

# SING THE NAME OF GOD

A Compilation of Articles from The Mystic's Vision

by Swami Abhayananda

Dedicated to the Public Domain 2-25-2020

(last revised, 9-22-20)

## *Haripatha: Sing Hari*

In addition to his major metaphysical works, *Jnaneshvari* and *Amritanubhav*, Jnaneshvar (1271-1296) composed a number of devotional songs as well. In them, he sings of his inner experiences and of his love of God and his Guru, Nivriddhi. One such collection of songs is Haripatha, or "Sing Hari," in which he utilizes a traditional poetic form to extol the practice of the repetition of the name of Hari, an endearing name for God.<sup>1</sup> These songs, presumed to have been written during Jnaneshvar's years at Pandharpur, are sung to various melodies in Maharashtra to this day, in their original Marathi.

Many of the great saints of Maharashtra—Nivriddhi, Jnaneshvar, Tukaram, Namadev, and Eknath—wrote such Haripathas, declaring the chanting or repeating of the name of God to be the simplest, easiest, and surest way to the continual recollection of God's presence. This practice is regarded, throughout India, as the means to the focusing of the mind in contemplation of God, and as the natural expression of the love of God. Jnaneshvar advocates it as well; he says, 'Chant within the name of Hari; your heart will melt with love. And that love will open the door to the true awareness — that you and your beloved God are one.'

## *Haripatha*

### I.

One who ascends, even for a moment,  
To the threshold of God  
Will assuredly attain the four stages of Liberation.  
Therefore, chant the name of Hari.  
Yes, chant the name of Hari!  
The value of chanting His name is immeasurable.  
So, let your tongue eagerly chant the name of Hari.

The authors of the Vedas and the various scriptures  
Have all proclaimed this path with their arms upraised.

Jnanadev says: chant Hari's name.  
 The Lord will then become your slave,  
 Just as Krishna became the servant of the Pandavas,  
 As Vyasa, the poet, has so excellently told.

## II.

In all the four Vedas, Hari's praise is sung.  
 The six systems of philosophy, and the eighteen Puranas  
 Also sing Hari's praise.  
 Just as we churn curds for the purpose of getting butter,  
 Likewise, we churn the Vedas, philosophies, and the Puranas  
 For the purpose of tasting the sweet butter of Hari.  
 Hari is the goal; the rest is mere tales.

Hari is equally in everyone —  
 He's as much in all our souls as He is in the gods.  
 He's the inner Self of all.  
 Therefore, don't weary your mind with strange practices.  
 Jnanadev says: You will experience heaven  
 Just by chanting Hari's name.  
 Everywhere you look, you'll see only Him.

## III.

This insubstantial universe, this web  
 Of interacting qualities (*gunas*),  
 Is but His superficial form.  
 His essence is the formless 'I'  
 Which is always the same,  
 Unaffected by the interplay of the qualities.  
 If you discriminate in this way, you will understand  
 That the continual remembrance of Hari  
 Is the supreme goal to be attained.  
 Hari is both the Formless and the changing forms.  
 Remember Him, lest your mind wander idly away.

He, Himself, has no form.  
 He cannot be seen.  
 He cannot be bound to a single form.  
 He's the Source of all forms,  
 Both the animate and the inanimate.

Jnanadev says: Rama-Krishna, the Lord,  
 Has pervaded my mind.  
 He is all I meditate on.  
 Blessed is this birth!  
 I seem to be reaping infinite fruits  
 From the good deeds I performed in the past.

#### IV.

To speak of performing strenuous deeds  
 When all one's strength is spent  
 Is nothing but foolish talk.  
 To speak of one's love for God  
 When there is no feeling in the heart  
 Is also worthless and vain.  
 Only when true feeling arises  
 Can love for God bear fruit.  
 Will the Lord appear to you at your sudden call?  
 No. You must yearn for Him in your heart!

It's sad to see that you weary yourself  
 With so many worthless tasks.  
 Day after day, you anxiously fret  
 For your petty worldly affairs.  
 My dear, why do you never think  
 To turn to Hari with love?  
 Jnanadev says: It's enough  
 If only you chant His name.  
 At once your fetters will fall.

#### V.

You may perform the rites of sacrifice,  
 Or follow the eight-fold path of yoga,  
 But neither will bring you to peace.  
 These are only tiresome activities of the mind,  
 And usually bring only pride.  
 Without true, heart-felt love for God,  
 You'll not attain knowledge of Him.  
 How is it possible to experience union with Him  
 Without the Guru's grace?  
 Without the discipline of *sadhana*,

He cannot be attained.

In order to receive, one must know how to give.  
 Give your love, and He'll shower you with grace.  
 Is there anyone who would be intimate with you  
 And teach you your highest good,  
 If you felt no love for him?  
 Jnanadev says: This is my judgment based on experience.  
 Living in the world is easy in the company of the saints.

## VI.

When one receives the grace of a saint,  
 His ego-consciousness dissolves.  
 Eventually, even God-consciousness will dissolve.  
 If you light a piece of camphor,  
 It produces a bright flame.  
 But after a while, both camphor and flame disappear.  
 In the same way, God-consciousness  
 Supplants ego-consciousness at first,  
 But eventually,  
 Even the awareness 'I am He' dissolves.

One who comes under the influence of a saint  
 Has arrived at the gates of Liberation.  
 He will attain all glory.  
 Jnanadev says: I delight in the company of the saints!  
 It is due to their grace that I see Hari everywhere —  
 In the forest, in the crowds, and also in myself.

## VII.

Those who have no love in their hearts for God  
 Accumulate a mountain of sin  
 Which surrounds them like a diamond-hard shell.  
 He who has no love for God  
 Is totally deprived of love.  
 He who never even thinks of God  
 Is undoubtedly an unfortunate wretch.

How can those who are ceaselessly gossiping  
 Ever attain the vision of God?

Jnanadev says: That which lives  
 As the Self of everyone and everything is my only treasure.  
 That is Hari.  
 It is He alone I adore.

### VIII.

If our minds incline us to the company of the saints,  
 Then we'll acquire the knowledge of God.  
 Let your tongue be ever chanting His name.  
 Let your hunger be ever for Him.  
 Even Shiva, who is absorbed in His own Self,  
 Loves to hear the repetition of God's name.  
 Those who single-mindedly chant His name  
 Will realize Him and be freed from duality.  
 They'll revel forever in the awareness of Unity.  
 Those lovers of God who drink the nectar of His name  
 Enjoy the same sweetness that yogis enjoy  
 When their Kundalini Shakti awakes.

Love for the Name arose early in Prahlada;  
 Uddhava won discipleship to Krishna  
 Through his love of the Name.  
 Jnanadev says: The way of Hari's name is so easy.  
 Yet, see how rare it is!  
 Few indeed are those who know  
 The infinite power of His name.

### IX.

He has no knowledge  
 Whose mind does not dwell on Hari,  
 And whose tongue speaks of everything but Hari.  
 He is a miserable person  
 Who takes birth as a human,  
 And yet fails to seek the awareness of Unity.  
 How could that person find rest in the name of Hari?

Unless the Guru sweeps away the sense of duality,  
 How could he who has no knowledge  
 Relish the sweetness of chanting God's name?  
 Jnanadev says: Repetition of the Lord's name

Is really a meditation on Him.  
 By chanting Hari's name,  
 All illusion is dissolved.

### **X.**

You may take a bath  
 In the confluence of the three holy rivers.  
 You may visit all the sacred pilgrimage places.  
 But if your mind does not always rest  
 In the name of the Lord,  
 All your efforts are in vain.  
 He is very foolish who turns away  
 From remembrance of God's name.  
 When the soul is drowning in misery,  
 Who else but God will rush to its aid?

Valmiki, who is certainly worthy of respect,  
 Has proclaimed the value of chanting God's name.  
 "The Name," he says, is the one trustworthy means  
 For salvation in all the three worlds."  
 Jnanadev says: Please chant Hari's name.  
 Even your children will be saved.

### **XI.**

It is enough to chant "Hari" aloud.  
 In an instant, all your sins will be burnt.  
 When a pile of grass is set ablaze,  
 The grass is transformed into fire.  
 Likewise, one who chants Hari's name  
 Becomes transformed into Him.

The power of chanting the name of Hari  
 Cannot be fathomed or gauged.  
 It has the power to drive away  
 All manner of devils and ghosts.

Jnanadev says: All-powerful is my Hari.  
 Even the Upanishads  
 Have failed to express His greatness.

**XII.**

Taking baths in various holy rivers,  
 Observance of vows, and other such outward trappings,  
 Cannot grant fulfillment,  
 If in your heart no faith or love exists.  
 My dears, it seems that you're needlessly engaged  
 In the performance of unfruitful deeds!  
 It is only by the path of love  
 That God may be approached.  
 There is no other way.

Give love to God,  
 And He will be as tangible to you  
 As a fruit in the palm of your hand.

All other means of attaining God  
 Are like the attempt to pick up liquid mercury  
 That's been spilled out upon the ground.  
 Jnanadev says: I have been entrusted  
 By my Guru, Nivritti,  
 With the possession of the formless God.

**XIII.**

Only when you have the continual experience of God  
 As equally existing in everyone and everything  
 Will you be truly established in *samadhi*.  
 This experience is unavailable to one  
 Who is addicted to duality.  
 Only when the mind  
 Becomes illumined by the experience of *samadhi*  
 Will it attain perfect understanding.  
 There is no higher attainment for the mind than this.

When one attains to God,  
 All miraculous powers are also attained.  
 But of what use are these powers by themselves  
 Without the bliss of *samadhi*?  
 In such a case, they are only obstacles  
 To one's progress on the path.  
 Jnanadev says: I have become supremely fulfilled

In the continual remembrance of Hari.

#### **XIV.**

The Goddess of destruction will not even glance at you  
 If you chant fervently and unceasingly the name of Hari.  
 The chanting of His name  
 Is equal to a lifetime of austerities.  
 All your sins will fly away.

Even Shiva chants the mantra, “Hari, Hari, Hari!”  
 Whoever chants it will attain Liberation.  
 Jnanadev says: I am always chanting  
 The name of the Lord.  
 That is how I have realized my Self,  
 The place of supreme inner peace.

#### **XV.**

Let the chanting of Hari’s name  
 Be your sole determination.  
 Throw away even the mention of duality.  
 But, alas, such mastery  
 In the awareness of Unity is rare.  
 First you must practice the vision of equality.  
 Only Hari must be seen everywhere.  
 In order to do this,  
 The mind and senses must be restrained.

When all these essential requirements are fulfilled,  
 One merges in Hari,  
 And becomes Hari, Himself.  
 Just as one solitary Sun  
 Manifests in countless rays of light,  
 One solitary supreme Being  
 Manifests Himself in all these countless forms.  
 Jnanadev says: My mind is fixed  
 On one unfailing practice:  
 The chanting of Hari’s name.  
 Thus, I’ve become free of all future rebirths.



**XVI.**

It is an easy thing to chant the name of God,  
 Yet they are few who chant His name  
 With full awareness of its power.  
 Whoever has attained the experience of *samadhi*  
 By chanting His name  
 Has acquired all the miraculous powers as well.

If you unflinchingly commit yourself  
 To chanting His name,  
 Then miraculous powers, intellectual brilliance,  
 And a disposition toward righteousness,  
 All will be yours.  
 Thus, will you cross the ocean of illusion.  
 Jnanadev says: The Lord's name has become  
 Engraved on my heart.  
 Because of this,  
 I see Hari, my Self, everywhere.

**XVII.**

By chanting the name of Hari and singing His praise,  
 Even one's body becomes holy.  
 By practicing the austerity of chanting His name,  
 One makes a home for himself in heaven  
 That will endure for ages and ages.

By chanting His name,  
 Even one's parents, brothers, and other loved ones  
 Will become united with God.  
 Jnanadev says: The secret of His name's infinite power  
 Was laid in my hands by my Guru, Nivriddhi.

**XVIII.**

One who reads the scriptures devotedly,  
 Who repeats Hari's name,  
 And keeps company with no one but Hari,  
 Attains heaven.  
 He earns the merit of bathing in all the holy rivers.  
 But pitiable is he who chooses  
 To indulge his mind in its wandering ways.

He alone is blessed and fortunate  
 Who continues to chant the name of God.  
 Jnanadev says: I love to taste the name of Hari.  
 Every moment I am meditating on Him.

### **XIX.**

The proclamation and command of the Vedas  
 And all the holy scriptures  
 Is “Repeat the name of Hari,  
 The supreme Lord, who is the Source of all.”  
 Without the remembrance of Hari,  
 All other practices, such as rituals and austerities,  
 Are only futile exertions.  
 Those who have dedicated themselves  
 To remembrance of His name  
 Have found unending peace and contentment.  
 They have become enveloped in its sweetness  
 Like a bee who, in its search for honey,  
 Becomes enveloped in the closed petals of a flower.

Jnanadev says: Hari’s name is my mantra;  
 It is also my formidable weapon.  
 Out of fear of this weapon,  
 The god of death keeps his distance  
 From me and from my family as well.

### **XX.**

The repetition of God’s name  
 Is the only treasure desired by His lovers.  
 By its power, all their sins are destroyed.  
 The chanting of His name is equal  
 To lifetimes of performing austerities.  
 It’s the easiest pathway to Liberation.

For one who chants the name of God,  
 Neither yoga nor the ritual of *yajna* is needed.  
 The injunctions of duty do not pertain to him.  
 He transcends all illusion.  
 Jnanadev says: No other practices,

Or rituals, or rules of conduct are necessary  
For one who chants the name of Hari with love.

**XXI.**

There are no limitations of place or time  
For the chanting of Hari's name.  
Hari's name will save your family  
On both your mother's and your father's side.  
His name will wash away every blemish and stain.  
Hari is the savior  
Of all who have fallen into ignorance.

Who can think of a word adequate to describe  
The good fortune of one whose tongue is restless  
To chant the name of Hari,  
The Source of all life?

Jnanadev says: My chant of Hari's name  
Is always going on.  
I feel that I have thereby made  
An easy path to heaven for my ancestors as well.

**XXII.**

There are very few who make the chanting of His name  
An unfailing daily practice.  
Yet, it is in this way that one may gain  
The company of Hari, Lakshmi's Lord.  
Chant "Narayana Hari, Narayana Hari,"  
And all material happiness  
As well as the four stages of Liberation  
Will dance attendance at your door.

If there is no room in your life for Hari,  
That life is truly a hell.  
Whoever lives such a life will surely  
Suffer hell after death as well.  
Jnanadev says: When I asked my Guru  
The value of the name of God,  
Nivritti told me,  
"It is greater than that of the sky above."

**XXIII.**

Some philosophers say that  
 The universe is made of seven basic principles.  
 Others say the number is five, or three, or ten.  
 When Hari is realized, He reveals that,  
 No matter what the number,  
 All those principles emanate from Him alone.  
 But let us not be concerned with philosopher's games.  
 The name of God is not like that.  
 It's the easiest pathway to approach to the Lord.  
 It involves no strain or pain.

Some speak of *ajapa-japa*  
 As the practice that should be used.  
 This practice leads to a reversal of prana's flow.  
 To pursue this practice,  
 One needs much stamina and strength of will.  
 But the chanting of God's name with love  
 Is free of all such difficulties.  
 Jnanadev says: I'm convinced that a man lives in vain  
 If he does not resort to the Name.  
 That's why I continue to extol  
 The chanting of the Name.

**XXIV.**

The practice of *japa*, austerity, and rituals  
 Is futile without true purity of heart.  
 One must have the heart-felt conviction  
 That God lives in every form.  
 Please hold onto that conviction,  
 And throw away your doubts!  
 Chant aloud, "Rama-Krishna, Rama-Krishna,"  
 As loudly as you can.

Do not become conscious of your position and your wealth,  
 Your family lineage, or your virtuous acts.  
 All these considerations produce only pride.  
 Hasten only to sing Hari's name with great love.  
 Jnanadev says: Hari pervades my mind and my meditation.

I feel every moment that I'm living in Him.

**XXV.**

To Hari, the learned and unlearned are the same.  
 By repeating His name,  
 Eternal freedom is won.  
 The Goddess of destruction will never even enter  
 That home where "Narayana Hari" is sung.

How can we know His greatness  
 When even the Vedas could not explain Him?  
 Jnanadev says: This vast universe  
 Has turned into heaven for me.  
 Such luscious fruit has come into my hands  
 Only because I cling to His name.

**XXVI.**

O my mind, cherish remembrance of Hari's name,  
 And Hari will shower His mercy on you.  
 It is no great difficult chore  
 To chant the name of the Lord.  
 Therefore, please chant His name  
 With a voice that is sweet with love.

There is nothing greater or more uplifting  
 Than the chanting of His name;  
 So why should you wander on difficult paths,  
 Forsaking the sweet path of His name?  
 Jnanadev says: I keep silence without,  
 And keep turning the rosary of His name within.  
 Thus, my *japa* is always going on.

**XVII.**

There is no pleasure as sweet as His name.  
 All the scriptures declare  
 That it's the secret to be attained.  
 So, do not spend even a moment  
 Without enjoying the nectar of His name.  
 This world is only a superficial play.  
 It is only an imagination, after all.

Without the remembrance of Hari,  
It's only a futile round of births and deaths.

By remembering His name,  
All your sins will go up in flames.  
Therefore, commit your mind to chanting Hari's name.  
Take the attitude of adherence to Truth,  
And break the spell of illusion.  
Do not allow the senses to bar your vision of the Self.  
Have faith in the power of chanting His name.

Be kind, serene and compassionate toward all.  
In this way, you'll become the welcome guest of the Lord.  
Jnanadev says: The chanting of God's name  
Is the means to *samadhi*; this, I swear, is true.  
This wisdom was bestowed upon me  
By Nivrittinath, my Guru.

#### **NOTES:**

1. This 'Haripatha' by Jnaneshvar is from Swami Abhayananda, *Jnaneshvar: The Life & Works of The Celebrated 13th Century Indian Mystic-Poet*, Atma Books, Olympia, Wash., 1989; pp. 221-234. If you would like to own this book, you may freely download it in PDF format from the "Downloads" page on my website at [www.themysticsvision.com](http://www.themysticsvision.com).

\* \* \*

#### **The Object of Our Love**

Everyone knows that the form is transient and impermanent, while the essence is unchanging and everlasting. We see this clearly as we note the inevitable changes in our own bodies and note, as well, the constancy of our inner divinity as we age. And yet, it seems that in our popular culture we tend to value the individual over the universal essence of which the individual is but a form. We proudly announce our love for this or that particular person, though the truth is that who we are in love with is God, manifest in the form of a human being. It is only God's beauty that attracts us and fills us with love and longing. If we attribute that lovability to the individual person, we are soon disillusioned and disappointed, as the beauty

and perfection of which we have become enamored sadly turns out to be marred by human imperfection and is subject to old age, death and dissolution. Therefore, we must acknowledge that it is God's eternal beauty that we have fallen in love with, for He alone is capable of inspiring our love and He alone is worthy of being the object of our love.

In our popular culture, we sing false and ludicrous love songs to this or that individual person; yet, how quickly the song of 'I love you' turns into a song of 'goodbye'! Every individual person and every person's heart is subject to infidelity and change, while God, whose beauty and goodness inspires our love, remains always perfect and unchanged. So, we must not be fooled by appearances; the love that God's beauty has inspired in us cannot be satisfied with the possession of any of His transient human forms. For it is only in His eternal Being, unformed and unmanifest, that His beauty and His perfection remain forever, and it is only in His unformed and eternal Being that He can be eternally possessed and loved. Then, let us continually sing aloud His praise, for He is in fact the beloved, the lover, and the love as well. Filling all, and beguiling all, He remains the one constant source and object of love in every heart.

### **When You Sing The Name of God In Your Heart**

When you sing the name of God in your heart,  
 When you sing the name of God in your heart,  
 The curtains of your soul then part  
 And the truth comes streaming in.

When you sing the name of God in your heart,  
 A new awareness dawns,  
 And the voice that called is silenced  
 In the silence that is Him.

Who calls? Whose awareness sings of God?  
 Who stands behind the calling and the song?  
 The very breath that sings His name  
 Is He whose name is called.

The caller recognizes suddenly from whence the song arose  
 And turns his attention to the "I" from whom all "I"s derive.  
 The consciousness that seeks His embrace

Is conscious of itself, above the breathing, beneath the song,  
And finds, amazed, the One it sought.

How delicate the thread that holds this knowledge close!  
Awareness held aloft upon its very Self!  
No call, no song; but only flawless clarity of mind  
Above the clamor of the song and breath,  
Above the sense of self.

This eternal breathless sky of Mind  
Is the Source of breath and song.  
The seeker and the One who's sought  
Reveal that they are one.

## **Remembering God**

What does it mean to remember God? It means to awaken in yourself the awareness of His presence within you and all around you. It is to transform the sense of selfhood into the sense of the universal Spirit, and to transform the vision of "others" into the vision of God's multi-formed beauty.

He is the Source of all that exists, and He is your inner Guide and Teacher. He is the majesty and greatness of your own soul. Remember Him with every breath, and thus keep alive the flame of His unconditional Love in your heart.

Say to Him: "Father, do Thou guide my life and my every thought, for I have no other joy but Thee. Thou art the strength of my soul, my only confidant and source of guidance. When I have forgotten Thee, I have forgotten my very heart's blood, and I have left aside the very fiber and backbone of my life.

"What I live for, Thou art. My only desire, Thou art. The sole fulfillment of all my dreams, the treasure for which my soul yearns, Thou art. O God of my soul, blood of my heart, let me not forget Thee for a single moment! O God of gods, grant me this boon that I may ever remember Thee who art my soul's support and strength, and let me love Thee and praise Thee ever in my heart."

\* \* \*



### ***Japa: The Remembrance of God***

The mental repetition of the name of God is the highest form of prayer; it is prayer reduced to its essence. It is concentrated aspiration and love-longing minus all the self-serving guile of petitionary prayer.

A mind focused on a *mantra*, a single word-symbol of God, is a mind reduced to one-pointedness. It is just such fervent single-mindedness, which is capable of supplanting the normally scattered flow of worldly thoughts, leaving in its stead a calm and focused awareness, empty of thought, full of peace and bliss. And because it is so simple and so effective a method of emptying the mind of its contents, and directing the flow of awareness inward upon itself, it is one which has been highly recommended by numerous sages and saints from all variety of religious traditions over the centuries.

There is, of course, no end to the number of names that may be given to God, who is the absolute Existence in which we live. And each one has the power to focus the mind upon its conscious Source. All that is needed is a sweet fondness for that particular name and a true and sincere love for Him whom that name signifies. There are those who have extolled the name of “*Rama*,” or “*Krishna*,” or “*Karim*,” or “*Adonai*”; all these names are holy, for it is the same One who is signified by each.

In the following Song in praise of the practice of reciting the Name of God, the name used is “*Hari*.” As a familiar appellation for Vishnu, or His manifestation, Krishna, it refers to God as the adorable Beloved, “the stealer of hearts.” Here in this Song of twenty-five verses, Eknath Maharaj extols the practice of singing the name of Hari and elaborates upon its benefits. However, before the Song itself, I’d like to tell you just a little about its author, Eknath Maharaj:

Eknath lived from 1548 to 1609 C.E. When he was still a young boy, he heard a voice speaking to him in his meditation, which said, “Go to Devgiri Fort!” Now, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, this Fort had been a glorious castle, the center of a great kingdom, but now it was merely ruins. And when Eknath went there and searched among the ruins, he found living there the man who was to become his Guru, whose name was Janardan Swami. Under the tutelage of Janardan, Eknath became a great yogi, and later wrote many wonderful works.

One day, during his adult years, while he was meditating, Eknath saw in his meditation a vision of Jnaneshvar, a great saint who had lived three centuries

before him in the same region. Jnaneshvar, who had entered his tomb alive at the age of twenty-five, was seen in this vision sitting in his tomb at Alandi, where a root from a nearby tree had encircled his neck and was choking off the prana in his still-living body.

Acting on this meditative vision, Eknath dug into the tomb and found Jnaneshvar just as he had envisualized him. He loosened the root and removed it from around the saint's throat. And while he was in the tomb, he took the manuscript of Jnaneshvar's famous book, *Jnaneshvari*, which had been buried with him, and brought the book back to the light of day. In Eknath's time, the words of this great book had been corrupted by various transcribers, and so Eknath brought forth the authentic *Jnaneshvari* to serve as the authority. This is a true story.

Eknath went on to write some wonderful books on the true realization of God; this little book of Songs written by him is called *Haripatha*, or "Sing The Name Of God." Others before him, including Jnaneshvar himself, had written such a collection of verses with the same title; here, then is Eknath's version of the oft-repeated call to remember God by singing His name continually within the heart:

***Haripatha* (“Sing The Name Of God”)  
by Eknath Maharaj**

1. In the eyes of Hari’s servant, God is everywhere.  
We can see Him by our love and faith.  
To put an end to all distress,  
Sing Hari’s name, and be released from birth and death.

Rebirth results from clinging to the world.  
The devotees of Hari cling to Him alone.  
Dissolved in Hari, they lose the sense of “I.”  
Where only one remains, both “I” and “Thou” are gone.

Says Eknath, “Remember Hari; meditate on Him!  
Always be aware of Hari; sing aloud His name.”

2. Sing Hari’s name, or else be still.  
Don’t chatter and gossip—give up your pride.  
Find joy in surrender of “I” and “Thou.”  
Your joy will then bring peace to all,  
And lead the lost to the righteous path.  
He who walks God’s path with love and faith  
Will not be caught in the snare of the world.  
Says Eknath, “I have unmistakably seen the Lord.  
He’s everywhere before my eyes.  
I see Him when I’m in a crowd as well as when I’m alone.”

5. That mouth is a rat-hole, which does not sing the name.  
That tongue is a viper that lives therein.  
That unscented speech is the shriek of a witch.  
That life is accursed. In hell suffering awaits.  
Not wife, or wealth, or children, but only Hari, can save you.

In your final journey, you’ll travel alone.  
Therefore, while living, seek the company of the saints.  
Through such company, you’ll at last be united with God.

Says Eknath, “These two syllables, *Ha* and *ri*,  
Have saved millions; it is this I continually sing.”

6. Blessed is that mother whose child loves the name.  
 Such love is the fruit of good deeds in past lives.  
 In a life without God, what good fruit can there be?  
 The whole essence of Vedanta is in *Ha* and *ri*.  
 This song of God's name is sufficient to man.  
 Not yoga, nor *yajna* (ritual), nor *puja* (worship) does he need.

The cream of *sadhana* is the singing of the name.  
 Says Eknath, "All is accomplished by singing Hari!  
 He who sings the name is ever free, a knower of Brahman.  
 Therefore, sing Hari! Hari!"

7. Your human body is the reward of good deeds,  
 But unless it's used to increase love for God,  
 Alas, O man, it will totter to doom.  
 O fool, learn the secret of extinguishing all karma,  
 And thus hasten the dawn of your unending good.

Your fervent desire to sing the Divine name  
 Is the reward you have earned from your countless past lives.  
 Whether a king or a beggar, a prince or a thief,  
 He who does not fill his mouth with the name [of God] fills it with dust.  
 Says Eknath, "Sing Hari; Liberation will come!"

8. One who sips Divine nectar by singing the name  
 Will view Liberation as a very small thing.  
 That home where the sound of the Divine name is heard  
 Is the city of Kashi, the holiest ground.  
 Even Varanasi must crumble one day,  
 But the name of God will forever resound.

Thousands of creatures come and go in a wink.  
 The Lord's devotees enjoy watching this play.  
 Says Eknath, "So many have lived and died in this world,  
 But he alone is blessed who resorts to the name."

11. To learn the true knowledge, to unlearn what is false,  
 The true Teacher's guidance and grace is required.  
 The lovers of God's form then attain to the Formless.  
 Do not doubt this, O man; your tongue may fall out.

When an actor, disguised as a beggar, receives alms,  
 It's the actor who receives what the beggar is given.  
 In the same way, the love which is offered to the form  
 Is received by the Formless, the God-beyond-form.  
 Says Eknath, "I've perceived that both the form and the Formless  
 Are the play of the Lord."

12. Can one who's seen Hari and enthroned Him within  
 Ever be touched by sorrow or pain?  
 Though that lover may have had an unsavory past,  
 By singing the Divine name, his life is made pure.

One who sings every day the holy name of God,  
 Brings blessings upon his parents and family as well.  
 But those whose minds are reeking of lust, anger and greed  
 Cannot reap the full fruit of singing the name.  
 Says Eknath, "The singing of the name is my secret:  
 I've revealed it to you; now please sing Hari's name!"

13. Sing Hari when you give, and Hari when you get.  
 Sing Hari when you're happy, and Hari when you play.  
 Sing Hari when you're chanting, while you eat, and  
 while you work.  
 Sing Hari when you're by yourself; sing Hari in a crowd.  
 Sing loudly Hari's name when you find you're in a brawl.  
 When your life is giving out, sing Hari's name aloud.  
 Sing Hari when you're pounding grain,  
 When you sit, and when you rise.  
 Says Eknath, "In the forest, or in the marketplace—  
 Wherever you may be, keep singing Hari's name!"

14. The universe is made of three, five, twenty-five,  
 Or even thirty-six Principles, they say.  
 How many branches, I don't know; but Hari is the root!  
 "Jiva (the soul) is only Shiva's Maya," so they say.  
 These *jivas* are only wavelets on the ocean of Hari.  
 Oyster-shell appears as silver, a rope seems to be a snake.  
 Yet the "silver" and the "snake" are illusions.  
 Both the subject and the object are Hari.

Says Eknath, “The crown of wisdom is bestowed  
On the one who sings loudly the name of Hari!”

15. By the power of his imagination, a man creates goals.  
Then, seeking to attain them, he forgets his Lord.  
He may attain those goals on which his heart dwells,  
Yet attaining those goals can never bring peace.  
Yearn for a goal that’s nearby: Hari’s feet.  
Then Hari will grant you whatever you wish.  
Until the knot of imagination is untied,  
Hari will stay away; birth and death will go on.  
Says Eknath, “I’ve found it—the secret of Hari:  
Even my imagination has become one with Him.”

16. Can an impotent man appreciate the charms of a girl?  
Can a woman who is barren appreciate what childbirth is like?  
A lamp to a blind man,  
Or fragrant sandal-paste to a mule,  
Or milk to a serpent.  
All these have no use.  
What good is a lecture to an angry, faithless man?  
It’s just a tiring exertion of speech!  
The company of the mean is not good; it is harmful.  
Says Eknath, “Shun the wicked and cherish the good.”

19. Take refuge in the name; it will lead you to Hari.  
Why resort to the needless activities of the world?  
Take refuge in That which will free you from agony  
At the hands of Yama in the kingdom of death—  
In That which will free you from the pain of rebirth.  
The name of Hari is the essence of all *sadhanas*,  
The seed of all *mantras*, the means to the Self.  
The singing of Hari is worth thousands of *yajnas* (rituals);  
Says Eknath, “Sing Hari, live as Hari Himself—  
You’ll become one with Hari; it’s certain, beyond doubt!”

20. The sun and the moon in their circular course  
Are ignorant of Hari. Hence their unceasing whirl.  
The thousand-headed serpent [in the Hindu story of Creation]  
Joyously attempted to sing His praises,

But became exhausted in the end.  
 The Vedas, in hopes of describing Him, failed.  
 How, then, shall you know Him with no effort at all?  
 Accumulate merit, always sing the name.  
 Serve the true Teacher faithfully; then you'll realize Him.  
 Says Eknath, "Even fools become wise by singing His name.  
 So, I urge you all to sing aloud Hari's name."

21. Both the world outside and the world within  
 Will delude you, unless you see Hari in them.  
 Yajnavalkya, Shuka, Datta, and Kapila  
 Attained knowledge of Hari and remained united with Him.  
 Dear ones, come close: cling fast to Hari's name.  
 His name is the boat to cross over this sea.  
 There's no need for fear! By resorting to the name,  
 Countless saints have drowned in bliss, and thus were fulfilled.  
 Says Eknath, "I've opened a market that's unique:  
 My entire stock I offer you, and everything is free!"

22. Take refuge in Hari's name; sing it with faith.  
 Then Hari, Himself, will keep you in His care.  
 He'll take up the burden of your worldly life.  
 Don't languish and worry; our Lord knows your plight.  
 He protects every soul; He'll protect you as well.  
 Did you think only you would be unloved and forgot?  
 Accept this life in which you're now placed.  
 Witness the play your past karma has made.  
 Says Eknath, "It's only by Shri Hari's grace  
 That the store of past karma is finally erased."

23. When a poor girl marries a rich man's son,  
 All of her poverty vanishes at once.  
 The same is true of a devotee  
 On whom smiles Shri Hari's grace.  
 Then God and His devotee are no longer apart,  
 But one, as they were at the start—  
 Like the lump of camphor on the *arati* tray,  
 Consumed in, and united with, the fire.  
 Says Eknath, "See even your attachments as Hari.  
 Then you'll live as Hari; you'll live as the Self."

24. Sing Hari as you talk, and as you move about.  
 Sing Hari while you play as a child.  
 Sing the name of Hari; all your wishes will come true.  
 You'll hold Brahman, like a fruit, in your palm.  
 Sing Hari when you're standing, and when you're sitting down.  
 Sing Hari as you witness the game Existence plays.  
 Sing Hari when you're in your chair,  
 and when you're in your bed.  
 With every single bite of food, keep singing Hari's name.  
 Sing Hari at the end of day, and Hari in the morning.  
 Sing Hari when you march to war, and Hari when alone.  
 Sing Hari when you're in trouble; cling to Him with love.  
 Sing Hari when you're wandering, or when you're doing chores.  
 Sing Hari when you're giving, and Hari when you get.  
 Sing Hari as you move along, with every single step.  
 Sing Hari in your homeland, and when you're far away.  
 Sing Hari in the day and night, and always be awake.  
 Sing Hari when alone, and in the crowded streets.  
 Sing Hari when your last breath leaves—  
 Sing Hari and be free.  
 Performing duties, taking pleasure, or while you're earning wealth,  
 Sing Hari's name, and all desires will surely be fulfilled.  
 Sing Hari for your own delight, and for the good of all.  
 Sing Hari to reach Brahman, even when you feel no love.  
 O sing the name of Hari: Liberation will be assured.  
 "Hari is my only treasure!" Remember this, and sing.  
 Sing "Hari! Hari!" joyfully; He's the origin of all bliss.  
 Says Eknath, "Please sing Hari, whether in a crowd or in the solitary woods.  
 Within you and without—no matter when you are,  
 There's no one else but Hari! He's sporting everywhere!"  
 This song of fourteen stanzas is, indeed, the *Gayatri*.<sup>1</sup>  
 Those who sing it save themselves, and their ancestors as well.

25. Yogis try to see the Self through exertions and through strain.  
 But that Self, whom I call Hari, I see without their pain.  
 Hari, whom my ears have heard, has also filled my eyes.  
 Everywhere I see Hari, only Hari, everywhere.  
 The celebrated paths to God: *bhakti*, *karma*, and *jnan*,  
 Are outlined in this song of Hari; it's the essence of all paths.



Whoever sings this song with love for God  
 Will be blessed with Hari's grace.  
 Says Eknath, "My Hari-song has reached its end.  
 So please sing Hari! Hari! I urge you all once again."

### **Meditation**

In this storm-tossed ocean of the mind, your fragile boat is carried up and down, from side to side. You have but one anchor in this chaotic storm: the name of Hari. Fix that anchor deep in the bedrock of this ocean's floor, and cling tenaciously to the anchor-line; above the sound, above the frightful threat, hear only Hari! Hari! Hari! Hari! Then watch the turbulent waves subside, and see the dawning Sun, triumphant, rise reflected on a tranquil sea.

In times of raging storm, His name is your unfailing anchor; in the calm beauty of the day, the name is the Sun that fills your day with light and illumines the path ahead. At night, when navigating darkened seas, that same name will be the pole-star leading you home.

Hari! Hari! No other creature, place, or thing exists but Thee. Then, let me name all that appears before my outer or my inner eye as Thee, seeing Thee alone; for there's nothing else but Thee!

O what marvelous beauty, what delicious joy, what wondrous vision of content, arises, like perfume, from the nectar of the name!

O friends let me not be the only one who enjoys such good fortune as this! This nectar is incomparably sweet, and it costs nothing. It's free! Just taste it: in the secret chamber of your mind, say "Hari!" Again, call "Hari!" Soon you'll be a Hari-junky, addicted to His name, like me!

\*   \*   \*