

Lesson 3

DHYANA SLOKAS (GAJANANAM)

At the beginning of any class, lecture, or personal sadhana, we chant the Dhyana Slokas. This helps to tune the mind to the divine in its different aspects. It makes us feel like instruments, and helps to remove the tamasic-rajasic ego. Divine guidance is necessary for any sadhana to be successful.

The Dhyana Slokas follow nearly the same sequence as the Daily Chants (Jaya Ganesha, etc.). First we invoke Ganesha to remove all obstacles, then we ask Subramanya to give us strength and destroy all negative forces, internal and external. Next is Saraswati, we pray to Her to give us divine knowledge. Then we ask the teacher (guru) to guide us always. Finally, we invoke the Divine Mother Durga, Narayani to bring auspiciousness for all our undertakings.

**Gajananam Bhūtagānadi Sevitam
Kapittha Jambū Phala Sāra Bhakshāṅgam
Umā Sutam Shokavināsha Kāranam
Namāmi Vighneshvara Pāda Pamkajam**

I Prostrate myself before the lotus feet of Vigneshwara (Ganesha), the son of Uma, the cause of destruction of sorrow, who is served by the host of bhuta-ganas (angels), who has the face of an elephant, who partakes of the essence of kapittha and jambu fruits.

**Shadānanam Kumkuma Rāktavarnam
Mahāmatim Divya Mayūra Vāhanam
Rudrasya Sunum Suraśainya Nātham
Guhām Sadāham Sharanam Prapadye**

I always take refuge in Guha of six faces (Subramanya), who is of deep red colour like kumkuma, who possesses great knowledge, who has the divine peacock to ride on, who is the son of Rudra (Siva), and who is the leader of the army of the devas (gods, angels).

**Yā Kundendu Tushāra Hāra Dhavalā
Yā Shubhra Vastrāvritā
Yā Vīnā Varadanda Mandita Karā
Ya Shvetā Padmāsana
Yā Brahmaachyuta Shankara Prabhr̥tibhihi
Devaihi Sadā Pūjitā
Sā Mām Pātu Saraswatī Bhagavatī
Nissesha Jādyāpahā**

May the goddess Saraswati, who wears a garland white like the kunda-flower, the moon and the snow, who is adorned with pure white clothes, whose hands are ornamented with the vina and the gesture of blessings, who is seated on a white Lotus, who is always worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and other gods, who is the remover of all inertness and laziness, protect me.

**Om Namah Shivāya Gurave
Sat-Chid-Ananda Mūrtaye
Nishprapanchāya Shāntāya
Sri Sivānandāya Te Namaha
Sri Vishnu Devānandāya Te Namaha**

Salutations to Guru Siva who is the embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, in whom worldliness does not exist, who is ever peaceful. Salutations to Sivananda, Salutations to Swami Vishnu-devananda.

**Om Sarva Mangala Mangalye
Shive Sarvartha Sadhike
Sharanye Trayambake Gauri
Nārāyani Namostute Nārāyani Namostute**

I salute the three eyed Divine Mother Narayani, who brings auspiciousness and who fulfils all the desires of the devotee (both spiritual and material).

Questions:

1. Why do we chant the Dhyana Slokas before each class?
2. Why do we chant them before our own personal practice?
3. Explain the symbolic meaning of the five aspects of God invoked in the Gajananam.