

## Three Minutes -13

### How do I define thee, Let me count the ways

om

pUrNamadaH pUrNamidam  
pUrNAt pUrNam udacyate |  
pUrNasya pUrNam AdAya  
pUrNameva avashiShyate ||  
oM shAntiH shAntiH shAntiH  
*(shAnti mantra, IshAvAsya upaniShad)*

*adha: = That (Brahmam)  
pUrNam = (is) Complete  
pUrNam = (and is) complete  
idam = here  
pUrNAt = from that complete  
pUrNam = completion  
udacyate = is arouse  
pUrNasya = From completion  
pUrNam = complete  
AdAya = taken out  
pUrNam = (still) complete  
avashiShyate = left out  
eva = only  
shAnti = peace*

This is the shAnti mantra for IshAvAsaya upaniShad. shAnti means peace and these mantras are called "Peace prayers", which are part of upaniShats. They are intended to calm and relax the reciter's mind and are generally invoked at the beginning and at the end of any vedic ceremony to remove any obstacles. Usually chanted to create a conducive ambiance for spirituality, these can

also be recited for peace in general. They all start by pronouncing "om" with a vibration. They all end with "shAnti", repeated thrice with a peaceful pause between them.

Human beings usually face three kinds of hurdles (tApa traya). 1. Body pain such as disease, mental agony like those which are created from their own body (adyAtmika). 2. Troubles from enemies, wild animals etc. which from the external physical world (Adi-bhautika). 3. Negative effects created by spirits, ghosts, demi-gods, and natural calamities which are classified as divine actions (Adi-daivika). So to cure diseases, to remove the influence of other souls, and planets etc., these mantras are used.

That is whole, this is whole; what has come out of the whole is also a whole; when the whole is taken out of the whole, the whole still remains the whole. The word whole here can be substituted with complete, fullness, absolute or perfect. Here, what upaniShads call whole is the ultimate Lord, brahmam. The Lord (bhagavAn) is everywhere in fullness. He is unbound and unattached. Nothing can be taken away that will make the Lord any less; nothing can be added that will make Him any more. The Lord is forever pure, independent and absolute.

This insightful statement shows the Lord's universe manifestation (vishva vyApti). shrI ViShnu sahasranAmam also starts with "om vishvam

viShnur". Think for a moment, is there anything in the world after you part some, you end up with more? Food, clothing, money? None of them. Probably love or devotion is the answer. And that is why God is realized through love and deep devotion (bhakti).

Though God is beyond any word or any one's mind, veda-s might have given the world, the original, oldest, most profound philosophical characterization of God. What we learn from here-

**1. God is beyond comprehension**

Scripts don't justify His true nature or power. They can paint only a minuscule sample of the whole.

**2. Nothing is permanent except God and the love towards Him.**

Obviously, anything permanent never gets affected; It is unattached.

**3. Understanding our limited scope of knowledge.**

We are all used to common sense, cause and effect phenomena, mathematical calculations etc. When they all fail in describing God, we realize how tiny our rational mind and theoretical wisdom actually is. These vedic scripts teach one to be more humble.

**He is infinite. You are in finite.  
Difference is the space  
(prakR^iti).**