever changeful. The Sun God who is unchanging is known as “the fourth” (caturtha) in the Mandukya Upanishad, and as “the witness” (sakshin) or “the onlooker” (upadrashta) in the Bhagavadgita. His glory is eternal.

As the supreme Lord, being both the efficient and material cause of the universe, he first creates the world, then he protects it, and at last he withdraws everything into himself. By some powerful rays he gives heat during eight months, and by some other rays he showers water during the rainy season. As the everlasting witness even of deep sleep state, he keeps awake in beings asleep, as taught to Janaka by the sage Yajnavalkya: “That it does not know in that state is because, though knowing then, it does not know; for the knower’s function of knowing can never be lost, because it is imperishable. But there is not that second thing separate from it which it can know.” To summarize, all the sacrifices along with their fruits, as well as all the gods, and also all the religious duties of people, are nothing but the Sun God.



Remembering and praising him in difficult or painful situations, and in the midst of wilderness or in times of danger, one does not sink in disheartenment. With concentration and devotion, one should worship the God of gods who is the great Lord of the universe. Reciting this hymn known as the Holy Heart of Aditya, and enshrining the Sun God in one’s heart, one will become victorious in the battlefield of life. Just as Sri Rama vanquished the ten-headed Ravana, one can conquer the ten sensory and motor organs by worshipping the glorious Sun of wisdom. Regaining one’s innate strength and dispelling the clouds of sorrow, one becomes self-controlled and very happy. That is being so, the Sun of Self-knowledge shines forth in the heart, spreading its warm rays of pure bliss.