

ॐ सहनाववतु । सहनौभुनक्तु । सहवीर्यं करवावहै ।  
Om sa-ha-nā-va-va-tu sa-ha-nau-bhu-nak-tu sa-ha-vīr-yaṅ ka-ra-vā-va-hai

तेजस्विनावधितमस्तु । मा विद्विशावहै ।  
te-jas-vi-nā-va-dhi-ta-mas-tu mā vid-vi-śā-va-hai

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः  
Om śān-tiḥ śān-tiḥ śān-tiḥ

|      |                         |         |             |
|------|-------------------------|---------|-------------|
| सह   | together                | भुनक्तु | nourish     |
| नौ   | us both                 | वीर्यम् | strength    |
| अवतु | may (knowledge) protect | करवावहै | may we have |

### Swamini's exposition:

The word *saha* (**together**) is key because it applies to both teacher and student. This mantra is for **protection** (Dhatu: *av*; to guard , defend , protect , govern) of both of us. (*nau* becomes *nāv* and then *nā* due to sandhi rules for the euphonic combination of sounds.)

**Protection** is twofold – Absolute and Relative. Absolute protection comes from *jñānam*, knowledge. With knowledge fear, which is based on the perception of two, disappears, and maturity grows. *Vairāgyam* (dispassion) is born from knowing the limitations of everything. The relative protections are such things such as good health, shelter, food, etc.

**Nourishment** here is the means of relative protection. It stands for all that is required to help us in life: food, shelter, etc - all that contributes to a proper conducive atmosphere in which we can grow and knowledge can thrive.

**Strength** is also a means of protection. It stands here for the physical and emotional strength to tackle *prārabdha*. *karavāvahai* (1st Per./dual/imperative/Ā) may we have.

May knowledge protect us both – teacher and student together – by giving us the vision of unity in which there is an absence of fear, and growth of maturity and discrimination. Together may we be nourished by being provided with conducive circumstances that support the establishment of knowledge. And, together, may we have the physical and emotional strength to face *prarabdha* with equanimity.

*NOTE: It's said that these three statements deal with the prayer for the protection of both teacher and student together. The following statements, slightly disjointed, refer to just the student alone.*

|           |                           |             |                     |
|-----------|---------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| तेजस्विना | brightness                | मा          | never               |
| अवधितम्   | understood well           | विद्विशावहै | may there be hatred |
| अस्तु     | may it (the Upanishad) be | शान्तिः     | peace               |

**Swamini's exposition:**

*Tejasvinā* is the singular, instrumental form of masculine noun *tejasvin* – - the glow that comes from inner composure and tranquility. The verb to be supplied is *bhaviyam* This means may I be *tejasvi* - one that is lit by that inner glow.

*adhitam* means 'learned well'. *avadhitam* means 'understood well'. *avadhitam astu* – 'may (the Upanishad) be well understood (by me)'.

*mā vidviśāvahai*. literally translates as may we not hate one another. But why is there talk of hatred? Here it means 'may there not be a communication gap between us'.

These are also forms for protection (*avana*).

The three repetitions of *śāntiḥ* is to pray for peace from the three 'heats' (*tāpaḥ*):  
*adhyātmika* - arising from my own being; *adhibhautika* – arising from conditions outside myself (over which I may be able to exert some control); *adhidavika* – arising from nature (over which I have no control).

May I be lit by the glow that comes from inner composure. May the Upanishadic vision be well understood by me. May there be no communication gap between me and my teacher.

May there be peace from inner afflictions, may there be peace from outer afflictions, may there be peace from god-made afflictions.

**Final translation:**

May he protect us both together (through the vision of advaita).

May he nourish us both together (by giving us the circumstances in which the vision can flourish).

May we have strength together (to face what's presented with poise).

May I have that glow (of inner composure).

May I understand well (the Upanishadic vision).

May there be no communication gap (between me and my teacher)

May peace and peace and peace be everywhere