

Śrī Nṛsimha Mahā-mantra

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Nṛsimha Tapāni Upaniṣad

Oṃ ugraṃ vīraṃ mahā-viṣṇuṃ

jvalantaṃ sarvato mukhaṃ /

nṛsimhaṃ bhīṣaṇaṃ bhadrāṃ

mṛtyur mṛtyuṃ namāmy ahaṃ //

“I bow down to Lord Nṛsimha, who is ferocious and heroic like Lord Viṣṇu. He is burning from every side. He is terrific (terrifying; fearful), auspicious and the death of death personified.”

-OR-

"I offer my obeisances to You, O Nṛsimha, the terrifying (bhīṣaṇaṃ) and combative form of Mahaviṣṇu, whose effulgent face is everywhere. O powerful destroyer of death, I salute You."

This mantra is quoted or at least referred to in many scriptures. The Nṛsimha Tapāni Upaniṣad also gives the history of this mantra. In the last creation the presiding deity was Lord Nṛsimhadeva and this was the mantra inspiring the entire creation into which Lord Brahmā was initiated, as in the present creation the presiding deity is Śrī Kṛṣṇa and He initiated Brahmā into the Kāma-Gāyatri.

In Jagannātha Purī the pūjāris believe that Lord Jagannātha is from the previous creation and was originally worshipped as Lord Nṛsimhadeva. Jagannātha Purī Dhāma floats on the ocean of devastation and is thus never destroyed. Every twelve or nineteen years the Deities' forms are changed. The installation yajña for the new Deities takes about two weeks and is mainly comprised of a Nṛsimha mantra which is chanted 20,000 times.