

# Therapeutic Utility of Divine Name.

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The headline of this humble paper is bound to arouse different feelings in different hearts. As it is quite natural in the present state of our intellectual and emotional temperature, I shall not say a word with regard to it. I must, however, apologize at the very outset to all my learned readers for saying a few words upon a subject which still lacks the academical seal of the orthodox science. I am fully aware that most of us look askance at everything going beyond normal and so I should like to assure my friends that I put this matter before them purely from a scientific outlook. Let me hope it will not tax their critical faculty in any abnormal way.

The question before us is this: Is it possible that the repetition of any of the divine names can cure a disease even of a person who has little devotion and no conviction with regard to its efficacy? In other words, can even the simple mechanical exercise of repeating audibly or inaudibly such words bring health to those who are being pressed down by the breakdown of it? To me and many others of my way of thinking, the answer to this question is a firm affirmative. We have arrived at this conclusion by the ordinary scientific method of induction, namely, by taking a number of such cases into consideration and drawing the inevitable conclusion forced upon us as it were. Without uselessly beating about the bush, I shall at once put a few selected cases before my readers and request them to draw their own conclusions from them. With apologies for personal reference, I shall begin with my own.

It was the month of April in the year 1935, when all of a sudden there

was a peculiar breakdown in my health. The symptoms were of a unique nature, scarcely met with in the common run of such maladies. Along with the violent palpitation of the heart, there was a wonderful sensation all over the body. Every part of the body seemed to be shaking, though there was no tremor externally visible. All along the spinal cord, there was a peculiar sort of twisting sensation. Surging waves were, as it were, rising and falling in the brain. The *medulla oblongata* was throbbing in such a way as if it was alternately becoming smaller and larger. Above all there was a feeling persistently present that I might drop down at any moment. The blood-pressure was perceptibly high. But there was one thing specially worth noting. I did not feel weak physically or mentally in any well-pronounced manner. I did not speak about it to anybody. I took particular care to avoid even any reference to it before my medical friends. The beri-beri was working havoc in Benares at that time. One of my most esteemed teachers, who was also a respected senior colleague of mine, had been carried away only two months before. So I feared my peculiar case might be taken for anything. Most of our medical men are undoubtedly well-meaning but unfortunately they are not equally unassuming. Something do they must, even if it be simply by way of experimenting. But perhaps human life is not so very cheap. Clearly mine was a case of cerebro-spinal disorder, and in those days God only knows what it would have been taken for by my learned friends. For some such reasons I made up my mind and kept it securely to

myself. But in spite of all this, I was trying to prepare myself for the worst. In doing this, naturally I was led to repeat 'Rāma-Nāma' more or less only mechanically. As I lay upon the bed during the night-time and even the bed seemed to shake on account of the hammering of the heart inside, I tried to feel that it was the sound of 'Rāma, Rāma' which was being fluttered out by my heart. The result was instantaneous. I began to feel a little relief. So in a way I had found out a very great thing, for in a very short time I began to welcome the unexpected return of hopefulness. Mr. Heart, like a good school-boy, came to be once again sober and docile and to give up all its wayward and rebellious ways. Not only it was the heart, every troublesome sensation gave way to its magic effect. By the end of June, I was my old self again. One thing is to be clearly noted here. There was scarcely any play of emotion, for my attention was riveted almost solely upon the movements of the heart. The whole process was simply mechanical, having been gone through by way of experimentation.

I recommended it to many of my friends who were suffering from heart trouble. But I have to admit that most of them did not even try it, even though they had promised to do so. Perhaps they took it for something mystical and mysterious, which on the very face of it, it never was. The few who tried it were much impressed by its instantaneous effect.

This led me to knock about it to find out whether mine was a special case or it was equally successful with all and sundry. I have collected many such cases and a few selected typical ones I shall put down here. I hope they will speak for themselves without any comment from me.

1. There was a gentleman—he is now no more—who whenever laid

prostrate by the attack of fever, used to mix up the sound of 'Rāma, Rāma' with the bodily commotion brought about by high temperature. In a short time his abnormal pulsations began to abate and the fever to subside. He told me all this when, finding him silent and motionless, I asked him what he was doing.

2. There is another learned gentleman, who was some thirty years ago assured by eminent physicians that his sputum disclosed the existence of a virulent type of T. B. Naturally he was terrified and approached all available experts. He tried the various 'pathies' one after another, but it was his money, patience, and peace of mind that gradually left him, but not his disease. He gave up all hope when he clearly found that he was swiftly going from bad to worse. In order to save others from infection, he tried to run away from home without saying a word to anybody. He was soon exhausted and lay himself down somewhere. Some mendicants were passing that way, vociferously shouting 'Sītā-Rāma' to the accompaniment of the clank of their chintās (pairs of iron tongs). He also tried to utter 'Sītā-Rāma' with all the strength he possessed. He persisted in this even after he was found out and taken home. In spite of all remonstrances, he went on with it and was very soon found to improve. He is all right even now, but he has vowed never to take any poisons, as he humorously calls all medicines.

3. Once upon a time, I heard a person advising another, who was writhing with headache, to mix up the sound of 'Rāma, Rāma' with the throbbings of the head. I do not know whether he tried this or not. It went away from my mind also. But after the above experimentation, I was reminded of it. I have tried it and found it equally efficacious. Let my readers try it. In any case it will do no harm

4. My friend, Prof. Baldeva Upadhyaya, tells me of a case. There is an old Munshiji still alive, who was addicted to wine from his early life. He often wished to give up the habit, but he could not. It had really become second nature with him. Once a *Sādhu* advised him to utter 'Rāma-Nāma' regularly. He followed the advice and soon found that his drinking propensity was slowly and gradually becoming less and less strong. Now he says he never feels any desire for drinking. He is perfectly all right even at the ripe age of seventy.

5. I came across a similar case some years ago. There was a Sethji who approached a *Sannyāsi* for some spiritual guidance; but the *Sannyāsi*, when he came to know that the Sethji used to smoke *ganja* worth Re. 1/4 a day, turned him out unceremoniously. The Sethji went to him again the next day and told him, with tears in his eyes, that he had tried his best but could not get rid of the habit. The *Sannyāsi* said that, if such was the case, he should repeat 10,000 Rāma-nāmas every night before he went to bed. The Sethji literally followed his advice, and after a month or so he was totally cured of this pernicious habit. This we heard from the *Sannyāsi* himself, who was now immensely pleased with the Sethji. The Sethji was also present when we heard all this.

6. I know a similar case of another Munshiji. He was a high-stationed officer, but he was all along a declared drunkard. By the advice of the late revered Lāhiri Mahāśaya, he began to repeat 'Rāma-Nāma' and soon overcame the infatuation for the bottle.

I should not prolong the citation of such cases any more. To some morbid minds it may appear a modern *Bhaktamāla*; but, as I have observed at the very outset, my intention is quite different. Far be it from me to attempt an

adequate solution of all these problems which crop up in connection with this highest spiritual asset, the greatest source of vital inspiration, the last unfailing resort of aching hearts.

The major portion of humanity does believe in Something Beyond. It may be called differently, but there it is. Even the intellectual giants of all times and climes could not shake off the idea of That from their illumined minds. What an impudence it must be to think with our pigmy minds that all of them were egregious fools. Those great men have left beacon-lights on the hills lying on the pathway for the guidance of those who may follow. Those half-hearted souls who hesitatingly linger on the half-way of their sojourn are reassured, with regard to the definite existence of the Goal by the decisive attitude of these great men. They may and they do widely differ in their conception of that Something; but that Something is there shining inimitably and unmistakably before their internal vision.

Along with the belief in the existence of an Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent Supreme Power, there goes inseparably an idea that any thought directed towards It is surely and certainly bound to bring about our purification, both external as well as internal. But what conceptual image can be, in the ordinary course of things, called up without the help of sound? Thus came in the names of the Nameless, which is everything and still beyond all this. From one side we hear 'पवनं राम ! नाम ते' (Purifying is Thy name, O Rāma), from another corner come the words 'Sanctificatur Nomen tuum'. No discordant note has been ever heard anywhere in this grand music of the adepts. They have found that Alchemy by which they can transmute even base and feeble thoughts into strong

and irresistible forces. In the laboratory of their hearts, the batteries of their emotions have been set up and worked up to a certain pitch by the help of the vibrations of peculiar sound waves, producing one of the most powerful magnet ever imagined and designed by any workaday scientist. There manifests Itself the great Power, little known and less described. The sound waves are, in their case, those which are produced by the ardent and regular repetition of one of the many divine names. As to the results brought about by the constant repetition of a divine name, they never have the slightest tinge of doubt even for a single moment. Why should they have it at all? Their beliefs have been turned into firm convictions by the constant intimacy with their Interior. So such questions can never ripple up in the calm and tranquil heart of the initiate and the adept. It is only with poor laymen like ourselves, who have still to wade through many swift currents and pass through a good many dark alleys before they reach the happy valley of eternal verdure, that such deviating doubts dart up here and there.

It is indeed beyond the limited capacity of a person with little real learning and less practical experience to launch upon an attempt to describe and discuss the way in which the Divine Name works. The processes by which It works and the forces it works up are mostly those which pertain to the sub-conscious and the unconscious regions of the psychologist. In spite of the marvellous progress made by psychology in course of the last few years it may be observed—even the psychologists admit—that it has not yet crossed even the threshold of the sub-conscious. So it is hopelessly baffling, at the present stage of our psychological attainments, to soar up beyond the atmosphere of our

conscious region. The physical plane of our existence is for the present the only field of our activity. Even there we are much more objectively alive than subjectively conscious, for it is after all nothing but the gross projection of the invisible. Such being the real state of things, it is quite honest to be rather suspicious than to be credulous about things which can scarcely be measured by the yard-stick of our wooden logic. So without being ambitious in any way, let us try to study the mechanical side only. It may be readily granted that such an isolating segregation is not quite in keeping with the real phenomenon of human life; but it may at the same time be submitted that our present conditions, physical and mental, have fettered us down to the outside of ourselves in such a way that our eyes mostly refuse to turn back and see the inside. It is with such a line of thinking that I set up this enquiry in my own humble way and have placed a few facts before my readers, so that they may also try to experiment in their own way. If Tennyson, as says F. T. Brookes, could go into trance by repeating his own name, Alfred, a number of times, why should we not have some definite result by repeating some of our own oft-repeated words? Whatever sounds we hear or produce a number of times, it is quite within the bounds of reason to believe that a particular kind of neural action will be established and is sure to affect the whole nervous system. It would be observed from the few cases related above, that most of the maladies cured had been of a nervous origin. Our modern conditions are such that they easily tax our brains and tell heavily upon our nerves. Nervous breakdown is the order of the day. To me it has become a matter of conviction that

all these disorders can be conveniently cured by the regular repetition of the divine names. We do not know how the ancients came to find out the beneficial effects of these few words of every language upon the nerves of human beings. But it is a fact that other sounds have no such effects. Only a few repetitions, gone through slowly and calmly before going to bed, seem to work wonders. The exhausted brain is soon lulled into soothing and refreshing slumber, which tones up the whole of the nervous system so much so that next morning one rises up from the bed with a fresh fund of bubbling energy.

Modern medical science has still to prove it. But our ancient sages knew it. Do we not remember the honest words of the greatest physician of India, Dhanvantari:—

अच्युतानन्तगोविन्दनामोच्चारणभेषजात् ।  
नश्यन्ति सकला रोगाः सत्यं सत्यं वदाम्यहम् ॥

May I hope my readers will do me the kindness of experimenting themselves sincerely for a few days? Let me assure them that it will never do them any harm. If they are benefited in any way, may I hope that they will also make a collection of such cases and place them before the public?