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Sriranga Sadgurave Namaha

THE WORD 'GOD' AS AN ACRONYM FOR 'BRAHMAN'

*Dr. M.G. Prasad
7 Fernwood Road
Maplewood, N.J. 07040*

This brief article is intended to present the thoughts on 'Brahman' as provided by the Rshis of ancient India (Bharata). Incidentally the word 'GOD' can be seen as an acronym for the principle and mechanism as denoted by 'Brahman'.

In the third chapter of 'Taittiriyaopaniṣad', when Bhrugu Rshi asks his father Varuna Rshi, about 'Brahman', then Varuna Rshi replies as

'Yato va imani bhutani jayante:
Yena jatani jeevanti:
Yat pratyabhisamvishanti
Tat vijignasasva, Tat Brahmeti,

'From which beings are born (Generated)
From which beings are maintained (Operated)
That to which beings proceeds and dissolved (Dissolution)
Yearn to know well the Brahman, thus defined'

The 'Brahman' can be said as a principle or mechanism with which beings are governed during their creation, maintenance and their merger into the principle.

Incidentally, the letters G, O, and D (of the word GOD) can be said to represent Generation, Operation and Dissolution respectively. The term Generation reflects the action of creation as the phase of a process. The term Operation reflects a combination of activities and maintenance. The term Dissolution reflects the action of merger, (end of a process) possibly leading again to generation. This concept of cyclical nature of a process is of major importance in the literature of Indian philosophy which is based on Upanishads, Bhagavadgita and Brahmasutras among others.

The definition of Brahman is identically (as above) given in both Bhagavadgita (chap. 10, Verse 20) and Brahmasutra (chap. 1, Sutra 2). It is noted that the origin of the word 'GOD' may be traced to the Aryan word 'Ghut' which would mean to 'protect', 'to preserve' (reference: Dictionary of Word Origins by J. T. Shirley, Philosophical library, New York). The word 'GOD' also refers to Supreme Being among other meanings as given in Webster's dictionary. The traditional wish 'good-bye' can be traced as a short form of the saying 'God be with you'. Thus, it would be appropriate to remember a vedic saying, given as:

'Aaa no bhadraha kratavo yantu vishwataha'

'Let noble thoughts come to us from every side'