

# The Name is God.

BY SWAMI RAMDAS.

God and His Name are not distinct from one another. Name is God Himself. The moment we think of the Name our mind is filled with the presence of God. There is no easier way of focussing thought upon God than taking constantly His Name. When we repeat the Name aloud, we feel our heart is flooded with the ecstasy of love, because the sound of the Divine Name awakens the heart to the bliss and love of God.

Although mental repetition of the Name is held to be far more efficacious than the verbal repetition, still the rare experience of sweetness and joy derived by uttering the Name aloud is incomparable. When the entire being of the devotee thrills with rapture to the music of the Name he realizes that Name is *Brahma*.

God is both manifest and unmanifest. The Name stands for such a God. Here the unmanifest is the all-pervading, infinite, immutable, tranquil and static spirit of God. The manifest is the entire universe of name, form and movement with all its beings, creatures and things. The Name stands for this all-inclusive and all-transcendent Godhead, who is both personal and impersonal.

The Divine Name is thus the beginningless source of all creation and the creation itself. God, the absolute, is the nameless Name.

The Name can free the soul from bondage. The Name can take it to the highest consummation of spiritual life. The Name can grant a blind soul with Divine sight. The Name can bless an individual with an universal vision full of sublimity. The Name can lift the soul to inconceivable heights of God-Realization.

The power of Name is invincible. A mind which is considered to be unconquerable, by the soothing influence of the Name becomes docile, yielding and submissive. The mind itself is transformed into God by the power of the Name. He who takes refuge in the Name can work wonders. Death itself will stand in awe of him. He can command all the forces of nature and direct them to bring about a spiritual awakening in the hearts of men. The Name can make a human being an embodiment of eternal love and joy. The Name can convert an individual into a Cosmic Reality—an ignorant soul into a very God.

Where the Name of God is sung, the atmosphere is permeated with purity, peace and bliss; for the symphony of the Name spreads everywhere the splendour of Love.

The Name is all-sufficient. The utterance of it is itself meditation. The ecstasy born of it is itself *Samādhi*. The Name is love, light, power and joy.

The writer can vouch for it from his own experience that Name by itself without any other *Sādhana* can grant one the fullest vision of God everywhere and may merge him in an ocean of never-ending love and joy.

There is no *Sādhana* which can be so universally adopted by all people and is at the same time so simple for realizing God as the Divine Name. It is perfectly true, in the words of a saint, that he who has God's Name always on his tongue is a *Jivanmukta*, or liberated soul.

So, dear friends, to whatever race, caste, creed or colour you may belong, take up the Name of God, and feel the sweet communion with it, and you may depend upon it, your souls through constant bathing in the nectar of the Name will not

only be purified but will also be illumined with the omnipresent and omniscient light and love of God. This practice of taking the Name will lead the unyielding spirit of man to complete surrender to the omnipotent power and will of God. In the earlier stages when the Name is repeated with earnestness, faith and concentration, the face and the body of the devotee will shine with a peculiar lustre, his mind will be filled with wisdom and heart with love. This is due to the predominance of *Satwa Guṇa* in the devotee. Later when the repetition is continued with the same zeal, he will behold the universe before him as the very expression of God. Becoming one with God, he will have the vision of God everywhere.

Verily, the Name is God Himself.

## Pranava as the Name of God.

BY GANGANATH JHA, M. A., D. LITT., LL. D.

When volumes have been written on the subject of *Pranava*, one feels content with bearing in mind just what the Blessed Lord has Himself declared on the subject, and also what the greatest expounders of *Dharma*—the revered Patañjali and the still more revered Vyāsa have said in relation thereto.

The Blessed Lord has said:—

(a) ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।

( Bhagavadgita XVII. 23 )

"*Om-Tat-Sat* is the threefold name of *Brahma*." The term 'Nirdeśah' as appearing here has been explained by Śrī Śankarāchārya as 'Nāma', Name; so also by Madhusūdana Saraswatī.

(b) Again, the Lord says:—

गिरामन्मैकमक्षरम्

( Bhagavadgita X. 25 )

"Of words I am the one Letter."

This 'one letter' is 'Om', the *Pranava*,—says Śankarāchārya.

(c) Again, He says:—

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म

( Bhagavadgita VIII. 13 )

"The one-syllabled *Brahma*"—

Śankarāchārya interprets it as "the syllable ॐ, which is the name of *Brahma*".

Let us see now what the revered Patañjali and Vyāsa have declared.

In the *Yoga-sūtras* it has been declared that 'Communion follows from devotion to the Supreme Lord' (I. 23). The Supreme Lord we are told by Vyāsa—becomes drawn to the devotee by the latter's *devotion*—which is a particular form of adoration—favours him with His grace; and from this grace follows Communion,

*Samādhi.* Again, in his *Bhāṣya* on II. 1, Vyāsa has explained 'Devotion' as 'the surrendering or offering up of all one's activities to the Supreme Preceptor or the renunciation of one's activities'.

Again, under II. 45, Patañjali has declared that "From Devotion to the Supreme Lord follows the perfection of Communion;" whereupon Vyāsa remarks—"Communion becomes perfected for one who has surrendered all his connections to the Supreme Lord; and by virtue of the perfection of this communion, the man comes to understand correctly all that is good for him, even in other places, at other times and in other bodies; and thereby his intellect comes to grasp the reality of things."

As regards *Pranava* being the name of the Lord, Patañjali says—"The syllable *Om* is His indicator" (I. 27)—on which Vyāsa provides the following explanation:—

The Supreme Lord is indicated by the name "Om"; and the connection between the indicated (the Lord) and the indicator (*Om*) is one that is always true, eternal. The convention also, which in the case of all Sanskrit words, is made by God, serves to make known what is already there; for instance, it is only when the *Son* and the *Father* and the relationship between them are already there that the relationship is made known by the words—"This is the Father and that is the

*Son.*' In other cycles also, Convention is fixed by God on the basis of the indication potency already there; and on account of there being a continued uniformity of usage regarding this convention, the Masters of Scripture have declared the relation between the word and its meaning to be eternal. The said uniformity is with regard to long-standing usage—explains Vāchaspati Miśra.

Vyāsa continues—For the *yogī* who has understood the said relation of 'Indicated and Indicator' as subsisting between *Om* and God, there should be repetition of that name and reflection on what is signified by it (*Yoga-Sūtras* I. 28). That is to say, (continues Vyāsa) there should be repetition of the syllable *Om* and also reflection on God, who is signified by the name. Thus when the *yogī* repeats the syllable *Om* and meditates upon God as signified by it, his mind becomes concentrated. This process should be continuously carried on—Repetition of *Om*—meditation on God, again Repetition of *Om*—meditation on God, and so on. Through perfect repetition and perfect meditation, the Supreme Spirit, *Paramātmā* becomes manifested—says the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*.

Vāchaspati Miśra adds—"From concentration of mind follows the direct perception of the Supreme Spirit and thence the Higher Dispassion, and finally Abstract Communion.'

