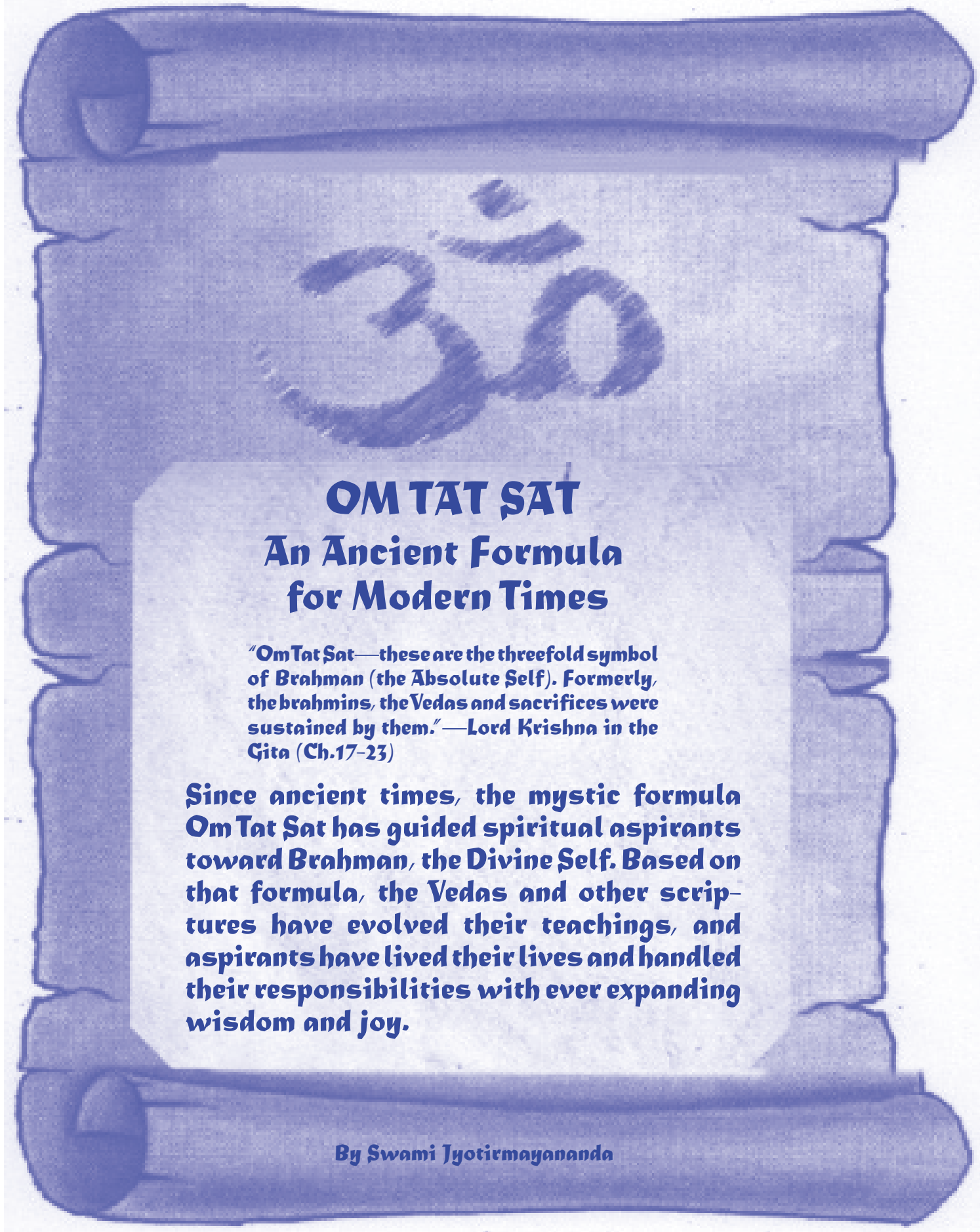




OM TAT SAT

An Ancient Formula for Modern Times

"Om Tat Sat—these are the threefold symbol of Brahman (the Absolute Self). Formerly, the brahmins, the Vedas and sacrifices were sustained by them."—Lord Krishna in the Gita (Ch.17-23)

Since ancient times, the mystic formula Om Tat Sat has guided spiritual aspirants toward Brahman, the Divine Self. Based on that formula, the Vedas and other scriptures have evolved their teachings, and aspirants have lived their lives and handled their responsibilities with ever expanding wisdom and joy.

By Swami Jyotirmayananda

Let us reflect deeply on this mantric formula and the power each component possesses to enhance the quality of life and impel an aspirant towards the goal of existence—God-realization.

OM

As you focus your mind on OM, you are invoking God. Invoking God should become a joyous habit. With everything you do, feel enveloped by God's Presence. Live your daily life with OM as the underlying melodious bell reverberating throughout your activities. Day by day, learn to promote a deep interest and great delight in remembering God at all times.

How, you may ask, can remembrance of God be uninterrupted when there are so many things to be done in daily life, so many problems to be solved? OM should not simply be a sound in your mind. It should be an ever-increasing feeling of Divine Presence. When OM is transformed into a more profound feeling of Divine Love within, you will find OM resonating uninterruptedly within your very breath.

Towards that end, develop the habit of beginning every work with a prayer to God, ending it with a prayer to God, and striving to create a sense of surrender while you are engaged in your activities. At the end of the day when you are ready to go to sleep, cast aside all stress and difficulties. Chant Om and meditate on this Divine symbol of God, allowing Om to be your only thought. If you live your life with that spirit, even your last sleep—death—will be peacefully ushered in with the sublime remembrance of God.

TAT

TAT means That—*Brahman*—the transcendental Divine Self, beyond time and space. With TAT you are reminding yourself of the Vedantic truth that *Brahman* alone is. The entire world is *Brahman*. *Brahman* alone is Truth. The world is illusory. When mind dwells on that transcendental nature of God, it spontaneously develops detachment from the relative world as well as from your individualized, egoistic personality—all of which are unreal from the highest point of view.

Normally you think of yourself as “this”—your ego. The word TAT reminds you, “Not this, That.” What you think yourself to be is incorrect. In reality, in

essence, you are That—*Brahman*. As the Upanishads assert, “*Tat Twam Asi*”—“Thou art That!”

Reflection on the meaning of TAT allows your mind to develop *anasakti* (detachment) towards the fruits of your karmas (actions) in life. A fruit of karma means a change in circumstances. As you evolve, you begin to realize that all fruits of karmas are transient. No matter how things may change or improve, you understand that the ultimate fulfillment of joy is not found in the world of time and space. Deep down your innermost identity does not depend on any development in the world. You are the Absolute Self.

SAT

SAT implies developing a selfless attitude while performing your actions. The activities that you perform should be your *swadharma*—actions that are in harmony with your spiritual evolution, actions that bring you closer to God. SAT reminds you about the mystic absurdity of holding onto anything for your ego and urges you to perform actions in the spirit of karma yoga (selfless service), in order to bring about purity of heart (*chitta shuddhi*).

When you perform actions, you should expect to succeed, and exert your effort with that idea in mind. But do not allow yourself to be so attached to the fruit of success that you feel helplessly dependent on it. Have “*agraha*” (insistence on success) but not “*asakti*” (attachment).

When your primary goal in performing actions is internal fulfillment and purity of heart, success will generally manifest automatically. But if you crave the fruit and ignore your heart center, then you are moving towards the realm of ignorance, where you will encounter one trouble after another.

Further, actions should be based upon *yajna* (benefit for creation), *dana* (benefit for humanity) and *tapa* (discipline of body and mind). From a broad point of view, *yajna* refers to acts that benefit the entire creation. This includes preserving earth's ecology and promoting balance and harmony in the kingdoms of animals, plants and minerals.

Dana refers to acts of charity and goodness towards other human beings. Benefitting others has many implications—sharing your knowledge, sharing your experiences, lifting the spirit of another person, helping

another person to better understand himself. Of course, it also includes giving material help when it is needed.

Tapa refers to disciplining your own personality—your body, mind, senses and speech. The more you discipline yourself, the greater is your ability to share your knowledge and talents, as well as to promote harmony and peace around you. Disciplining yourself promotes a strong and magnetic personality, a personality that can become an instrument for helping others. If you are not strengthening and integrating your personality day by day, then although you may have multiple resources, you cannot be truly charitable towards the upliftment of humanity.

Performing your duties while remembering God amplifies your experience of peace. However, when God is not remembered and actions are based on the ego, the idea “I am the body” intensifies, and this creates painful karmas for your future. On the other hand, sublimate your ego to champion Divine expansion within yourself. SAT also reminds you to promote *satwic* or sublime feelings within your heart. You are then creating a basis for terminating all pain and sorrow in the future. When your feelings are not constricted by negative sentiments such as anger, hate and jealousy,

they exude the fragrance of Divine virtues and bloom like a lotus enjoying the rays of the morning sun.

OM TAT SAT

A guide for Heart, Head, and Hand

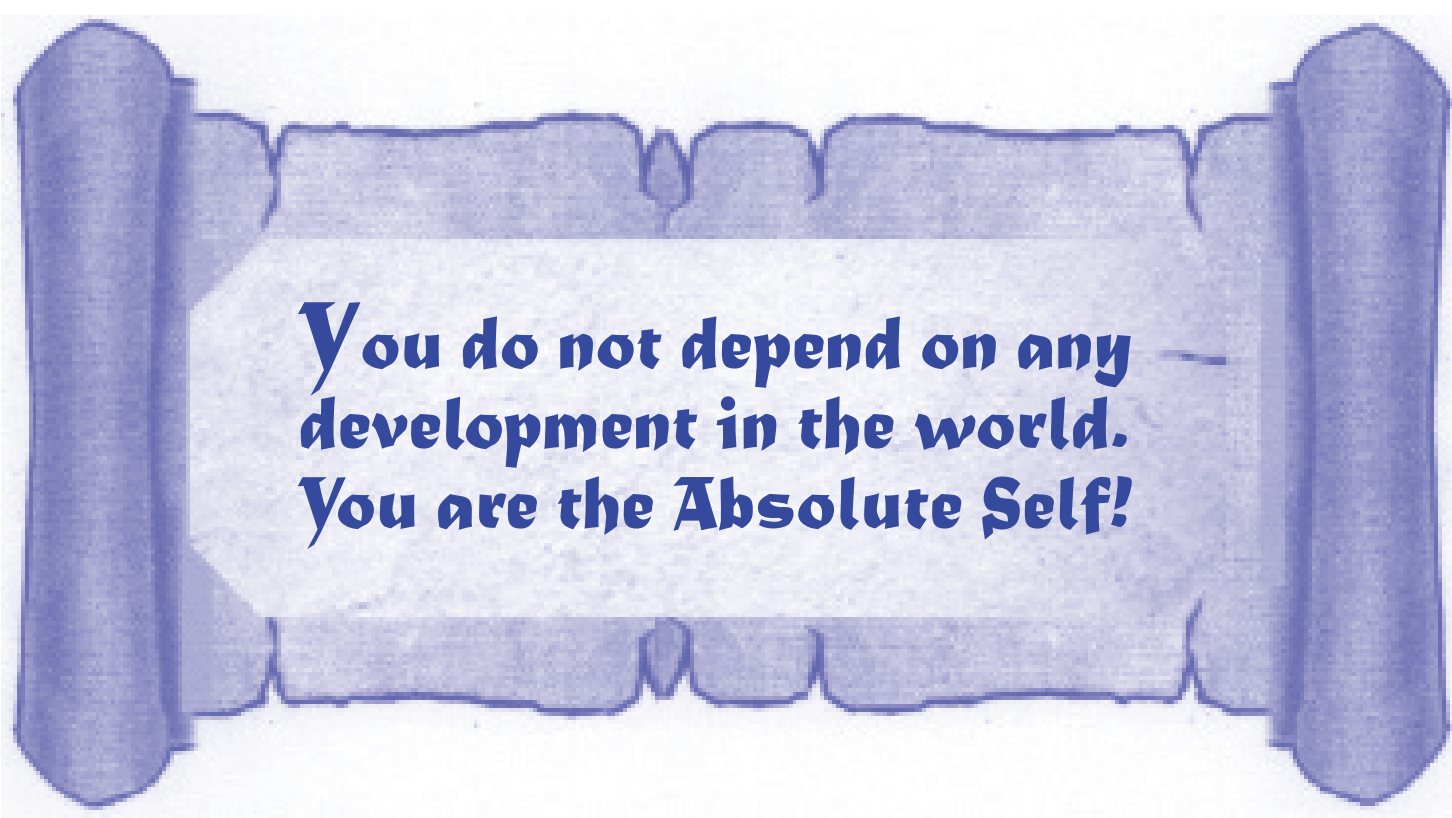
In conclusion, the mystic formula—Om Tat Sat—should become the spiritual basis of your personality and the mantric undercurrent of all your activities in daily life. The sacred words of the formula should inspire you to:

Constantly remember God within your heart and within others’ hearts (OM),

Develop increasing detachment with the help of an intellect that truly grasps the transcendental nature of your inner Spirit (TAT),

Allow your ego to melt and your energy to flow spontaneously in performance of actions beneficial to others (SAT).

OM nurtures your “heart,” TAT nurtures your “head” and SAT nurtures your “hands.” May all three aspects of your personality resonate with this ancient mantra until the goal of life—Self-realization—is attained.



**You do not depend on any
development in the world.
You are the Absolute Self!**