

## **NAAMAVALI: 'A ROW OF DIVINE NAMES'**

A short devotion-filled song, *naamaavali*, means a row of Divine Names, which are easy for one to remember and repeat frequently, collectively and sing in chorus. Like *japa* – chanting of a *mantra* – the main purpose of *naamaavali* is to enable one to remember God constantly and continuously, so that one may get absorbed in deep devotion, and gradually abide in the Divine which is in ones own heart.

Singing of *naamaavalis* and chanting of *mantra*, normally go hand in hand. *Naamaavalis* go a long way in reinforcing our practice of *japa*, because the former (*naamaavali*) elevates and prepares our mood and mind, gradually, for the latter (*japa*). Hence *naamaavalis* are supplementary and complimentary to *japa*.

For many years, *naamaavalis* have been sung through out India, in temples, Ashrams, homes and festivals. They express the devotee's intense aspiration for the Divine, and are intended to invoke various aspects, attributes and glories of the Most High.

*Naamaavalis* seek to create an atmosphere rich in devotion that will inspire one to dive deep within and discover the Divine.

Here below are four *naamaavalis*, on different aspects of the Divine. They are only samples and just representative of various gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon. Each *naamaavali* is followed by its meaning in English. It will enable one to sing them with devotion, understanding their meaning. Appended to these *naamaavalis* are three simple English songs which can be sung in chorus. And finally, there is a "Universal Prayer", followed by a "Peace Prayer".

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***Gananaathaa Gananaathaa  
Vighna Vinaashaka Gananaathaa ||  
Gananaathaa Gananaathaa  
Bhaktapaala Varadaayakaa ||  
Sharanaashraya Bhava Thaaranaa ||  
Siddhivinaayaka Chandana Thilakaa  
Sharanam Sharanam Bhakta Rakshakaa ||***

I take refuge in Lord Ganesh, the remover of all obstacles; the protector of devotees, and the bestower of one's just deserts; the refuge for those who fervently seek it; who takes one across the ocean of *samsara* (life of becoming); the bestower of success, and who is adorned with the *chandan tilak* (mark of sandal paste on the forehead).

***Jai Jai Jai Devi Jagadamba ||  
Sankata Haarini Mangala Kaarini ||  
Jnaanashakti De Jnaanamayee  
Premamayee Kalyaana Mayi ||  
Shubhade Maataa Devi Jagadamba ||***

Hail unto the Divine Mother of the universe, remover of all afflictions, bestower of auspiciousness, embodiment of Knowledge, grant me the ability to discern and think clearly. Hail unto the Divine Mother of the universe, replete with love, who does good and bestows auspiciousness.

***Krishnaa Maadhava Manoharaa (Hare)  
Shyaama Sundara Murlidharaa ||  
Yaadava Shaure Krishna Muraare  
Raadhaa Priyakara Hey Ghanashyaam ||***

O Lord Krishna, the consort of Lakshmi, the one who attracts the devotees, the dark-hued and beautiful, who holds a flute in his hand, who hails from the Yadava clan, who is courageous, who vanquished the demon Mura, and who is the beloved of Radha.

***Jai Jai Rama Krishna Hari ||  
Dasharatha Nandana Rama Namu  
Vasudeva Nandana Krishna Namu ||  
Kausalya Tanayaa Rama Namu  
Devaki Nandana Krishna Namu ||  
Sita Ramana Sri Rama Namu  
Raadha Ramana Sri Krishna Namu ||  
Ravana Mardana Rama Namu  
Kamsa Vimardana Krishna Namu ||***

Victory be unto Lord Rama and Krishna, the sons of Dasharatha and Vasudeva, respectively. Victory be unto Lord Rama and Krishna, the sons of Kausalya and Devaki, respectively. Victory be unto Lord Rama and Krishna, the consorts of Sita and Radha, respectively. Victory be unto Lord Rama and Krishna, who vanquished Ravana and Kamsa, respectively.

**Take my life and let it be,  
Humbly offered, all to Thee.**

**Take my hands and let them be,  
Working, serving all for Thee.**

**Take my heart and let it be,  
Fully saturated, Lord with Thee.**

**Take my eyes and let them be,  
Intoxicated, God, with Thee.**

**Take my mind and let it be,  
All day long a shrine for Thee.**

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### **UNIVERSAL PRAYER**

O Lord of the universe, O Creator, Protector, and Destroyer  
of the worlds,  
I come in all humility to Thy holy feet and surrender myself  
entirely to Thee.

Deign to bless me ever with Thy remembrance.  
O merciful Divine Master, give me strength, purity and peace.  
Thou art absolute power, omniscient and omnipresent.

Thou art seated in the hearts of all;  
Thou art all purity, all goodness and all love;  
Thou art a veritable ocean of peace and bliss;  
Thou art the lover of Thy devotees, refuge of the helpless,  
Redeemer and Savior of those who resign themselves to  
Thee.

Make me dedicate my life to Thee and to Thy service.  
By Thy grace, may peace and joy always dwell in my heart.  
Thou art mother, master, friend and all to me.  
Accept me as Thy child and servant.  
Grant me power to love Thee with all my heart.  
Let whatever I do be a fitting offering at Thy holy feet.  
Make me pure in thought, word and deed.  
I lay my mind at Thy feet; fill it always with Thy  
remembrance.

Let Thy glorious light illumine my heart.  
O Sustainer of the worlds, O kind and compassionate Lord,  
God of Gods,  
Give me the divine vision so that I may behold Thee in all,  
as all.

Make me ever feel Thy constant fellowship.  
May my life be guided and controlled by Tee.  
Thy presence be ever with me, in me and everywhere  
around me.

I beg of Thee, I prostrate before Thee,  
Hearken to this heartfelt prayer of mine,  
And make me Thine and Thine only forever and ever!

– SWAMI RAMDAS ([www.anandashram.org](http://www.anandashram.org))

**Just to be tender just to be true,  
Just to be glad the whole day through.**

**Just to be merciful just to be mild,  
Just to be trustful as a child.**

**Just to be gentle and kind and sweet,  
Just to be helpful in willing feet.**

**Just to be cheery when things go wrong,  
Just to drive sadness away with a song.**

**Whether the hour is dark or bright,  
Just to be loyal to God and right.**

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**Two little eyes to see the Lord.  
Two little ears to hear His word.**

**Two little feet to walk His ways.  
Two little lips to sing His praise.**

**Two little hands to do His will.  
And one little heart to love Him still.**

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### **PEACE PRAYER**

Adorable Presence!

Thou who art within and without, above and below and all  
around.  
Thou who art interpenetrating the very cells of our being.  
Thou who art the Eye of our eyes; Ear of our ears; Heart of  
our hearts;

Mind of our minds; Breath of our breaths;  
Life of our lives and Soul of our souls.

Bless us dear God to be aware of Thy presence now and  
here.

This is all that we ask of Thee.

May all of us be aware of Thy Presence  
in the East and the West, in the North and the South.

May peace and goodwill abide  
among individuals as well as communities and nations.

This is our earnest prayer.

May peace be unto all.

– SWAMI OMKAR (<http://tinyurl.com/j6cby7d>)