The One... Tad Ekam
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FROM THE VEDAS

The One... Tad Ekam

Pannikar translates Vedic verses on the One Supreme Being

In a period where information has reached its saturation point, when it is practically impossible to know and understand all the details of the constantly proliferating sciences and discoveries, when people begin to question the efficacy and even the possibility of a way out, of a comprehensive world view, the Upanishadic Ã±way inÃ® of sitting quietly and trying to reach the roots of all things appears again in all its effectiveness. We cannot know and experience everything, yet we have a universal urge to do so. If there is any answer to such a quest it can come only from an attitude like that of the Upanishads we find in the Vedas.

All beings they unite and separate. They support the mighty Gods, but do not tremble. The One is lord over all things, fixed or moving, walking or flying--this whole multiform creation. From afar I perceive the Ancient One, the Father of mighty

power, the Generator, our connection, singing the praise of whom the Gods, stationed on their own broad pathway, go about their business.

Rig Veda 3.54.8-9

The One, without moving, supports six burdens. The cows have gone to him, the highest Instance.

Rig Veda 3.56.2ab

Only One is the Fire, enkindled in numerous ways; only One is the Sun, pervading this whole universe; only One is the Dawn, illuminating all things. In very truth, the One has become the whole world!

Rig Veda 8.58.2

Assemble all, with prayer to the Lord of heaven, He is the One, the all-pervading, the guest of men. He, the ancient of days, abides in the present. Him, the One, the many follow on their path.

Atharva Veda 7.21

By their words the inspired sages impart manifold forms to that Bird which is the One.

Rig Veda 10.114.5ab

As fire which is one, on entering creation, conforms its own form to the form of each being, so also the One, the atman within all beings, assumes all forms, yet exists outside. As the wind, which is one, on entering creation, conforms its own form to the form of each being, so also the One, the atman within all beings, assumes all forms, yet exists outside. As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not touched by external blemishes seen by the eye, so the One, the atman within all beings, is not touched by the sufferings of the world. He remains apart. The One, the Controller, the atman within all beings, the One who makes his own form manifold--the wise who perceive him established in themselves attain--and no

others--everlasting joy.

Krishna Yajur Veda, Katha Upanishad 5.1-14

Power entered within him. He is the One, the Onefold, the only One. In him all the Gods become unified. Fame and glory, fruitfulness and fertility, Brahman splendor, food and nourishment, belong to him who knows this God as One only. Not second or third or fourth is he called--he who knows this God as One only. Not fifth or sixth or seventh is he called--he who knows this God as One only. Not eighth or ninth or tenth is he called--he who knows this God as One only. He watches over all existent beings, those that breathe and those that breathe not. Power entered within him. He is the One, the Onefold, the only One. In him all the Gods become unified.

Atharva Veda 13.4.12-21

That, verily, is Agni. The Sun is that, the Wind is that, the Moon is that. That is the Light, that is Brahman, that is the Waters, Prajapati is He. All moments originated from the Person like lightning. No one has comprehended Him, above, across, or in the center. There is no image of Him whose name is Great Glory.

Yajur Veda 32.1-3

Eye cannot see Him, nor words reveal Him; by the senses, austerity, or worksHe is not known. When the mind is cleansed by the grace of wisdom, He is seen by contemplation--the One without parts.

Atharva Veda, Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.8

He who lives in us as our guide, who is one, and yet appears in many forms, in whom the hundred lights of heaven are one, in whom the Vedas are one, in whom the priests are one--He is the spiritual atman within the person.

Krishna Yajur Veda, Taittiriya Upanishad 3.2.1

Raimundo Panikkar, 82, holds doctorates in science, philosophy and theology. His anthology of verses, The Vedic Experience, excerpted above, is the result of ten years spent in Banaras translating with the help of Vedic scholars.

The Vedas are the divinely revealed and most revered scriptures, sruti, of Hinduism, likened to the Torah (1,200 bce), Bible New Testament (100 ce), Koran (630 ce) or Zend Avesta (600 bce). Four in number, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva, the Vedas include over 100,000 verses. Oldest portions may date back as far as 6,000 BCE.