

Veda Niketan Tract Series

GOD IS ONE

ओम् एकं सद्दवपिरा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरशिवानमाहुः। Aum ekaṃ sadviprā bahudhā vadantyaagniṃ yamaṃ mātariśvānamāhuḥ. Rig Veda 1:164:46

God is one, but wise people call God by many names.

Messages from the Light of Truth

No 1 of 10

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Messages of the Light of Truth

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Foreword

To commemorate the 200th birth anniversary of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati in 2024, the Veda Niketan Publications committee began work on this new series of Tracts, which summarizes the message of the seminal work of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, "The Light of Truth".

The need for simple and modern summaries of the messages in the Light of Truth arose from discussions at a Back to the Vedas lecture in 2022. The idea crafted was to produce a quick summary that entices the reader to go through Light of Truth.

We are deeply indebted to Pt Suriyaprakash Singh an ardent scholar of the Light of Truth and Ms Oosha Chirkoot-Lalla for the research conducted for the writing up of material and the time placed into the production of the tract.

We hope to provide readers with a summary of a chapter of the Light of Truth in each of the tracts in the series "Messages of the Light of Truth". The series starts with the 100 names of God with the tract entitled "God is One" and will be followed with the second tract entitled "God and the Veda".

This year, 2023, Veda Niketan is 60 years old. We believe that the launch of this new series of tracts is an appropriate way of celebrating the 60 years of existence of the Veda Niketan.

Karuna Mohan
Publications Committee Chairperson

Pt Shobana Singh
Veda Niketan Secretary



There are millions of other names of God besides the 100 presented here. His names are without number, because His nature, attributes and activities are infinite. One name stands for each of them. These hundred names are like a drop in the ocean.



100 NAMES OF GOD

An Etymological¹ Exposition of the Various Names of God

01 AUM

“AUM is the Great God Who is omnipresent (like ether).” Yajur Veda 40.17.

“He alone, whose name is AUM, Who is Immortal, is worthy of our adoration and none other.” Chhandogya Upanishad

“All the Vedas and the Shashtraas declare AUM as the primary and natural name of God. All others are His secondary names.” Mandukya Upanishad

¹ Etymological is about relating to the origin and historical development. Etymology is the study of the history of the form of words and by extension the origin, and evolution of their semantic meaning across time.

“He Whom all the Vedas declare worthy of homage, Whom all devotion and righteous actions lead to, and for Whose realization, the life of Brahmacharya (chastity) is led, is called AUM. Katha Upanishad.

“He, Who is the Teacher of all, subtler than the subtlest, Resplendent, Who can be known through understanding begotten of Samādhi, i.e., ‘superior condition’ of the soul, when the mind is perfectly concentrated by means of psychical practices, is the Great Being.”
“Being All-glorious, some call Him Agni. Being the Embodiment of all true knowledge, others call Him Manu. Others call Him Indra, being All-powerful and Protector of all. Others, Pranā, as the source of all life. Others, again, call Him Brahma, the Greatest of all beings.” Manusmriti 12.112.

Of all the names of God AUM is the shortest and the most popular. All Vedic mantras commence with Aum, as acknowledgement to God for His divine guidance. Aum represents the beginning, the middle, and the end. Of all names of God Aum is supreme. It denotes the most comprehensive name of God.

ओ३म्

AUM also has two special meanings – Omnipresent and Protector. God is present in every particle of an atom. He protects this universe through His power, knowledge, and His laws.





A denotes the power of God to create the universe,

U demotes the power of God to sustain the universe and

M denotes the power of God to dissolve the universe.

A represents:

02 Virat He illuminates this multiform universe.



03 Agni He is all-knowledge, Omniscient, and worthy of adoration, fit subject to be known, sought after, and realized.

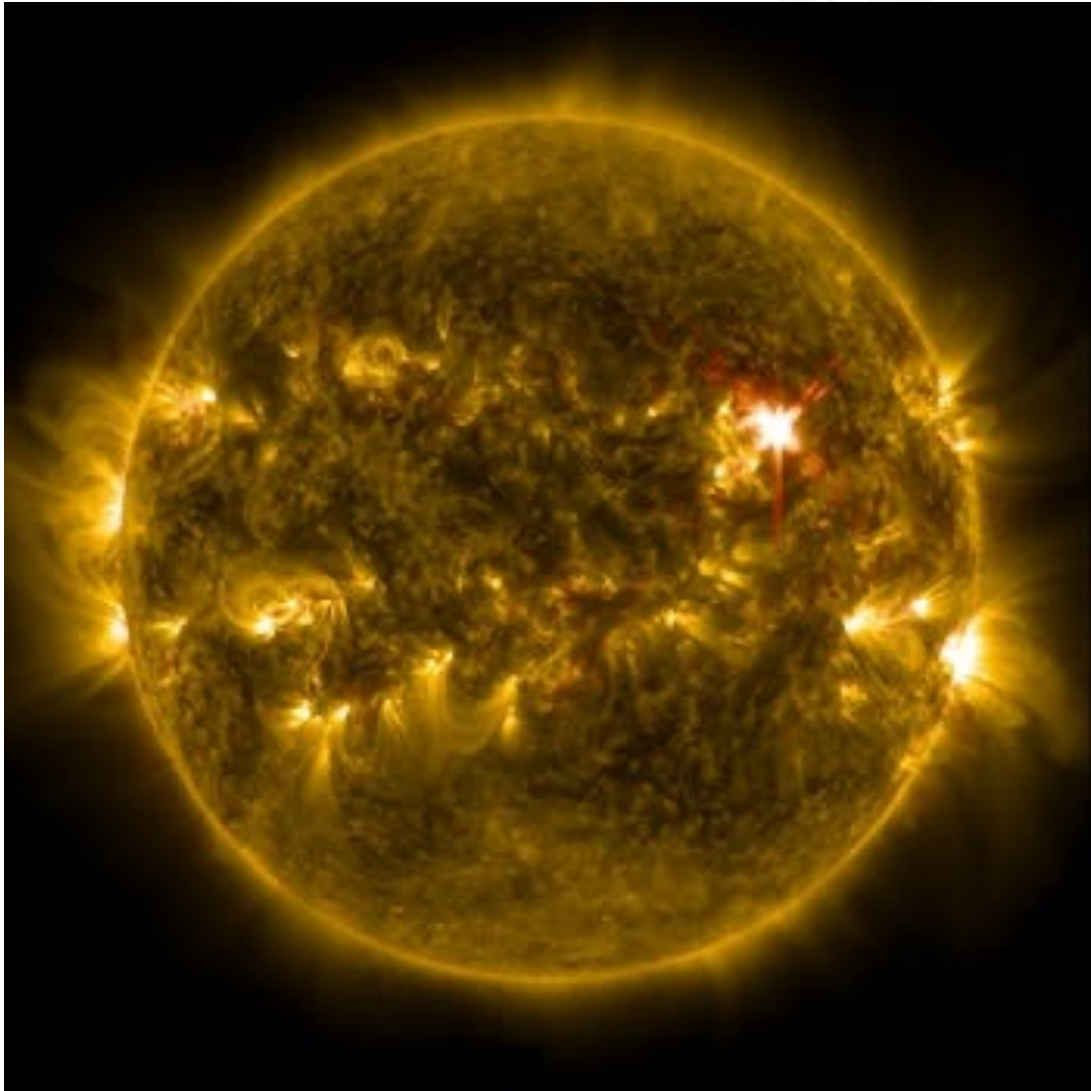
04 Vishwa All the world and the worldly objects dwell in Him and He resides in all of them.

U represents:

05

Hiranyagarbha

Hiranya is light and garbha is source. This means One who is the source and support of all light and luminous bodies such as the sun. This is substantiated by Yajur Veda, which says: "In the beginning was Hiranyagarbha – the One Lord of the creation. He sustains the sun and the earth. We adore Him – the All-Blissful Being." Yajur Veda 13.4.

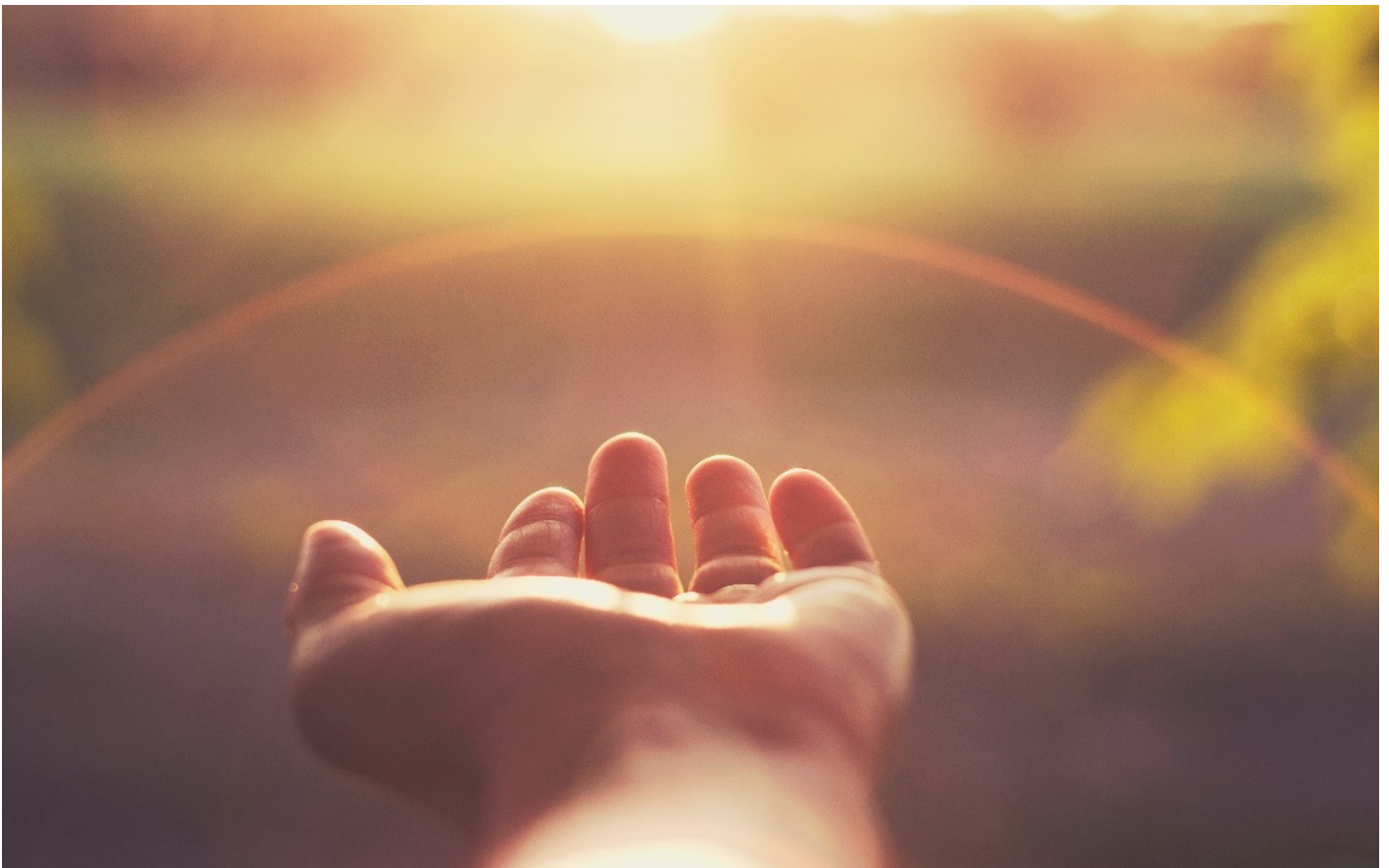


06

Vaayu One who is the life and support of the Universe, the cause of its dissolution, mightier than the mightiest.

07

Taijas One who is Resplendent and gives light to the sun and other luminous bodies.



M represents:

- 08 Ishwar** One whose knowledge and power are infinite.
- 09 A'ditya** One who never dies or decays – is Immortal.
- 10 Prajna** One whose knowledge is perfect, Who is Omniscient.
- 11 Mitra** He loves all and is worthy of being loved by all.

A man who is friend to one, is an enemy of another and indifferent to a third person. Hence Mitra here cannot be taken to signify an ordinary friend, but it here means God, because He is One Who is an absolute Friend of all, unfriendly or indifferent to none. No man can ever be like Him. This is the primary meaning of the word. But its secondary meaning is an ordinary friend.

- 12 Varuna** One who is best, holiest of all and desired and sought after by all righteous, pious, and learned men who are seekers after truth and salvation.

13

Aryama One who respects and honours the good and, the just, and punishes the wicked – The Great Judge who gives souls the fruits of their deeds, good or evil.



14

Indra One who is all – powerful.

15

Vrihaspati One who is greatest among the great and governs the entire universe.

16

Vishnu One who pervades all the universe, animate and inanimate.

17

Urukramaa One who possesses infinite energy.

18

Brahma One who lords over all.

19

Bhumi One who is the abode of all and greater than all.

20

Surya One who is the life and light of the universe, animate or inanimate.

21

A'tma One who pervades the soul as well as the material universe.

- 22 Paramatma** One who is holier than the soul, subtler and more powerful than the soul and matter, who pervades and controls the soul.
- 23 Parameshwar** One who is All-powerful among the powerful, Almighty.
- 24 Savita** One who is the Creator of the Universe.



- 25 Deva** One who operates in the universe and governs it and does all His works by His own powers without help from others; Who desires or helps the good and the righteous to win and is Himself invincible, gives all power and means to work; Who knows everything and is just and glorious, illuminates and enlightens all, is worthy of praise, All-blissful, bestows happiness on others, punishes the wicked and gladdens the hearts of the good and Himself enjoys perpetual bliss; who has ordained night for all to sleep and rest, in the indefinable, imperceptible, primeval elementary matter – prakriti; Whose will is holy, Who is desired and sought after by the good, and Who pervades all and knows all.
- 26 Kuvera** One who covers all or overspreads all.
- 27 Prithivi** One who has spread this extensive universe.
- 28 Jala** One who beats or punishes the wicked and beats the atoms into shape or beats them asunder in the Creation or Dissolution of the universe, respectively.
- 29 Akaash** One who illuminates or enlightens the whole world.



30

Anna and atta

One who absorbs into Himself or contains the universe, animate and inanimate. As grubs are born in the inside of a fruit of a fig tree, live and die in the same, so is the universe born, lives and perishes in God i.e. reduced to its elementary condition.



31

Vasu One who dwells in all things and is the abode of all.

32

Rudra One who makes the wicked and the unjust shed tears. "Whatever a man thinks, he speaks; whatever he speaks, the same he acts; whatever he acts, he reaps" Shatapatha Braahmana. In other words, a man reaps whatever he sows.

When the wicked suffer pain in consequence of their sins at the hand of Divine Justice, they wail and weep. He is, therefore, called Rudra

33

Naraayana He is the abode of souls and pervades them.

34

Chandra One who is All-bliss and gives pleasure and happiness to others.

35

Mangala One who is All-blissful, and showers bliss on the soul.

36

Buddha One who is All-knowledge and endows souls with knowledge.

37

Shukra One who is purity personified and in whose company souls becomes pure

38

Shanaishchara One who reaches or gains access to all with ease, and possesses great fortitude.

39

Rahu

He Who is one without admixture of anything else. Who rejects the wicked and frees others from the hands of the wicked.

40

Ketu

One who is the abode of the universe, free from death and disease. He frees the emancipated souls from disease and suffering during the period of salvation.

41

Yajna

One who combines the different elements together and evolves this world and its objects out of them, Who is worthy of being worshipped by all the sages and seers from Brahma downwards and will always be. He is the Omnipresent God. "Yajna is the Omnipresent God" Shatapatha Braahmana.



42

Hotaa

One who gives all that is worth giving to souls and takes from them what is worth taking.

43

Bandhu

One who keeps all the worlds bound by laws to Himself and helps to keep them in order so that they cannot move out of their orbit or the laws of their constitution. He is like a brother unto all the world and supports, protects, and gives happiness to all.

44

Pitaa

One who protects all. Just as a father, through paternal love and kindness always desires the good of His children, even so does God, the Father of all desire happiness for all.

45

Pitaamaha

The father of fathers.

46

Prapitaamaha The Great-Grandfather.

47**Maataa**

He has happiness and prosperity of all souls at heart just as an earthly mother, out of extreme love and kindness, desires happiness and prosperity for her offspring.

48**A'charya**

He is the source of all true knowledge and righteousness. It is through Him we receive knowledge, and live virtuous lives.

49**Guru**

Teacher of all true knowledge and learning Who revealed the Word of salvation (Vedas) in the beginning of the creation. He is the teacher of even all the earliest teachers such as Agni, Vayu, A'ditya, Angira and Brahma. He is immortal, says Yoga Shastra: "He is the Teacher of even the most ancient teachers. He is Immortal. Time cannot influence Him."

50**Aja**

One who combines the elements and atoms properly and evolves the world out of them; unites bodies with souls, and brings them out into the world, which is called their birth. He, Himself is never born.

51**Brahma**

One who has created the world and multiplies it.

52**Satya**

One who is the true embodiment of existence among all existences.

53**Jnaana**

One who knows all the world, animate and inanimate. "The Great God is Satya Jnaana and Ananta" – Taittiriya Upanishad Brammaanad Valli 1.2

54**Ananta**

One who has no limitations, boundaries, end, or dimensions.

55**Anaadi**

One who has no beginning, nor a first cause.

56**Ananda**

One who is All-blissful and endows happiness on the good and the righteous.

57**Sata**

One who exists in all times, the past, the present and the future, and is not limited by time.

58**Chit**

One who is a truly conscious Being and endows souls with true knowledge of right and wrong.

- 59 Sachidaananda**
One who is an existing, truly conscious, blissful being.
- 60 Nitya**
Firm, Immortal, Eternal.
- 61 Shudha**
One who is Himself pure and purifies others.
- 62 Mukta**
One who is always free from all sin and impurity and frees souls from sin and suffering.
- 63 Nitya shudha budha mukta subhaava**
One who is Eternal, Holy, Omniscient and Free.
- 64 Niraakaara**
One who has no form nor body nor is ever embodied.
- 65 Niranjana**
One who is free from immoral conduct, disorders, etc., nor is He the object of senses such as the eyes.
- 66 Ganapati**
One who is the Lord of all hosts, i.e., of all the Material and Spiritual world, which He also protects.
- 67 Ganesha**
Lord of all hosts.
- 68 Vishveshwara**
Lord of the Universe.
- 69 Kutastha**
One who pervades all, supports all, and yet Himself undergoes no transformation.
- 70 Devi**
Has the same meanings as the word Deva, which is of masculine gender, whilst Devi is of feminine gender. God has names in all the three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter.
- 71 Shakti**
One who is powerful enough to create the world.
- 72 Shri**
One who is served by all saints, sages, and seers.

73**Lakshmi**

One who sees all the universe and endows it with distinguishing marks or features, as bodies with eyes, ears, etc.; trees with leaves, fruits, and flowers; liquids and solids with different colours as black, white, red, etc. earth with dust and rock, etc.; and sees them all. He is the most beautiful among the beautiful. He is the chief source of Vedas, Yogis, and wise men.

74**Saraswati**

One who is possessed of infinite knowledge of the universe, of words, their objects and their relations.

75**Sarvashakitimaan**

One who does not require the assistance of another in accomplishing His works, Who by His Own innate power does all His work.

76**Niyaayakaari.**

Niyaaya is what is proved to be true by all the eight kinds of evidence such as, Direct Cognition, Inference, Analogy, etc. It is the dispensing of justice without favor or partiality. Niyaayakaari is One who practices Niyaaya, i.e., truth, justice and righteousness.

77**Dayaalu**

One who makes all fearless, knows all, protects the good, and punishes the wicked.

78**Advaita**

One and only one, and indivisible without any admixture, either of the same kind (as man and man are of the same kinds from man), or made up of different parts. Consequently there is no relation of the whole to its parts, as of body with its parts, such as eyes, ears, etc.

79**Nirguna**

One who is free from the (distinguishing) properties of matter such as Satwa, Rajas, Tamas, colour, taste, touch, smell and of the soul, such as finite power and knowledge, ignorance, passions and desires, and pain of all kinds. This definition is substantiated by the authority of Upanishada. "He is free from sound, touch, colour, and such other qualities."

80**Saguna**

One who possesses such attributes, as perfect knowledge, perfect bliss, purity, infinite power. Everything in this universe is Saguna (positive) and Nirguna (negative). For instance, the material objects are called Nirguna, because they are void of the properties and powers of conscious beings, as will and feelings. Whilst they are also Saguna (positive), because they possess their own material properties. The same is true of God. He is Saguna, when He is looked upon as possessed of His own attributes, as Omniscience, Omnipotence, but He is also Nirguna, being free from the properties of matter and soul.

81

Antaryami

One who pervades the animate as well as the inanimate universe and controls it.

82

Dharma Raja

One who is free from sin and evil, and rejoices in truth, justice, and righteousness – The Great Judge.

83

Yama

One who governs all, administers justice to all and is the personification of Justice.

84

Bhagwaan

One who is possessed of all might and power and is worthy of being served and worshipped.

85

Manu

One who is the true embodiment of knowledge, and worthy of being known and believed.

86

Purusha

One who counts and classifies the material objects and souls.

87

Vaishwambhara

One who sustains and preserves the world.

88

Kaala

One who counts and classifies the material objects and souls.

89

Shesha

One who undergoes no change during Creation or Dissolution. He is the One Unchangeable Eternal world.

90

A'pta

One who pervades the universe, is filled with all true knowledge and righteousness, is the true Teacher of all, accessible only to the good and the righteous, and free from such bad attributes, as dishonesty, fraud, etc.

91

Shankara

One who is the Benefactor of all, and Giver of happiness.

92

Mahaadeva

One who is greatest among the great, the good, and the learned, and is the Light of the world.

- 93 Priya**
One who gladdens the good, the righteous and the true seekers of salvation, and is worthy of being sought after – The embodiment of Love.
- 94 Swayambhu**
One who is Self-existent, Uncreated.
- 95 Kavi**
One who is all-knowledge and reveals true knowledge through His Word (The Veda).
- 96 Shiva**
One who is all Bliss, and he is the Giver of happiness to all.
- 97 Swaarat**
Self-effulgent.
- 98 Suparnaa**
The Protector and Preserver of the Universe.
- 99 Matrishwaa**
Powerful like wind.
- 100 Garutmaan**
Mighty by nature.

Aum is the most sacred name of God, the words Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Shiva, Ganesha, Lakshmi etc mean God on the occasion of prayer, but signify common objects in natural science and ordinary affairs of life. The context determines the right sense. All shastras commence with Atha (now) keeping the discourse in the present and making them relevant to life today. All mantras of the Vedas are recited commencing with Aum. Aum and the other names of God in the verses are significant. In "Aum Kham Brahma" God is called Aum from affording us protection, Kham from pervading all things and Brahma from being greater than all things.

In the Veda and Shastras infinite attributes, powers, and characteristics of God are described. These can be learnt by the study of those books. A more detailed knowledge even in other subjects can only be gained by those who study them.

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