

Mealtime Prayers

Purification of the Place and of the Food

**I invoke the Lord to purify within and outside me,
purify the place and purify the food I offer to the body.
May the Lord protect me, the food, the body
and the place through this act of mine.**

Comment

It is recommended that we eat in a clean and serene place, where silence and purity prevails. We should not eat on pathways, in moving buses and in underground trains. Unless inevitable, we should eat only in quiet places. Eating in busy centres, bars, restaurants and in places of noise and hubbub should be avoided. Wherever you eat, consecrate the place through a mental proposition and eat.

Offering the Food to the Lord of Fire

**I am thankful to the Lord for the food made available.
I offer this food to the Lord of Fire,
For his distribution to the Devas within the body.
May the Lord be pleased.
May the Devas be pleased with this act of mine.**

Comment

Eat in quietude. Eat with a pleasant attitude. Eat with a sense of offering. Remember that you are offering food to the body. You are eating for the body and the body works for you. If you offer well the food to the body, the body offers well to serve you. The body does not serve well those who do not serve the body. Hence eat with a sense of offering.

When you eat food, the heat in your body arranges for assimilation of the food and its distribution to the body as energy. It is the work of Fire within the body. Hence the offering of food should be to the fire in you. Offer the food to the Fire and eat with quietude. Even if you are pleasantly engaged in talk, do not forget your offering to the Fire. Silence while eating enables you to maintain the sense of offering. But when you gain familiarity, you can even engage in pleasant talk with those around, while maintaining the sense of offering. Consecrate the food through such offering.

Offering Food to God: Brahma Arpanam

**Brahma Arpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnau Brahmanaahutam
Brahmaiva Tena Ghantavyam
Brahmakarma Samadhina**

**Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva
Praninaam Dehamaashritaha
Pranapana Samayuktah
Pachaamyannam Chaturvidham**

Bhagavad Gita, Chap. IV, verse 24
Bhagavad Gita, Chap. XV, verse 14.

Meaning:

The act of offering is God, the oblation is God.
By God it is offered into the Fire of God.
God is That which is to be attained by him.
who performs action pertaining to God.

Becoming the life-fire in the bodies of living beings,
mingling with the subtle breaths,
I digest the four kinds of food.

Comment:

The whole food is seen as Brahman because the Brahman himself has transformed into food so that he feeds the beings who are no other than Brahman -- just like we grow vegetables and we eat them! The Brahman creates food and he nourishes the beings with the food. Brahman is food. The food is no different from Brahman and you are not different from Brahman. The fire in you is also Brahman. The Brahman is offered to Brahman via the Brahman. And all is Brahman. "Brahmarpanam" meaning I offer to the Brahman. "Brahma Havir" meaning that which we offer is also Brahman. "Brahmata" meaning you are also Brahman. So that activity is all Brahman's activity for Brahman. These two stanzas are normally, every day when we take food we are supposed to read them with understanding and then eat.

MP3: Brahma Arpanam (Parvathi Varanasi) (MP3, 0.6 MB)

https://worldteachertrust.org/_media/media/audio/brahmaarpanam.mp3