

## The Power and the Efficacy of God's Name

Sages will not try to describe their highest experience, perhaps because there is no longer any subject-object relationship. When all is one, there is no one left to describe something else. However, on the way to that highest realization, we can realize that I am That; it is an internal realization of our true subjectivity. Normally following this comes the realization that all this is That—everything that we can know is That.

Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī has pointed out that, symbolically, it is this dual realization that is the purpose of our ending prayers after meditation here in the Samādhi Hall. During meditation we go inward, the purpose being to realize I am That. Then, as we are coming out of meditation, after we have briefly chanted I am Bliss, we chant all this is That—all arms, all faces, *crores* of universes are That. And this is what we are meant to take into our daily life: we are meant to see everything as That. Therefore, we are to consider work as worship; we are to see God in all. All our spiritual practices, if we will analyze them, are to help to lift us to this stage: I am That, and all this is That.

However, during this Kali Yuga, when the normal spiritual practices have become most difficult, many of the great ones have said that the best practice of all is the repetition of God's name. And certainly for most seekers in the Indian subcontinent and those associated with the Vedic religion, if it isn't their main spiritual practice it is a supplement to the other practices that they are doing. How is it that the repetition of God's name can bring us towards the double realization of I am That and all this is That?

When we sit for meditation it can work in two ways. It can lead to the stilling of the mind and an experience of That which sees, the pure subjectivity. It can also lead to an experience of the truth through reasoning. When we are repeating the Lord's name, we ask the question, Who is it, or what is it, that knows this repetition? We realize that That which knows is unknowable to the mind, and we are thus put in touch with the mystery that the mind can never know, but that knows the mind. We can then recognize that it is I who know the mind; therefore, I am That, That which I can never know with the mind except in this indirect way.

But how can repetition of God's name help us to realize that all this is That—everything that we see, hear, feel, smell, touch? This cannot be explained; it can only be experienced. We repeat God's name and somehow our perspective on the outer world changes. Especially if we're having difficulties, we repeat God's name and somehow we see God in the difficulty, and therefore our understanding of the difficulty changes.

The highest realization is God's gift to us. All religions agree upon this. Our task as seekers is to realize that I am That and all this is That. Let us use whatever means we can to lead us to these dual realizations, but let us remember also the assurances that the scriptures and our *guru*-s have given us about the power and the efficacy of God's name.