

## The Incarnation of God as the Name (*Prabhu Ka Naamavatar*)<sup>1</sup>

**Swami Dr. Vishwa Mitterji Maharaj**

In the age of *Satya Yuga* (divine age/ age of perfect morality), Bhagwan Narsingha was incarnated; in the age of *Treta* (three-quarters virtue and one quarter sin), Bhagwan Ramchandraji took incarnation, in the *Dvapara* (age of one-half virtue and one-half sin), Bhagwan Krishnamurari incarnated and in the *Kali Yuga* (one-quarter virtue and three-quarters sin), God has been incarnated as the 'Name' (God's name which symbolizes supreme sanctity and divinity). In reality, *Naam Avatar* (God incarnated as the Name) is ancient, constant and eternal. In every age, alongside every incarnation, It always remains existent (*vidyamaan*). Bhagwan Narsingha, the Perfect Being Ramchandra, Bhagwan Shri Krishna, on completing their divine play returned to their heavenly abodes; however, *Naam Bhagwan* (God as the Name) remains present even now. In *Satya Yuga* meditation was the chief concern; in *Treta Yuga*, traditional offerings (*Yagya*) and in the *Dvapara*, temple-worship emerged as the chief features, but in other ages, the goal which was reached through prayer, Yagyas or meditation -- the same goal in this *Kaliyuga* -- can be attained by the Name of the Almighty. Thus declares Shri Kak Bhusundi :

---

<sup>1</sup>Published in *Kalyan*, (Gita Press, Gorakhpur) January 2007.

*In Kritayuga, Treta, Dvapara humans are able to attain the Almighty through worship, sacrifice and Yoga,*

*In the Kali age the same goal is reached through the Name of Hari (the Almighty)*

*(Ramcharit Manas, 7/102)*

Compassionate God moved by the concern for the well-being of His disciples displayed His powers by taking the incarnation of the Name. All the purposes for which the *Para Brahma* (Supreme Brahman/supreme cosmic spirit) incarnated in physical form, those purposes are being fulfilled through the Grace of *Naam Avatar*. As Tulsidasji states:

*The Name of Rama is the Lord manifested as a man-lion and the demon is Hiranyakashupa in Kaliyuga. Crushing the demon, the Name will protect the devotees repeating it; as the Man-lion protected Prahlad, Those who do jaap are Prahlad*

*(Ramcharitmanas, 1/27)*

That is - the Name of Lord Rama is Lord Narsingha Bhagwan personified. In this age, Kali is Hiranyakashyap and those who do *jaap* (meditation of the name of God) of *Ram-Naam* are Prahlad. Just as in *Satya Yuga* the atrocities of Hiranyakashyap over Prahlad were removed by the Almighty in the form of Narsingha; similarly in the present *Kaliyuga*, through *Naam Bhagwan* (God as the Name) all our problems and our crisis are overcome. Prahlad's own father tortures him; burns him in fire; he is stung by snakes, thrown off mountain cliffs and starved of

food. If you think carefully, the spiritual aspirant experiences the same. Even if there may not be an external snake, an external mountain, or physical fire; are spiritual aspirants (*sadhaks*) not troubled by jealousy, anger and malice? Are all people not burning in the fires of worry?

*The fires of worry engulf the entire world*

*Only those saints escape who make God's name their prop!*

The snakes of vices are ever-waiting to bite the spiritual aspirant. The poison of material interests does not loosen its grip. The fire of worry is always lit. The mountain of pride is ever-ready to collapse.



There is an event from the reign of Raja Parikshit, son of Abhmanyu. Raja Parikshit learnt of the coming of Kali Yuga into his kingdom, so he took his army to attain supreme victory. At one place they saw that *Dharma* has taken the form of a bull and was roaming around on one leg. At another place they encountered the earth in the form of a cow; she had tears falling from her eyes. *Dharma* asked the earth: 'Why are you unhappy?' The earth explained: 'Dharma, Bhagwan Shri Krishna has, at this time, withdrawn his divine play from this world and the world has fallen prey to the evil eye of the sin-filled Kaliyug. Seeing all this I am deeply saddened.' Raja Parikshit again saw a *shudra* dressed in royal robes holding a stick and

violently beating cows and bulls. The Raja asked: 'Hey, cruel one, who are you? Why are you beating them?' He replied: 'King, I am Kali. I am doing my work.' The King responded angrily: 'I will not allow you to remain here.' Kali replied: 'King, at least listen to my merits and flaws and only then pronounce your judgment. In my age brothers will fight over wealth and worldly possessions. Men and women will break the boundaries of decorum. Few women will live within the bounds of dignity. Violence will be dominant. Humans will be unintelligent and have short life spans. On hearing Kali's declaration, the King spoke tremblingly: 'Enough, enough, the limits have been reached. Under your influence humanity will be extinct. I will kill you.'

Kali further said: 'Maharaja, I have a very strong virtue; listen to that. In *Satya Yuga* long performance of *japa* (meditative repetition of a mantra or name of Divine Power); ascetic practices (*tapas*), fasting, meditation; in *Treta Yuga* performing elaborate rituals, in *Dvapara*, Service to Lord (*Bhagwat Seva*) - all the merits could thus be accumulated; all that merit is now achievable in my age by lovingly chanting *Jaap* of the Name of Rama.' This is what Shri Shukdevji tells Parikshit: 'King, ordinarily *Kaliyuga* is the treasure chest of flaws (*dosh*); but there is one very big positive virtue (*guna*) in it. That virtue is just this: that in *Kali Yuga* the only requirement is the mere worship of the Name of God (*Naam Sankirtan*) - all worldly attachments are left behind and one is thus able to attain the Almighty.

*Although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: simply by chanting or repeating krsna-katha, one is liberated from the material bondage*

*(Shrimadbbagwat12/3/5)*



It is thus implied that in *Kaliyuga*, God incarnated as the Name provides human beings with salvation. Thus, those spiritual aspirants who take refuge in the Name of God for their protection, in the end the Almighty, with His Perfect Energy appears in seen or in unseen form and shall slay the *Hiranyashakyaparupi Kaliyuga*. In this way an aspirant's spiritual endeavor becomes successful.

To depend on the Name, to seek proximity to the Name (*Naam Upasana*)- despite the obstacles and difficulties placed by *Kaliyuga* is the direct proof of God's Grace. Living examples are: Goswami Tulsidasji and Bhakta Shiromani Surdasji. They worshipped the Name. The Almighty was compassionate and purified their beings and made them worthy of respect and also immortalized their compositions. The worship of the Name (*Naam-upasana*) is devotion-centered. The path of *Bhakti* is of those who do not have their own strength. If a follower of this path of *Bhakti* (devotion) feels his own strength in any way, or even has minimal pride in his own strength - then, he is not a true follower of the path of *Bhakti*; his supreme strength is God Himself. In the weakness of the devotee's self, lies strength and it is this quality which attracts the Almighty. This path is for those who have purged their pride. They know that -

*The 'Name' and pride cannot exist, in one mind, at the same time*

*Light and darkness at one place, cannot be seen anywhere*

*(Bhaktiprakash)*

Whoever asked the Saint Kankandas: 'Will I go to heaven?,' he would reply 'No, if I don't go, you will not go.' To some he would respond: 'When I go, you will go.' Those asking thought that his answers were prideful. Again he was asked: 'Will you go to heaven?' 'Yes, when 'I' go, then I will go.' Now it was understood what the 'I' was which the Saint was referring to. When you read the word *Maan* (pride) backwards, it reads as *Naam* (the Name). These two cannot co-exist. That Naam (the Name) is the best medicine for ending *Maan* (pride). The Name is what makes a human being bow down. On the one hand, the Name teaches human beings to bow down. On the other, it makes God bow. When both bow, the human spirit meets the Supreme, Cosmic Spirit. The Name even makes the incarnation of the Name bow down. Love for God removes attachments of this life and previous births. The 'Name' gives you the wherewithal (*Samarth*) to experience Shri Ram always within you, within every part of you (*ang sang*); that is always remaining drowned in Divine Love and always remembering the Grace of Shri Ram. Such a *Jaapak* (practitioner of *japa*) on learning the art of bowing and becoming humble becomes the object of God's Divine Love and accepts all circumstance as God-given and maintains equanimity.

Once, in the garb of a Brahmin, *Kaliyug* appeared before a saint, introduced himself and directed as follows: 'Do not discuss *atma-paramatma* and put emphasis on 'sitting close' to the Name of Lord Rama (*Upasana*). This increases morale and mental strength, strengthens the faith. Then, I cannot influence people; they get out of my sphere of influence.' The Saint replies respectfully: 'Brother, my aim is not to assemble a crowd. That

devotional-ism increases, people become aware of their 'true-self' (*sat swarup*) - that is the aim of *Satsang*.' Kaliyuga said: 'At this time, it is my reign. Intelligence lies in remaining subservient to the side that is sovereign.' 'Brother, I live not in your reign, I believe in the Reign of Rama (*Ram Rajya*) who is my King, not you. Reigns come and go.' 'Your disobedience will cost you dearly,' with this warning *Kaliyuga* departed. The very next day a person came and said: 'Maharaj! you had ordered liquor but the payment has not yet been received.' The Saint understood: 'This is a game of *Kali*.' All his devotees turned into critics. Soon the *ashram* was empty. *Kali* appeared again and enquired: 'How is the *ashram*? How is devotion? It is all quiet. Those who regarded you as God, now consider you as the devil. Thus, I would again say, in my realm do not go against me by preaching *Naam Upasana* (meditation upon the Name).' If you agree, then from tomorrow itself, double the number of disciples will start coming.' The Saint asked, 'How?' *Kali* said: 'I will show you tomorrow itself.'

A leper was lying on the road and lamenting: 'Hey! Someone please takes me to the Saint. If he is compassionate enough to sprinkle water on me, then my leprosy will disappear - this God has revealed to me in my dreams.' People said: 'No, he is a drunkard, not a Saint.' 'Oh, no he is a Saint of a high order.' People took him to the Saint. The Saint sprinkled water and the ailment was cured; from an elderly state, he became a handsome youth. All the disciples were shamed and started to beg forgiveness. The *Satsang* again began to overflow with people.

*Kali* visited again and said: 'So you have seen my power. Therefore, be on my side.' The Saint immediately responded: 'No, we shall remain one with Lord Shree Ram. The *satsang* will continue, so that people do not become slaves of material subjects, but become disciples of Rama.' *Kali* threatened: 'It will cost you dearly; you have already seen my influence.' 'Yes, I have witnessed it. I have been both criticized and praised. You have also seen the Splendour of Ram Rajya? In every circumstance I remained equanimous; in both I remained unmoved and calm- this is the effect of the Almighty's divine favour. The worship of the Name (*Naam Bhakti*) makes God favourable to the disciple and equanimity (*samta*) is the highest state which the disciple gains by the Compassion of Lord Rama.

The *Upanishads* declare the Name of God as the highest of all truths and the worship of the Name as the highest form of worship. Verbal, mental and in low tone- these three types of worship (*upasana*) bring all joys and bestow compassion. In all four ages the influence of the Name (*Naam*) is manifest; but in *Kaliyuga* its special significance has been emphasized. Since ancient times it has been given the highest place. This form of meditation ('sitting close' *upasana*) has been described as the fulfiller of all desires and remover of fear and disease. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christian and Jews - all, in some form or the other, accept the ...importance of *Naam Upasana* ('sitting close to'/ meditation on the name of God) The main parts of this are: *Naam Smaran* (remembering and repeating the name of God), *Dhyana* (meditation; contemplation; the seventh rung in the eightfold ladder of Yoga) and *Sankirtan* (singing in the praise of God).

1. *Naam Smaran*: Taking the Pure and Holy Name of the Almighty, by verbal recital or in the mind, is called *smaran*, while repeating the Lord's name, remembering His virtues with love and emotion is called *smaran (simran)*. Singing in praise of *Simran*, the Saints do not tire:

*All happiness lies in simran, the Almighty resides in simran...*

*(Bhaktiprakash)*

Feeling the Presence of God everywhere, always feeling the Presence within you, besides you at all times, conversing with Him in your mind is called sweet remembrance yoga (*smaran yoga*).

*Remembrance yoga is easy; other Yogas are difficult  
Simran gives darshan of the Almighty, is the abode  
of the Almighty and the cure of illnesses*

*(Bhaktiprakash)*

Everyone has the equal right to do *jaap* (meditative repetition) of the Name of Rama - whether the person is illiterate or literate, poor or rich, of high or low caste, woman or man, pure or impure, sinful or virtuous, vegetarian or non-vegetarian, happy or sad. The *jaap* (meditative repetition) may be performed at all times and at all places- in jail, in washroom, at cremation sites, fields, hospitals, anywhere. The Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) is King among Gods which acts as a watchman for the devotee and protects piety and virtues and saves them from vices. The sound of the Name is the *Garuda* (mythical bird, usually the mount of

Vishnu, has a golden body of a strong man, red wings, eagle's beak, a crown on his head; is known as the eternal enemy of the Naga serpent race) warning to vice-like snakes.

*As the snake encircles a sandalwood tree, evil  
attributes encircle the self  
The 'Name of the Almighty is like the sound of  
Garuda upon hearing which the snake flees  
(Bhaktiprakash)*

*Through the echo of Ram Ram, all fears and doubts  
disappear.  
(Bhaktiprakash)*

Even birds and animals have achieved the Almighty's Protection by calling out His Name.

*The elephant had no virtue and no knowledge; what  
religious rituals has he performed?  
Oh Nanak, behold the way of the Lord, who  
bestowed the gift of fearlessness*

'Ram' is the favored loving, sweet name of *Para Brahma* (the Supreme Cosmic Spirit, the Highest *Brahma*) and is also a two-letter Mantra. Utterance (*ucharan*) of the word yields the fruits of both the Name and of a *Mantra Jaap*. It is said that once *Dharam Raj* (celestial judge) Yudhishtra enquired from Bhishma Pitamah: 'Which state of after-life do the devotees of the *Mantra* attain?' Bhishamji replied with the help of an anecdote: 'Near the

Himalayas one ascetic Brahmin performed the *Jaap* of *Ram Naam* for many years. The Lord Himself appeared and said: 'Brahamrishi (one who has attained the highest divine knowledge)! I am pleased with you; ask for a boon!' The Brahmin replied: 'Oh Almighty! may my desire for even more recitation of the *mantra* grow and may my mental focus progress continuously.' 'May your wish come true. Now you repeat the Name lovingly.' The Brahman continued the *Jaap* for many years; he obtained full control over his self and his mental faculties, he gained victory over passions, greed, anger and attachment. He never saw faults of others. Now *Dharma Raj* appeared and said 'Maharaj, I have come to seek your *darshan*. With the fruits of meditation on the Name (*Naam Mantra*) you can cross the abodes of the Gods and enter an even higher abode. Such is the Glory of *Ram Naam* and devotion of *Ram Mantra*.

The Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) has rendered respectful even those who are condemnable. It even makes ordinary humans receptacles of God's Grace. Once upon a time, a servant of a king went to an abode in the Himalayas to become the Servant of God. While initiating him in the Name of Lord Ram, his Guru explained: 'Disciple, *Ram Mantra* may be chanted while walking, roaming, eating, drinking, playing, bathing, working, while awake and in sleep, while inhaling and exhaling, travelling -- at all times, at all places -- this *Jaap* may be performed. While cooking, cutting wood, also keep taking Ram's Name.' The yearning commenced and his ceaseless chanting began. It was quiet and he used his time well. Gossip, criticism, lies, cunning - all were left behind. This servant got immersed and colored in the ochre colors of God. The God of *Naam* showed compassion and his mind was

purified, his conduct and behavior reformed and his temperament changed. His hunger and sleep lessened considerably; his yearning for union with Lord Ram awakened. His self became peaceful; he could feel the ultimate peace and experience the ultimate spiritual ecstasy. A divine radiance appeared under his face. With the blessings of the Name (*Naam*), he became a saint. One day the saint organized a gathering. The well-to-do and the king provided monetary help. Subsequently, the saint explained the glory of the Name (*Naam*) to everyone and *Bhajan Kirtan* was performed. As they were leaving, everyone bowed to the saint. The king also came and said: 'Mahatma! you have not shown any miracle.' Smiling, the saint responded with respect: 'King, a miracle has occurred. I am your old servant who a few years back bowed to both you and your officers. Today, along with you, all others are prostrating respectfully before me. What bigger miracle can there be?' Everyone was astonished upon hearing this. How easily the Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) upon being pleased, makes manifest among the devotees the Miracle of His glory.

2) *Naam Dhyaan*: concentrated *jaap* (repetitive meditation) of the Name (*Naam*), even if selfish, awakens soul-power (*atmashakti*). If it is mental or chanted alongwith the breath and in a loving manner by focusing the mind on the Name, ceaseless *jaap* (*Shabd Brahma*) and limitless sound (*Naad Brahma*) appear on their own accord. *Naam Dhyaan* is an easy and excellent means for cleansing the mind, burning old misdeeds and realizing the true self. This is the ultimate means for Union with the Endless.



*Naam is the essence of all means, the essence of all  
Yoga  
It is the essence of all karma and its dhyaan bestows  
happiness*

*(Bhaktiprakash)*

It is an extremely powerful means for the divinification of life or imbibing the qualities of Shri Ram in one's inner being.

*With concentration on the sound of Ram Ram,  
auspicious forces for all round well-being emerge*

*(Amritvani)*

3) *Naam Sankirtan* (singing in praise of God's Name) - *Kamini* (lust), *Kanchan* (lucre) and *Kirti* (fame) make the human into an inhuman ; these are cured by the fourth alliteration - *Kirtan* (singing in praise of God). Of all the *Kirtans*, singing in praise of the Name of God (*Naam Sankirtan*) is the most significant. In relation to the singing in praise of the Name of God (*Naam Sankirtan*) it has been said - it is like a thunderbolt (*Vajra*) in grinding the mountain of sin into dust. In happiness and sorrow, respect and disrespect and conflicts resolution, it is a sure remedy to as well as the dawn which destroys the deep darkness of ignorance. Excessively beautiful, full of devotion, hymns with loving devotional songs, fully immersed one should dedicate oneself to the feet of the Almighty -- that is the true character of *Sankirtan* (singing in praise of God). Shree Ram is Himself present at such places where his devotees come together to sing in praise of His Glory. The *Kirtan* (singing in praise of God) which is electrified;

where loving tears well up and passion emerges - such a *Kirtan* affects the mind, the body and the marrow itself. The soul easily becomes peaceful through this. The Saints have truly pronounced that the worship of the Name is a very easy and the highest means of attaining the Lord's Love. Just as birds perched on a tree flee on hearing the clapping of hands, thus the birds of sin flee on clapping while singing the praise of God (*Sankirtan*). Elucidating the glory of singing the virtues of Lord Ram, Shri Tulsidasji states:

*In the Kali age, however, men reach the end of mundane existence simply by singing the Almighty's (Hari's) praises. In the age of Kali neither Yoga, nor the performance of sacrifices nor spiritual wisdom is of any avail; one's only hope lies in singing Lord Rama's praises.*

*(Ramcharit Manas, 7/ 103/4-5)*

He further elaborates - one who loves Ram Naam (the Name of Lord Ram) more dearly than Shri Ramji is destined to attain salvation in this dire age of Kaliyug. On being asked by someone, Goswamiji explains the method of the worship of the Name:

*Repeat Ram Ram, memorize Ram Ram, do jaap of Ram Ram, oh, tongue!*

*(Vinay-Patrika 65)*

The mind has three states. It is sometimes calm, sometimes sad and sometimes happy. Tulsidasji explains: 'When the mind is peaceful, do *jaap* of *Ram Ram* in such a manner that you attain

the state of meditation; if the mind is unhappy, then repeatedly chant *Ram Ram* - repeat my sweet song *Ram Ram Ram* (*rat meri rasna Ram Ram Ram*); in illness or crisis, when the mind is not stable, even then continue reciting *Ram Ram*. When the mind is in a happy state, then play with the joyful 'Ram.' Tulsidasji explains that when we perform *Sankirtan* with music and musical instruments clapping also takes place, hands are raised and dance is performed - all these acts are the act of playing joyfully with the Name God (*Naam Bhagwan*) and getting immersed in Him. Thus, Shri Tulsidasji also describes and acknowledges the above three parts of the worship of the incarnation of the Name. Swami Satyananadji reassures firmly and confidently as follow:

*Ram Mantra is the redeemer and savior which delivers our soul from mortal bondage (captivity in the perishable human body). Be sure that remembrance of His Maha-Mantra leads to salvation as well as provides all round bliss, good fortune, God-realization and oneness with the Supreme Being (May our faith in the Maha Mantra of Ram Naam be resolute and unshakeable.*

*(Amritvamni)*

Guru Nanak says speaks in a similar voice -

*Says Nanak only that person is at peace who sings the virtues of Ram  
All other worldly persons are possessed by temptations of the world and therefore do not attain the state of fearlessness.*

Once a person enquired from Swami Akhandanandji: 'Maharaj ! Please explain any way which is simple, brief, does not require prayer objects, is easily accessible to everyone and fructifies early.' Maharajji replied: 'The *Upasana* (sitting close to) of the Name of God.' The other person enquired: 'How can one purge attachment to materialism?' Maharajji replied. 'When the *simran* of Shri Ram *Naam* grew strong hold, Kabir noted that all material subjects fled'

History is witness.

The holy 'Ram-Naam' ensured ultimate salvation even to those who were atheistic and irreligious, and who led a life of wickedness, immorality, crime, promiscuity, deceit and treachery. This was the result of remembering Shri Ram's Name only.

*The Graciousness of 'Shri Ram-Naam' saves the souls of even those who lack steadfastness, faith, self-restraint and are irreligious and overly indulgent. The holiest of the holy 'Ram-Ram' helped and sustained the worst offenders and criminals who were absolutely cleansed and purified without any traces of past sinfulness.*

*(Amiritvani)*

The other incarnations became manifest for one, or for a few, or to carry out a specific mission, but the Name as Incarnation (*Naam Avatar*) is for everyone, for fulfilling all purposes, universally available and at all times.

Endless salutations to such a Shri Naam Bhagwan !