

|| Om bhurbhuvah swah tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat ||
(May Almighty illuminate our intellect and inspire us towards the righteous path)
-Rigveda 3/62/10, Saaved 1462; Yajurveda 3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/3



Volume – 2

Issue – 3

May – June, 2004

Date of Publication :

01.05. 2004

FOUNDER - PATRONS
Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya
Mata Bhagwati Devi Sharma

CHIEF EDITOR
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Annual Subscription:

India – Rs. 60/-

Abroad – Rs. 600/-

Gāyatrī Chetanā

Man's eternal quest since times immemorial has been: 'What am I', 'Where from have I come here', and 'What is the purpose of life'? Experiences of the seers, sages, savants and prophets of all ages and cultures stand testimony to the truth that we are Spiritual Beings going through a human experience so that we rediscover our true identity – a spark of the Effulgent Sun of Spirit – the underlying basic Reality behind the flux and foam of ever-changing phenomenon.

In *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* we call this dimension of Supreme Consciousness as *Prakhar Pragyā – Gāyatrī Chetanā*. We worship it as Supreme Divine Mother – *Gāyatrī Mātā* – whose immortal children – we are. Once we rise to this awareness of true identity that the human and spiritual aspects of our lives are fused together, we become fit instruments for the works of the Divine Mother. In this *Sādhanā* two things are needed: The Grace of Divine Mother and on our part an inner state made up of faith, sincerity and surrender that is genuine and entire.

On the auspicious occasion of *Gāyatrī Jayantī*, let us dear *Parijans*, engage ourselves in sincere, single-pointed *Gāyatrī Sādhanā*, as demonstrated and taught by *Poojya Gurudev* and *Vandaniya Mataji* and rediscover our divine identity, as immortal spiritual beings, children of the Supreme Divine Mother.

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From Chief Editor's Desk :

OUR TRIPLE PLEDGE ON GAYATRI JAYANTI PARVA

Notwithstanding the apparently dark, depressing, discouraging and daunting human scene, the seer – sages endowed with clear, penetrating vision have prophesied in unambiguous terms that behind the dark thick curtain and covering of appearances, all-seeing, all-conquering cosmic consciousness is unobtrusively but surely preparing human consciousness, through the chosen few as catalytic agents, to transcend its limitations and transform itself into a fourth dimensional Life of Unity, Love, Light and Bliss. Our *Gurudev* has been the latest in the line of such seers and we the *Gayatri Pariwar Parijans* belong to this worldwide vanguard of the legions of Light. When the history of this transforming upward evolutionary leap is written, there is no doubt, posterity will remember with deep gratitude the saga of the selfless sacrifices of these Peaceful Warriors of Light.

The clarion call given by our *Gurudev*, the World Teacher is that the only way to transform the world is first to transform ourselves individually through the triple effort of *Sadhana* (self-discipline), *Upasana* (self-surrender to the Divine) and *Aaradhana* (selfless service of the needy, the lowliest and the lost) – by practicing what we preach. Looking back, we can be fairly satisfied with the progress we, as a Mission, have made so far in moving towards the realization and concretization of our Master's Vision and Will. However, far more intensive and concerted efforts are required to be made by *Parijans* individually and by the Gayatri Pariwar collectively, to hasten the accomplishment of the sublime goal – in one word, *BHAGIRATH PRAYATNA* – is the need of the hour.

The legend says that king Bhagirath, through his unparalleled *Tapasya*, brought down from the Heavens the Holy *Ganga* to Earth for purification and liberation of the disembodied souls of his dear ones. Since then the *Ganga* has been a boon and a blessing for countless number of human beings here and hereafter. It is not a mere coincidence that *Ganga Avataran Parva* (*Ganga Dussehra*) and *Gayatri Jayanti* (the sacred day of revelation of Mother *Gayatri*) are celebrated on the same day. Another divinely - designed coincidence is that our *Gurudev* also cast off his physical sheath on this very sacred day – *Gayatri Jayanti –Ganga dussehra* – on June 2, 1990. This year this Twin - *Parva* falls on May 29. The *Yug Nirman Yojana* initiated by *Poojya Gurudev* is, in its aims and objects (as applied to the human soul and psyche), like the sanctifying and purifying flow of Holy *Ganga*.

As part of our intensive, collective and concerted *Sadhana*, let us pledge on this Twin –*Parva* to take up for concentrated implementation three projects:

1. Purification of the Holy Ganga:

Through our own follies we have converted the Holy *Ganga* from Uttarkashi – Joshimath through Rishikesh -Hardwar – Prayag – Kashi right up to Gangasagar into a stinking, swelling and swarming gutter by dumping into it the dead bodies of so-called *sadhus*, poisonous effluents of factories and even sewage water and wastes of the cities

lying on its banks. Let us resolve to lead a relentless campaign against these suicidal and unholy practices and force the powers - that – be to take time- bound remedial measures to restore the holy river to its original pristine purity.

2. Spread of Gurudev's Message and Vision:

On the sacred *Mahasamadhi* Day of our Divine Teacher let us pledge ourselves to still more intensive efforts towards the dissemination of his inspiring, illuminating and uplifting message amongst the masses by substantially augmenting the circulation of *AKHAND JYOTI* – the mouth piece of the Mission in its original version in Hindi (with six lakh subscribers); its editions in various Indian regional languages (another six lakh subscribers); and its recently started bi-monthly English edition. We must resolutely endeavor to increase the readership of this unique multilingual magazine of integral spirituality so that more and more awakened aspirants for integrative spiritual vision become aware of our epoch – transforming campaign of *Yug Nirman Yojana*. In addition, we must also intensify our efforts towards further promoting the readership of *Gurudev's* multi-volume inspiring and illuminating literature.

3. Disseminate information amongst the elites as well as the masses about the aims, objects and achievements of the two path-breaking institutions established for actualizing the vision and will of Gurudev:

(i) *The Brahmavarchas Shodh Sansthan* : Established in 1979, it has been engaged in integrative in-depth research, through scientifically verifiable methods, in the realms of soul, mind and body, aiming at the synthesis of science and spirituality. As a part of its Silver Jubilee Celebrations, special programs have been planned to be carried out at different places in India between coming *Guru Poornima Parva* (02-07-04) and *Vasant Parva* (13-02-05). Let us motivate maximum number of enlightened persons from all walks of life to participate in these programs.

(ii) *Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya* : Formally founded and consecrated on 23-05-1999; it started functioning, after its formal incorporation as an autonomous university approved by UGC, in June 2002. We are holding its first convocation in July-August 2004.

Printed material giving detailed information about both these institutions will be made available at all centers / branches of the Mission for wide spread dissemination.

Lastly I fervently appeal to all *parijans* to collectively celebrate this Twin-Sacred *Parva* on May 29/30 at their nearest centers/branches in a befitting, solemn and worshipful manner and take the above-mentioned three-fold pledge.

With heartfelt prayers and wishes.

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KNOWING THE DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF TIME

Time is supposed to be absolute. It cannot be broken up in multiple components. It is a continuous flow. Separating the gigantic waves of an ocean is never possible for human power. Then, how could it be thought of for infinite flow of time? It is only for facilitating our realization of time that it has been specified in three different phases (intervals) with respect to the relative occurrence of the events around us. What has just happened or is happening is said as existing in the present. What has happened before becomes the past and what is yet to happen or is still unexpressed in the folds of time is termed as the future.

If we think a little beyond or above this common practice of ‘grasping’ the flow of time, we would know that existence or occurrence of events has been happening since time immeasurable and will continue to happen till infinity. There is an eternal flow of time. Because of the subliminal nature of time it is difficult to realize its flow. Expressing it via the flow of events and experiences is easier and is found useful in our day-to-day dealings. What has happened in the past was at sometime the present; what is currently happening is present; and what is going to happen will also sooner or later become the present. This way, everything exists in the present somewhere. Because we observe it from one point and through the limited periphery of our experience, it becomes something of the past, present or future for us. If this point of observation were

also flowing (with the speed of time), there would be no relevance of the past and future, everything will be in the present. Or, we can understand it this way also: if suppose, our vision expands so much that nothing is beyond its reach then everything will be happening in front of our eyes! Everything will be present. Thus, there will be an infinite present only, with no instances of the past or the future. However, this ‘infinite present’ is also defined in the sense of the flow of events. If we look at it independently, there will be nothing except the sublime flow of time in infinity. But it would be impossible for us to realize it in that case. So it would be better for us to talk in terms of the usual concept of the three segments of time – the past, present and the future.

As this ‘division’ between the three segments is relative or imaginary, a natural question arises – whether and how it would be possible to traverse from one phase into the other? Can an ordinary mind enter the past or the future? Science answers this in the affirmative. It confirms multiple dimensions of time. If by chance or by making some specific efforts, one reaches the higher realms of time in connection with a thing, person or place, then he would automatically know all the past as well as the future of that particular thing, person or place. This way he would enter the past and future tense. How this would happen can be explained as follows. As most of us would normally conceptualise, the past, present and

future segments of time exit in a linear sequence. In scientific terms, this would happen only in single dimension of time. In higher dimensions, there would be different realizations. There would also be a higher dimension in which the past, present and future will be overlapping or existing simultaneously. It is believed that these higher dimensions could be reached gradually from the well known three dimensions of space – namely, length, width and depth (or height). As these dimensions could be reached starting from the zero dimension, viz., a point, it should be possible to reach the fourth dimension from the three dimensions and so on....

Suppose a point is moving straight in the space then its path would make a line, which will have a single dimension – say length. If another straight line is also drawn similarly, or is there in the space then these two straight lines together would form a two dimensional plane. If such a plane is moved freely in the space, it would erect a three dimensional structure. In the reverse way, if we go on taking the cross sections of a three dimensional object, we will be left with a two dimensional plane. Cutting this plane gradually will lead to a straight line and so on.... At the end of this reduction process, we would be left with a dimensionless point. This example illustrates that what we perceived as a three-dimensional thing is actually a cross section of some four dimensional thing. Similarly, specific movement of a three dimensional object or structure would give rise to a four dimensional entity. The latter kind of movement is difficult to be visualized as we are used to think of movements in the three dimensional space only and therefore feel that whatever structure the movement of a

three dimensional object constitutes will only be three dimensional – may be bigger in size. In this context, the physicists define time-duration as the fourth dimension.

In other words, every three-dimensional thing is a projection of a four dimensional thing. Its three dimensions in space are visible or measurable as length, width and depth but the fourth dimension is invisible. In terms of the aforesaid example, if a three-dimensional object is moved in the direction of time, it would construct a four-dimensional entity.

The concept of ‘motion in the time-direction’ should be understood clearly. It should be noted that it is a direction different from that of the three spatial dimensions – e.g. upwards (downward) or lateral. One might doubt whether there could be other kinds of direction or motion? Yes, several such dimensions have been conceptualised and analysed mathematically. The possibility of more, yet unknown, directions of motion have been postulated in the modern science; for example, the speed, which is inherent in every animate and inanimate on the earth because of the velocity (of the pivotal motion) of the latter. What appears stationary to us here is in fact moving continuously with the velocity of the earth. But this is an invisible motion due to relativity. We may now understand that the three-dimensional appearance of any thing in this world is a cross-section (of a four-dimensional structure) along the fourth dimension – that of the ‘time duration’, which is invariably associated with the latent motion of everything on the earth.

Like the invisible motion induced by the pivotal motion of the earth there also are other kinds of invisible motions – e.g. the orbital motion of the earth around the Sun,

that of the Sun around some other centre, the motion of the entire solar system, of the galaxies and so on.... As all these motions exist simultaneously but are different, so one can say that these are motions in different directions constituting the higher dimensions. Thus, there exist uncountable dimensions although we do not perceive them and cannot experience them. Note also that these dimensions are conceptualised with respect to some motion, which, in any direction, is realizable only in terms of time-interval. Thus, time-duration is the basic reference for these higher dimensions. These are therefore termed as different dimensions of time.

Another scientific quest arises here — ‘duration’ is only one attribute of time. What are its other aspects? The experts of this field describe several possibilities; these include – visible/invisible existence, change, repetition, etc. Of the immeasurable features of time, only duration is within the grasp of human-perception.

The appearance or occurrence of an event or an object etc is nothing but the notice or acquisition of its existence in our knowledge. It existed before as well; but in some invisible dimension or beyond our knowledge. On the contrary, when something ends or disappears from our domain of perception, it becomes non-existent for us. But that again is only a relative term. What happens between this visible and invisible existence is beyond our knowledge but it indeed exists in the continuous flow of time. For example, the intermediate state between life and death is subliminal but its existence in time is the only possibility upon which the occurrence of birth and death would rely. Similarly, the process of change can be perceived only with respect to the span of time.

The changes experienced by us in the visible world are in fact an outcome, compounded effect or ensemble of uncountable invisible changes. For example, look at sunrise-sunset, seasonal variations, growth of a plant or a child. These are the events, which are the outcomes of variations in the tiniest existence (continuous flow) of time, but we cannot see the intermediate steps. The intermediate steps of changes exist in the four-dimensional domain (of the three dimensional physical space and time-duration as the fourth dimension). Time and its higher dimensions are therefore of utmost importance for absolute knowledge.

If one can grasp or enter into the higher dimensions of time, nothing would be unknown or impossible for him. There is no relative segmentation of time for him; every thing exists, every event happens for him in the present. Knowledge of the past or the future is as natural for him as that of something before our eyes. Precognition and clairvoyance for him would be like normal vision for most of us. But when and how could it be possible to reach the higher dimensions of time? It is said to be realizable only by spiritually evolved sublime consciousness.

In our dormant, segmented, fractured and deluded state of consciousness, we can't even know the physical world around us. Intellectual refinement and scientific trenchancy may be of great help in deciphering the visible world or manifestation of Nature. But here, too, the results are seldom conclusive; there is always a place or need for reinvestigation. Then how could one know the higher dimensions of time by abstract mathematical formulae or scientific analysis alone? This would only remain an excellent mental exercise far away

from the experience of reality. The natural realization of the sublime realms could be achieved only through *pragyā* – pure, spiritually enlightened intelligence and sublime consciousness. Attempting to decipher people’s past or forecasting their future without the arousal of such higher and deeper levels of consciousness is nothing but a crafty play of words, a trick of brain washing or an entertaining magic show.

Advent or arousal of spirituality begins with gradual transmutation of intellect and mental faculties into *ṛatambharā pragyā* – that which exists in *ṛata*, the ultimate realm of divine consciousness. It is here that the

human mind, the inner self, realizes absolute knowledge. The science of *sāadhanā* holds the key to this sublime transmutation. The attainments of spiritual awakening are supernatural, inexplicable. These could only be experienced through the deeper depths of the inner self. Whatever be our intellectual level and activities today, proceeding along the path of *sāadhanā* will certainly elevate us towards higher and brighter realms of knowledge and experience. Eventually, it might enable us to peep into the higher dimensions of time and beyond into Eternity.

* * *

Once Lord Krishna was questioned by a friend why he called Yudhishtira as “Dharmraj”? Sri Krishna narrated an incident: During the Mahabharat war Yudhishtira used to go in disguise somewhere in the evenings after the day’s battle was over. Pandavas thought of finding the reason. When secretly followed, it was found that Yudhishtira was nursing and saving the dying and wounded soldiers of both the armies without discrimination. He was asked by his brother why, instead of taking rest, he was wasting his time in serving his enemies and that too in disguise. Dharmraj said, “ There are soldiers of Kaurvas as well as Pandavas amongst the wounded. Both are humans. If I had come to serve the Kaurvas wounded soldiers without disguise they would not have shared their pain with me nor would have allowed me to serve them. Probably wounded of the Pandavas army also would not have accepted my service. I would have thus missed this privilege of humane service.” Cultivating the spirit of selfless-service is true religion and whosoever resolutely adheres to such basic standards of conduct is called a “Dharmraj” – concluded Sri Krishna.

THOUGHTS – SOURCE OF IMMENSE POWER

Sitting near the fire warms and protects us even in harsh winter. Fire spreads the heat in its surrounding area. That way, our body also has heat in it. The heat inside could be experienced in the expired breath. The clothes we wear also become warm by the heat of the body. Wearing woolen clothes in winter protects the emission of body's heat outside and thus helps keeping the body at natural temperature. The body-system also possesses many other kinds of energies in it. But most prominent, intense and radiant of the powers a human being is endowed with is the thought-power.

The thought-power and willpower are generated in the mind. Numerous mind-boggling examples of the immensity and trenchancy of these mental powers are available in the history of mankind. Paragons are born by awakening of these hidden sources of inner force. Many demonstrations of willpower are recorded in the different parts of the world; some are even entered in the Guinness Book of World Records; these often appear miraculous to the masses. While most of us might have experienced willpower as the strength of determination, only few would know that thought-power and willpower are manifestations of the same subliminal force of the higher mind and are implicitly the same. Mental concentration is an effect as well as a generator of this power. Every impulse of mind is also a reflection of this power; enlightened and deep thoughts are more evolved expressions of this power, which is also regarded by the modern researchers of metaphysics and parapsychology as a

source for deciphering the extrasensory psychic force.

The American Society for Psychic Power, the Parapsychology Lab of the Duke University and several other research institutes of global repute have collected and reviewed many authentic examples that signify the importance of the willpower or thought-power. The amazing demonstrations of willpower of Red Cereus were widely published in the newspapers and magazines of the USA in the early 20th century. Using the focused force of his thought-power, Isaac Borne of Spain had helped in locating the ships submerged and lost in the gigantic depths of the Pacific Ocean about three-four decades back when no other expertise or technological advancement could provide any clue. All the supramental talents of this kind including clairvoyance, precognition, telepathy, etc, are expressions of the thought-power or the willpower. At times this power is expressed as a supernatural potential of the physical body, but its origin is always rooted in the subtle cores of the mental body.

Most of us define and experience thoughts as the language of the conscious mind and regard thought-power as the impact of thoughts on intellectual perceptions and activities. Its inherent equivalence with willpower may therefore be difficult for us to visualize. We should note here that every vibration, every perception and expression of the mind (the conscious mind, the intellect, as well as the inner mind) is a thought. This is how emotion is regarded as a higher order thought and willpower as a sublime expression of the thought-power. Willpower

could also be generated by intense control and focussing of elevated thought-power. Once awakened, the willpower or force of intrinsic inspiration can help activating the otherwise dormant folds of mind and thus induce intellectual and emotional evolution. History of mankind has witnessed its miraculous impact in transmuting dullards into eminent scholars, preposterous fools into distinguished talents.

How and from where does this power emerge? It is hidden in the subliminal cores of our minds. Human mind is indeed a majestic bequest of the Supreme Creator. However advanced it may be, no super-computer of the world could ever equal the Nature's masterpiece – the human brain. Even the perceivable faculties of mind reflected in wisdom, intellectual and creative talents, memory, eloquence, etc are unlimited; then what to say about its preeminent inner powers? It is a pity that we, the intelligent beings, use only a negligible fraction of this infinite treasure hidden in our own self. Moreover, whatever fraction of this power we are able to awaken, we spend (or rather waste!) it only in earning and gathering comforts for the physical body and in worthless ego-driven activities and passions.

As the Sun spreads the heat and light in all directions, our mind also continuously emits energy radiations in the cosmos through the medium of thoughts, emotions, desires, determinations, inspirations etc. Every human being thus inadvertently influences – even without saying or visibly doing anything – the ambience and hence many others around him via these mental radiations.

Throwing a stone in a pond produces wavy currents of water on the surface. Our thoughts also do something similar in the cosmic pool of ether. The waves generated

by thoughts are more subliminal and of higher order than the light or sound waves. These waves do not cease and continue to traverse in the cosmic expansion with superimposition on compatible thought waves. Because of their circular trajectory, they eventually return back to their origin with more intense effect (due to superimposition), while also influencing on their way the like-minded people, or those whose minds are receptive to those kinds of thought waves. They have negative or positive impact, depending upon the quality of the thought, upon the person from whose mind the thought had emerged and also upon others in their domain of influence.

'Thoughts' of animals are nothing but mental instincts pertaining to the sustenance of their gross body; these instincts are usually weak and short-lived and are educed as per the Nature's arrangement for their food, growth, reproduction, self-defense, etc. But the force of human emotions, desires, thinking, mental sensitivity, convictions, faith, determination, etc is immeasurably powerful and profound. The nature and degree of this force varies among humans as per their intrinsic character and intensity of their thoughts. Most people today live an extrovert life generally revolving around sensual pleasures and satisfaction of ego in one form or the other. Therefore, their thought waves are also feeble and dispersed in general. It is the strength of the inner self and the concentration of radiant thoughts that generate intense and powerful thought waves.

What induces radiance and force in the thoughts? If the answer is to be crypt, it would be — the spiritual light and inner force of emotions pertaining to noble ideals. Only the elevated and enlightened emotions of this kind can inspire the flow of virtuous

and trenchant thoughts. The altruist sentiments, piety of character and eminence of endeavors of great souls generate corresponding thought waves and thus bestow enormously more benefits upon the world than the noted contributions of their visible deeds. Presence of such sentiments and mental purity in other (ordinary) people also contributes, though invisibly, in the refinement of the subtle world by combining with compatible thought waves in proportion to their strength and intensity. The same is true of the negative effects of the untoward or debased thoughts. The firm determination and extreme negative psychology of the demonic minds, dreaded criminals and terrorists etc make the impressions of their perverse thoughts, scandalous intellectual sharpness quite intense and dense. People with weaker mental makeup are often easily influenced by their thought waves. At times, the resonance of collective thought waves of similar kinds makes them powerful even if they are individually infirm; for example, this is what is happening with erotic thinking these days.

Accumulation of similar or compatible elements appears to be the law of Nature. This is what accounts for formation of seas and oceans. Individually the metal particles lie unnoticed in the soil. However, wherever they are gathered, their force of affinity compounds exponentially and leads to formation of huge repository of that particular substance. The gigantic mines of metals and minerals evince this fact. Similar is the case with superposing of sound waves etc. The cycle of their circular motion and recurrence with further superimposition of similar thought waves creates a subtle energy field in the etheric expansion that

widens and affects more and more people having even the slightest receptivity to those thoughts, with its larger and sharper reach. This is why the books we read, the ambience we live in most of the time, or the people we interact with, indirectly influence our thinking and tendencies. This is how the company of drunkards produces more drunkards, that of thieves makes others thieves and so on; this is how criminals form stout gangs. This is how the inspiring proximity of saints, great personalities, or sagacious thoughts enlightens and elevates many others.

What kinds of thought waves influence one and to what extent? This depends upon what his mind is prepared for and what are its own intrinsic inclinations and aspirations. Radio stations or satellite sites broadcast/transmit varieties of programs, but our radio or television sets receive only those for which they are set/tuned. Our minds are also like antennae or receiving stations for thought waves they are naturally tuned to or vigorously trained for. Good people with alert mind feel some kind of repulsion from cruel, cunning or debased people; whereas the magnetism of morally pure, elevated and kindhearted personalities often attracts them. Contrary is the case with people having mental vices, evil characters or perverse tendencies. All of the infinitely many kinds of thought waves floating in the subliminal layers of the cosmic expansion may touch every mental body at some point of time, but attract or influence only those that are sensitive or receptive to them or have compatible nature. Unstable (agile), dormant and weak minds do not have any firm tuning and are therefore easily influenced by any kind of thought waves that have strong force of attraction.

We often consider the actions of the body and its five senses as the cause of what makes good or bad *karma* (destiny). But the *shastras* (vedic scriptures) also in detail the effects of mentally committed *pāpa* (sins) and *punya* (noble, ethical deeds) in shaping our future destiny. As discussed above, our virtuous and evil thoughts indirectly make corresponding contributions in the subtle environment and hence on many others; so these invisible actions of our mind also become parts of our *karma*. The more and deeper the involvement of our mind and hence of the inner self in the thoughts, the more intense and lasting would be the impression of the associated *karma* in the script of our future destiny.

The social norms and governmental laws may constrain the conduct and visible deeds of a person. But everyone is totally free in the unlimited expanse of mental creations, imaginations, thoughts, feeling ... etc. This is why most of us don't care for the immense capabilities and impact of the hidden powers of mind and the inner self. The *shastric* concept (affirmation) of mental *pāpa* and *punya* should serve as a timely warning for us. The kinds of imaginations and thoughts one's mind is inclined to, or is often engrossed in, determine and influence his attitude, mental tendencies and hence his actions because of the compounding effect of the thought waves of coherent quality. Thought power is like fire or electricity, which should be used wisely and cautiously; little carelessness may cause havoc in the subtle world and eventually give rise to equally

hazardous consequences in the visible realms of life.

If used wisely and constructively, the thought power like the thermal, electrical or nuclear powers, could prove to be a boon for the individuals as well as for the society and the world. The treasure of this natural bequest grows with sagacious use. If instead of preserving, guarding and expanding it, we drain out this wealth haphazardly or let it be misused by evil instincts, we would be the culprits, the sinful destroyers of our present as well as the future lives. When we use our materialistic possessions and resources so intelligently, then why should not we do the same for the precious mental property? The currents of our thought waves subliminally create our worlds. Our thoughts inspire and direct our ascent or descent. What kind of thought waves our minds are sensitized to also depends upon the quality and depth of our own thoughts.

We should therefore be aware and alert about what we are thinking, imagining, aspiring for, or emotionally engrossed in. If untoward thoughts are allowed to occupy our mind and are let free to spread their roots, we are, unknowingly, inviting ill future for ourselves. It will therefore be better that we let only constructive, sane thoughts enter our minds. Cultivation of positive thinking, engrossed reading or listening and contemplation over elevated thoughts, and training the mind to invoke the corresponding thought waves are the keys to progressive and blissful present, a brighter future and sublime transmutation of the human self.

* * *

A noble person is humble like the poor in riches and prosperity and generous like the rich in adversity.

ON THE STRUCTURE AND EFFECTS OF MANTRAS

Our world is physically constituted by three basic energies *viz.* Sound, Light and Heat. According to the electromagnetic wave theory, the ever-expanding universe is described as a limitless ocean of energy waves. Discovery and utilization of some of these have given rise to inventions like radio, telephone, television, laser, X-rays, gamma-rays, etc. Enormous combinations or superimposition of compatible waves are supposed to give rise to the energy particles, various subtle particle-states and ultimately to the atomic and molecular forms of matter. The root cause of the existence of different physical forms/states of any kind of material – howsoever subtle or gross it might be – is the ‘collision or superimposition’ of some of these omnipresent, ever vibrating, energy waves.

The eternal forms of sound vibrations are synonymous with respect to their physical existence. This in other words corresponds to the *vaidik* concept of *shabda* (eternal sound/cosmic vibrations) as the origin and controller of everything that exists (in gross or subtle form) in this universe. The *vaidik* and *tantrik mantras* are meant to be specific configurations of syllables (sonic codes) that could generate specific energy-currents of *shabda*. In terms of its meaning in Sanskrit, the word “*mantra*” also implies – ‘a liberator of mind’. This indicates the psychological impact of chanting or *japa* of a *mantra*.

Implications of Ancient Theories:

As per the scriptural descriptions, often the vision of the syllables for subtle sounds (*Nada*) in the etheric ocean had been revealed to the *rishis* (Indian sages of the vedic times) through an afflatus or intuition in their inner selves or the *mantras* were just ‘heard’ by them in a state of trance. This is the reason why most of these *mantras* are known as – *shruti* (‘heard’) or as – ‘conveyed by the cosmic voice’.... These depictions also signify that *mantras* are compilations of sound-elements rather than linguistic structures.

In his book “The Garland of Letters” Sir John Woodroffe elucidates some of these aspects as – “The *vaidik varnas* (letters – sonic patterns - used in *mantras*) are eternal and represent in themselves and their variations all the possibilities of articulate speech in all languages. These *varnas* represent both the vowels and the consonants. The vowels are continuous sounds formed by varying the size of the mouth cavity. The consonants are particular interruptions of those sounds. They cannot be sounded without vowels; for this reason, the vowels are referred as *shaktis* (power streams) of the consonants. The *varnas* are classified according to the ‘natural sound’ of their pronunciation. The subject matter of *varnas* occupies an important place in the “*Tantra Shastra*” in which it is sought to give a practical application to every ancient doctrine

concerning *Shabda* or the *Mantra Shastra*". Sir Woodroffe further discusses these in detail in the light of foundational works on Sanskrit Grammar.

The scholarly works on these topics also refer to five different forms of natural modes of pronunciation or expression of letters or words. A combination of these together with the mention of the multiplicity of the phonemes associated with the *vaidik varnas*, indeed makes it interesting to investigate the science of mantras.

The 'elements' of ether are highly sensitive subtle 'particles', which can vibrate at a frequency up to 34×10^9 cps. At the absolute high frequencies these oscillatory particles constantly emit a unique light. The radiation of this light can travel with a velocity of 10^8 meters per second. The vibrations of the etheric elements never stop. They are supposed to stabilize at the outer layer of the earth's gravitational sphere and continue vibrating there at constant ultra high frequencies. They attract the weaker waves of similar frequencies and get attracted by more powerful ones of the same range of frequencies. In either case, the superimposition of such compatible vibrations gives rise to an extremely powerful field of attraction. The 'influencing power' of this force of attraction is also bestowed upon those whose 'thought waves' match with these supersonic waves.

Japa or chanting of the *mantras* is only a means for creating specific vibrations of the omnipresent subtle power of *shabda*. When we awaken somebody by pushing him by our hand, the hand simply plays the role of a tool; it is not a part of the process of awakening. Similarly, the specific configuration of syllables and the sound (including the sublime sound) produced by

the *japa* of a *mantra* is only a means for activating specific field of the cosmic energy of *shabda*. Which *mantra* is suitable for awakening what kind of subliminal energy center – is described in the *viniyoga* (structural classification) of that *mantra*. All of the *Vaidika* and the *Tantrika Mantras* have distinct *viniyogas*.

The *viniyoga* of each *mantra* has five components – (i) *Rishi*, (ii) *Chanda*, (iii) *Devata*, (iv) *Bija* and (v) *Tatva*. The first component contains the names of the *rishi(s)* or the sages – seers, who had discovered, compiled and/or completely mastered that particular *mantra* and who therefore are regarded authorities on all the knowledge associated with the spiritual practice of that *mantra*. Such spiritual masters are the ideal *gurus* (guides) for the disciples who endeavor a *sadhana* of that *mantra*. Recalling this first component of the – *viniyoga* of a *mantra* also implies that revered devotion for those *rishis* and adept guidance of a noble living guru is essential for practising (the *japa* of) that *mantra*.

The *chanda* indicates the rhythmic composition for the enunciation or chanting of the *mantra*. As described earlier, each *mantra* can be practised with different combinations of *swaras* (musical accents) and *gati* (speed). *Manasika*, *Vachika*, *Upanshu*, *Udatta-Anudatta*, *Swarita*...., etc are some of the many modes of *japa* that are also described in the *chanda* for a *mantra*. The specific pattern of sonic waveforms generated by the *mantra-japa* depends upon the syllables of the *mantra* and the type of *chanda* used. The assignment of appropriate *chanda* for the spiritual *sadhana* processes of practising a *mantra* is called – *yati*. The selection of a *yati* and

hence of a *chanda* for a given *mantra* is decided with reference to the purpose of the *sadhana*, the configuration of the *mantra*-syllables and the mental and spiritual level of the *sadhaka*.

The third component, the *devata* represents the specific cosmic field (– of the subliminal energy of *shabda*) in the limitless expression of the supreme consciousness – that is aimed to be realized by the *japa-sadhana* of the associated *mantra*. We all know that out of the different programmes being broadcast via the radio waves, a radio set can receive only the ones whose frequencies it is tuned for. Similarly, from the different streams of the conscious power of *shabda* present in the universe, a *mantra* can be used to link the individual consciousness with the *devata* of that *mantra*.

As the practice of the *mantra* involves devoted meditation upon the *devata* along with the specified (according to the *chanda*) rhythmic enunciation or chanting, the *rishis* had assigned visible forms to different *devatas* – representing different manifestations and subliminal expressions of the One, Eternal, Consciousness.... Some of the *rishis* also recommended worshipping the idols – of these forms of the *devata* – in sacred environment before commencing the *japa* of the *mantras*.

The *bija* represents the origin of the *mantra*. It may be understood as a group of those syllables that contain, in compact coded form, the gist (*tatva*) of the *mantra* and thereby imply the latent existence of the specific power of *shabda* in that *mantra*. The *japa* of the *bija* generates the ‘energy’ essential for initiating the activation of the *shakti* (sonic power) of the associated *mantra*.

Possibilities of Scientific Studies:

It may not be feasible to verify or analyze the role of the subtle components like ‘*devata*’ in the structure of a *mantra* by scientific methods. Nevertheless, scientific investigations – along the lines of that in the field of musical ragas – could begin with the other components, namely the *bija* and *tatva* and the *chanda*, as these directly pertain respectively to the symbolic patterns, sonic configurations and phonological characteristics.

It is a well known scientific principle that continuous movement of any kind ultimately results in a circular motion. The orbits and shapes of all the planets in the universe are almost round (or elliptical closed contours) due to this simple principle. It is by the same principle that continuous (non-stop) *japa* of a *mantra* creates a circular domain. The ‘*Taila Dharavat Sutra*’ describes that – ‘If oil is dropped at constant speed for some time continuously, its flow forms a steady stream. Similarly, the repeated rhythmic enunciation of the same word (or a string of words) forms a continuous (without an end or boundary) segment of words’. A popular story in the *Ramayaṇa* also gives a simple supportive example here. It describes that *rishis* Valmiki’s non-stop chanting of the word *mara mara...* bestowed upon him the sanctifying effect of the *japa* of the name of the God — “*rama rama*”....

The *vaidika mantras* are usually recited in specific rhythms as per the *vaidika swaras*. However, during the process of *japa*, the recitation of all the *mantras* takes place at constant amplitude without any break or pause. Therefore the speed should be so regular and constant that one can count the number of *japas* by measuring the time taken for the completion of specific *japas* in one

sitting. It is this consistency and continuity that gives a cyclic motion to the sonic waves generated by the *japa*, and thus helps in activation and focusing of the related powers of *shabda*.

That circular motion generates energy – can also be observed in day-to-day life; for instance, the movement of the toy ‘top’, or the functioning of machines by the movement of a flywheel, etc. Continuous *japa* of a *mantra* in a consistent manner, for sufficiently long periods of time per day, can generate energy in and around the *sadhaka* that would keep his physical and subtle bodies creatively active for the rest of the day....

Fast circular motion at a regular pace generates a centrifugal force. Demonstration of this force can be seen in a circus – in the rotating swings or the circular motion of a motorbike rider in the ‘well of death,’ etc. Similar effect helps generation of a supernormal ‘sphere’ of sonic energy by the cyclic *japa* of a *mantra* repeatedly while maintaining the consistency of the pace by thorough engrossment of the mind.

That sound can be recorded (e.g., by tape-recorders), amplified (e.g., by loudspeakers), propagated (e.g., by radio and TV signals), recognized (e.g., by the radar), measured and analyzed (e.g., by spectrographs or voice-printers) – in physical terms, proves its existence in matter.... A large number of examples of the destructive and creative effects of sound on matter can also be found in day-to-day life.

The mechanical devices of *radar* send sound signals – via radio waves – far away in the space and receive the echoed sound back in few micro (10^{-6}) seconds. The radio waves travel at a speed of about 295000 kilometers per second. Whenever their

collision takes place with any object on their way, these waves are reflected back (to the radar that is set ‘tuned’ to receive them) at equally fast speed. The vibrations of these reflected signals contain the ‘information’ about the position, size and some other properties of the object. (This is how sound waves help in the recognition, through the radar, of an enemy’s airplane, during war times.)

The human body could also be regarded as ‘radar’ with respect to the gross sonic effects of the *mantras*. The extrasensory energy nuclei (like the *shatchakras* or the *granthis*.... etc described in yoga scriptures) of this biological radar send supernormal radio signals in the ‘etheric whole’ via the vibrations of *mantras* being enunciated in specific rhythms.... This wonderful radar receives back the quintessential signals of *shabda* as an ‘echo’ from the cosmic nucleus of the *mantra*.

Our gross body is a physical system consisting of bio-physicochemical components. The impact of sound on this system results in corresponding vibrations in the molecular, cellular (e.g., an enzyme in a cell or a membrane, or a hormone...) or organ (e.g., the liver, uterus or ears.....) components and generates isolated or cascade effects (positive or negative, depending on the type of sound) on the interconnected subsystems. Several instances of the negative physical effects of the impact of sound on the gross body have been scientifically verified. Examples of the positive physical effects (on the gross bodies of any living being) include – increase in the immunity of human beings under specific therapies based on sound; acceleration of the growth rate of vegetation by special music; increase in the

reproduction rates of some varieties of fish and hens under certain music-based treatments.

The interest, to some extent, in the subtle power of sound has been revived in the modern era by the scientific works on ultrasound. The ultrasonic waves were successfully used for the first time in 1914 for recognition of underwater objects (like submarines) during the First World War. There has been a significant progress in the applications of ultrasound in the twentieth century. Today, the medical technology is making tremendous use of advanced ultrasonic devices for noninvasive diagnostic purposes.

Laboratory experiments on ultrasonic effects have shown that the vibrations at a high frequency – of the order of five crores per second – can produce enormous energy that would convert the surrounding material into vapors and ashes almost instantaneously. Then what about the power of the vibrations that are generated at exponentially faster frequencies by a controlled use of bio-electricity, vital energy and the sublime force of the otherwise untapped layers of human-consciousness? Why wouldn't they induce supersonic impulses in the etheric whole and create cosmic effects?

The effects of *mantra* are based on subtler (in terms of the 'audio' perceptions) levels of sound than the ultrasound. The

body components like the tongue and the palate are supporting tools for augmenting the frequency of the sound of the syllables of a *mantra*. The inner extrasensory energy-centers of the body (including those in the brain) exponentially amplify – with the help of the vital power of the bioelectricity and the strength of consciousness (of the *sadhaka*), the frequency of the sound waves of the *mantra* far beyond the limits of ultrasonic and supersonic vibrations.

Scientific investigations on *mantras* are important, considering the fact that only a handful of genuine 'experts' of this occult field of knowledge are available today. The creative and enchanting impacts of particular forms of sound – Indian musical *ragas*, in particular – on human-psychology are well accepted today. Interdisciplinary scientific research is emerging to make use of the same against psychological disorders and as a 'tonic' for mental health and enthusiasm for those engaged in monotonous and tiring tasks. In addition, research should also begin for understanding the patterns, meanings and complexities of the phonetic symbols used in the *vaidika mantras*, deciphering the spectrum of accents and rhythmic chanting patterns for these *mantras* and devising scientific methods to experimentally establish their veracity.

* * *

Oil in the lamp was about to finish. The wick continued burning without oil, shedding whatever dim and fluctuating light of lamp. An onlooker asked the wick, " You have been selflessly sacrificing yourself for providing light to others and it pains me to observe this pathetic self extinction as the reward for the good you are doing". The flickering flame of the wick became suddenly brighter and the wick smilingly replied, " Brother, whosoever is borne in this mortal world, is sure to die. It is inevitable. The only purposeful use of this mortal life is to be consumed in the service of others without expectation of reward".

THE IDEAL LOCATIONS OF DIFFERENT ROOMS IN YOUR HOUSE

As per the tradition of Vedic worship, the rituals of *Vastupujan*, *Bhumipujan*, *Bhumishodhan*, and *Shilanyasa* are performed at an auspicious time before commencing the construction of a building. Apart from invoking divine grace, these rituals are aimed at creating a harmonious balance and linkage with Nature so as to attract its agreeable support and favorable effects of the Sun and other planets and stars. Accompanied with every new construction, there is a natural desire and hope that the building would be a source of prosperity, joy and peace for the people residing in it and that the life of its residents would be protected from adversities and hazards; they should live in a cordial, mutually benevolent and progressing ambience, avoiding bickering and clashes. All projects initiated in the buildings having maximum *vāstu* benefits are expected to lead to shining success. Everyone wants his house to be the harbinger of health, happiness, prosperity and social prestige for him and his family.

If *Vastu Shastra* was so pervasive and integral part of the Indian culture and religion, why is it no longer having the same place in our lives today? In order to seek an answer, we will have to have a quick look at its brief history.

Vastu Shastra is counted among the sixty-four principal faculties of knowledge which emanated directly from the Vedas. Several hymns or formulae in the Rigveda and Yajurveda pertain to the origin of

Vastukala (architectural and constructional art). Like the four Vedas there are four *Upvedas*, namely, Gandharveda, Dhanurveda, Ayurveda and Sthaptyaveda. Of these, as mentioned in our introductory article, the last one happens to be what was developed as the *Vastu Shastra* in the successive ages – the periods of the vedic scriptures like the Brahmins, Aranyakas, Upanishads and Puranas. The subsequent post-vedic times of the Ramayana and Mahabharata are believed to be the periods when this knowledge (of *Vastu*) was deciphered and disseminated in its most evolved and practicable form. The planning and architecture in the grand cities of Lanka, Ayodhya, Hastinapur, Dwarka in that era are regarded as exemplary monuments of *Vastukala*.

After the devastating war of Mahabharata, the world entered the Dark Age (*Kaliyuga*) when no development of any kind could take place. With gradual revival of civilization, the ancient architectural knowledge again came into use in several parts of India between 800 - 600 B.C.; the royal palaces, buildings of rich traders and several Buddhist monasteries and other religious centres and temples were the major outcomes of this resurrection of the Indian archaeology. But the cultural and socioeconomic development faced a setback with the invasion of Alexander around 400 B.C. However, this was only a temporary phase. Soon, with the endeavors of farsighted geniuses like Chanakya, the Indian economy

as well the Vastu-based grand constructions of individual houses, community centres, palaces, forts, warehouses, temples, monasteries, universities etc, and all round progress gained glorious momentum and blossomed in the golden era of the regime of Chandragupta Maurya and his successors.

The heritage of ancient knowledge lost its originality and grip on people's life in the mist of the opportunistic trends and consequent anarchy on the sociopolitical and even religious fronts. Foreign invasions from the Northwest and the West resulting in the political and cultural subjugation of India in the medieval era devalued the role of *Vastu* in the Indian system of life. The luxurious and lavish lifestyles of the foreign rulers adversely influenced the architectural designs as well. In lieu of the disciplines of *Vastu Shastra*, the focus then shifted to gorgeous appearance, huge structures, artificial decoration, creature comforts and excessive possession of land. Gradually increasing influence of western culture, the greed of builders and contractors, space constraints coupled with growing populations (especially, in the metro cities) have practically ruined the meaning and vital relevance of *Vastu Shastra* in the modern times.

Given that the invaluable repository of Vedic knowledge cannot be found in its original form today and in view of the unavoidable constraints (of space, environment and costs) of the present circumstances, it is certainly not feasible to follow the principles and teachings of *Vastu Shastra in toto*. However, as the ancient and modern scholars and savants have opined, many of its guidelines and architectural formulae or tips of internal and external designs are simple and adaptable even today.

With a little care, wisdom and will on our part, we can be blessed by the power of *vāstu* in our existing or future houses (and other buildings, if any, owned or constantly used by us). The present series of articles on *Vastu* aims at elucidating the relevant and practical tips in this regard.

It may be recalled that it is not the size or cost of the house but the impact and intensity of specific kinds of energy fields and natural forces from specific (geo) directions that are of significance in *Vastu*. The subtle as well as the gross roles of the cosmic energy of the Sun and the five basic elements (*pancha tatvas*) are of paramount relevance here. The Northeast and the East directions assume a leading role with respect to spiritual effects and religious and devotional accomplishments. The home-temple, meditation chamber or place for devotional rituals is therefore advised in *Vastu Shastra* to be located in these directions.

We had discussed about the Northeast and East directions and place of devotion/worship/meditation and related matters with practical guidance in the previous issue of this magazine. As per the excerpts from the principal scriptures on knowledge of Vastu, broad guidelines on the most suitable directions for positioning of important rooms (including kitchen, bedrooms, living room, drawing room, etc) were also presented in that issue. It may be added that having a basement and open ground (*brahmsthāna*), plants and trees (garden) within the building premises is also recommended in the *Shastras*. Further interpretations of some scriptural excerpts indicate that the electrical appliances (e.g, heater, refrigerator, cooler, telephone, television set, music system, etc) should be placed in the southeast angle or in

the southward portion (of the house/room). Specific guidelines for interior settings and decoration are also given in the teachings of *Vastu Shastra*. We shall discuss these aspects with respect to the location of important rooms in the successive installments of this series. In the present article we consider the location and design of the bathroom(s).

Bathing has a vital place in daily life. It has been given crucial importance in healthcare under Ayurveda and Naturopathy. Almost all creatures bathe in their own style. Right from the tiny butterflies and small birds to giant elephants and bears, every one enjoys dipping into a pool of water — be that a collection of dew-drops, tiny pots or rivers, ponds or an ocean, as per one's requirement and convenience. The delight of diving and bathing in the fresh streams of water in a river or a pond certainly can't be found in the tubs, roof-showers or buckets of the bathrooms in our houses. Still, we all need to clean and freshen up our body by a good bath every day. It energizes the body and gives a calming feel to the mind as well. However, the exploding population, increasing pollution and the drying of natural resources of water have made it impossible for most of us to have the 'luxury' of bathing in a natural spring or a river every day. We are to manage with the bathroom(s) inside the house or premises of our buildings.

As per the guidelines of *Vastu Shastra*, bathrooms should be constructed in the East with as much open space around them as possible. The windows/ventilators of the bathroom should open in the East. The obvious reason is the direct reach of sunlight from this direction. While taking bath it would give the natural advantage of absorbing the vital elements and energy from the sunrays in the morning. Today, for most

of the 'urbanized' ones among us, bathrooms have also become showpieces rather than natural necessities of health and hygiene. We decorate them with modern accessories, cosmetics, steam-tubs, moving showers, glass taps, plastic gadgets, electrical appliances and what not... Not only that, more than the space constraints, our 'comfort driven' life-style has given rise to new trends of having bathrooms attached to (every) bedroom.

With the influence of western culture and use of western techniques of construction, our overall living styles and housing patterns have restrained the architectures of our houses. This has virtually imposed the negligence of the 'need' of *Vastu Shastra*. For example, the position of the kitchen and the dining hall is constrained by that of the drawing room which, in turn, restrains the designing of the bedroom, study room, etc. The bathrooms and toilets then are naturally confined to be located wherever possible as per the restrained structure of the house. The limitations are unavoidable in case of multistoried buildings as per the pre-laid water supply and drainage pipelines. However, if one cares and aspires to benefit the most from Nature, one can incorporate the guidelines of the Vastu-Scriptures prior to the construction of the house. The builders and architects could adopt the same practice at the stage of initial planning of the multistoried complexes.

As per the Vastu guidelines, bathrooms should not lie in the Northeast or Southwest corners of the house. The bathrooms and toilets should never be constructed beneath the staircase or somewhere in (a patch available in) the central portion of the house. This obviously will let the filth, the bacteria, the stingy odor and infections to be retained

in the house; people residing in such houses would suffer health problems. As fire and water have opposite natural properties, so have the kitchen and the bathrooms in the terminology of Vastu-Scriptures. Therefore, the kitchen and dining room should not face the bathroom. Also the bathrooms and toilets should be located at a safe distance from the kitchen and the dining room. In any case, one may alter the internal design of the bathroom so that one faces the East while bathing.

Toilets should not be constructed near the bathroom in the East direction. If it is a must to have the toilet attached inside the bathroom because of space constraints, it should be in the Southwest or Northwest corner. However, if it be not possible in the existing structure of the house or building, one could simply change the positions of the ventilators or taps etc. Only one door is sufficient in the bathroom, with windows or ventilators in the East. If exhaust fan is a must, it should be fixed in the eastern or northern direction. Geysers and other electrical appliances, if any, should be fixed in the *āgneya* angle (Southeast corner), because of the favorable effect of *agni* (fire, heat) in this direction. The tap to be used for

bathing should be in the east so that, while bathing, one would face this direction. It is said that facing the East while bathing generates soothing effects on the mind-body system.

As we have discussed earlier, the principles of *Vastu Shastra* are derived from deeper understanding of the gross and subtle energies of the five basic elements (*pancha tatvas*) so as to maximize the favorable impacts of the desired elements in the specific portion (room, as per its use) of the house and minimize the untoward influences. We shall continue with broad guidelines on the positioning and design of other rooms in the successive installments.

(To be continued)

Notes:

1. *Pancha Tatvas*: The five basic elements of the gross manifestation of Nature. Namely, *prithvī* – source of all material existence is solid or semi-liquid and gel forms; *jala* – source of material existence in liquid and fluidic forms; *vāyū* – source of air and gaseous states of matter; *agni* – source of fire and all forms of energies and light; and *ākāśa* – the subliminal etheric expansion and source and foundational base of existence and manifestation of mental and emotional expressions.

In the second decade of twentieth century, Robert Godard (1882-1945) had foreseen the invention of the rockets and also the possibility of interplanetary voyages. The famous newspaper of USA, 'The New York Times', had ridiculed Godard's proposal as a fantasy and said, "The person saying this is supposed to be even less intelligent than school children. Somebody knowing about the gravitational force of earth won't even talk about such baseless imaginations." Within fifty years of his journalistic comment a spaceship had been launched for Moon from Cape Kennedy. 'The New York Times' then published an apology for ridiculing Godard five decades ago. Our dreams and imaginations, if pursued tenaciously, become realities in due course of time. Let us not discourage the dreamers of high and noble dreams.

CHARACTERISTIC LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES

*Aham gr̥bhñāmi manasā manāṁsi
Mama chittamanu chittabhireta |
Mama vaïeḷu h—day³ni va; k—ñō mi
Mama yātamanuvartmāna eta ||*

- Atharva Veda 3/8/6

“I draw your mind with my mind, and mould it to my accord. Follow in my wake by bringing your *chitta* in harmony with mine. I cast a spell upon your hearts; come along with me by doing as I do.”

How to lead effectively? In all walks of life and at every level- educational institutions, games and sports, industry, commerce, politics, social service, religion or the wider canvas of other collective human pursuits the presence of inspiring, competent, wise and dynamic leadership is essential for success. If the leadership is enlightened, there is a wave of progress, development and prosperity; if it is otherwise, degeneration sets in all around. An inspiring leadership is able to magically transform the crumbling structure of any institution, society or nation, and uplift it to pinnacles of glory, whereas under a lackluster leadership even the heights attained in the past crumble into nothingness. How could that magical leadership be produced which could work wonders and get Herculean tasks accomplished? The answer is simple: through development of the attributes of competence, dynamism, commitment, farsightedness, caring concern, magnetic attraction, accommodation, etc. It should be borne in mind that it is such qualities in an individual and not the individual per se that command respect, adoration and following. From such leaders,

who are the most prized assets of society, people have high expectations of right guidance and resolution of their problems. But if, unfortunately, in the name of leadership arrogance of power is foisted, then the subordinates suffocate and suffer. An arrogant and power-drunk person can never inspire anyone. Even his hangers-on only flatter him; they never really cherish any genuine goodwill and respect for him.

The ideal of perfect leadership is achieved and emerges in a person whose every facet of life radiates inspiration, who is brimming with the energy of great courage, who has the capacity and ready willingness to consecrate himself at the altar of his goal, whose character has such a fragrance that his followers swear by him, who is able to bring about full co-ordination among the members of his team, and who is ready to sacrifice his own personal interests, however big, for the collective interest of those he leads. Such a leader spontaneously evokes feelings of goodwill, respect and faith in the hearts of his followers. His one gesture has the power to galvanize dormant masses. His words cast a magic spell over millions and millions of people. In whichever direction he turns, masses of humanity follow him.

In the twilight period of his earthly life, Param Poojya Gurudev's heart was filled with pain at the paucity of leadership in the country. This anguish was often reflected in his words “The pitiable condition of our institutions, the humiliating sight of our country looking up to others for its every small and big requirement – this situation has

arisen solely because there is no effective leadership around. In the absence of such leadership, nothing can be achieved". In course of his address to *parijans*, he would often say: "The country does not need *yogis*, *sainyasis* and *mahatmas* but self-sacrificing and courageous public servants who can give right direction to the society".

Leadership is provided by exemplary conduct and deeds, not by empty words. The need of today is that people be like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel and Subhash Chandra Bose who were always ready for every kind of sacrifice for the sake of principles and common weal.

Let all of us, *parijans*, introspect and evaluate ourselves. Are we willing to alleviate the agony of Gurudev? If your answer is in the affirmative, move forward; there is place for you in the front ranks. Only you will have to dive boldly the ocean of virtues and pick up the right qualities. In whichever direction you wish to lead, you will have to consciously strive to acquire the highest competence and excellence. This could be in any field - services, medicine, management, or any other. But remember that although ability is undoubtedly a prerequisite for effective leadership, it alone is not sufficient. For good leadership boldness and dynamism are also essential, and so is their transference to the co-workers. It is also imperative that he be a good judge of the merits of his colleagues, recognize the unique talent of each one of them, and share this knowledge with others. This will generate mutual confidence, respect and goodwill.

When the time comes for any recognition and honor, the right thing to do is not to step forward in a hurry to own the credit; the credit should be unreservedly given to members of the team as a whole. This will reinforce their confidence and faith in the leader. Along with this, they should also be given encouragement and inspiration through words of praise and by concrete recognition. Such gestures fill the hearts of his coworkers with increased enthusiasm and uplift their spirit. Their work-efficiency is increased manifold. Their inter-relationships become warm and cordial. To maintain this spirit of bonhomie, we should make it a point that in our mutual interactions we highlight each other's merits and never highlight the weaknesses lest feelings be hardened and relationships strained.

Another quality, which must be developed for augmenting the characteristics of good leadership, is the ability to innovate, i.e. to think new ideas and execute them. Whatever be the field of work there should be constant endeavor to formulate practical work-schemes aimed at accelerating the progress of the organisation. Also, glad and enthusiastic participation of the co-workers in the execution of enterprises should be ensured. If we are able to gradually acquire and develop such leadership attributes within us, we will not only be able to provide successful leadership in our specific work-spheres but also become pacesetters for others.

* * *

Set your own goals so that one day you can reach there if you rely on someone to help you then you will meet disappointment only.

MAN WAS ENDOWED WITH MARVELLOUS INTUITIVE INGENUITY EVEN IN THE STONE-AGE

Modern theories on the history of evolution of mankind hold that in the remote past man everywhere was extremely primitive and ignorant and his progress since then has been gradual. This implies that our early ancestors were steeped in backwardness in all respects. This also assumes that it is only the modern man who stands at the apex of the evolutionary pyramid.

This linear model of the process of development is only partially correct. It goes without saying that modern man has achieved great successes in the fields of physical and material sciences. He is in a far superior position in terms of life's comforts and conveniences and the resources at his command. But it does not necessarily follow that the prehistoric age was a dark age with regard to physical or social sciences. We will not talk here of the achievement level of the ancients in the spheres of metaphysics, ethics, intellectual integrity, social harmony and peace of mind. Even in pure physical sciences, the available evidences are making it clear that in the earliest periods of history man had acquired substantial knowledge and some measure of control over many branches of science. The extant samples of his stupendous feats leave scholars and scientists of today awe-struck. The more one studies these relics of the past, the more one is unable to comprehend how such impossible-looking artefacts of technological and engineering feats could have been made possible in those prehistoric times!

One such marvel is the pyramids of Egypt, of which the largest is at Giza. Archaeological and other evidences including radiocarbon dating establish that the Giza Pyramid was built around 2600 B.C. In the 19th century Charles Piazzi Smith put forth many

propositions, one of which is that the great Pyramid stands exactly at the centre of the earth.

No one exactly knows how such massive blocks of stone, weighing 2 to 5 tons, were carried long distances and placed one atop the other in a tapering matrix. Were these stones pushed upward on makeshift sand slopes or some heavy mechanical device was used to loft them up? It is thought that the blocks were slid into place by lubricating them with a liquid gypsum mortar.

The very first big challenge facing the builders was to make level the huge foundation spreading over 13 acres of area. How could they successfully accomplish it? A new theory is that an earthen ring dam was first constructed along the entire perimeter. It was then filled with water. The dunes and other uneven parts jutting above the water level were cut and sliced to bring them in alignment with the water surface. The water level was gradually lowered by draining out water and, in each phase, the projecting parts smoothed out to make level the water surface. In this ingenious way, the ancient Egyptian engineers achieved in the solid plinth a very high level of horizontal flatness with the margin of error reduced to 1 in 10,000. In modern day constructions, the error margin is about the same.

Dr. Livio Steshini, a professor of ancient history in William Peterson College, New Jersey and Dr. Peter Tompkins have examined the distinctive mathematical and geometrical principles underlying the design and construction of this pyramid. According to them, the great pyramid is a very precisely located terrestrial landmark. With the help of this benchmark, a survey of the whole earth and its curvature could be made. This formed the basis of preparation of an ancient atlas of

the world. The pyramid was also an observatory, which enabled minute mapping of the canopy of the sky and preparation of precise charts.

In olden days, when metal was unknown, the building material was rock. There has been an extraordinary use of these rocks in a variety of structures. The level of technical skill and the power resource required in moving, handling and exact placement of these large rock pieces defies comprehension. How and from where had this knowledge and resource come?

A book titled 'The World Atlas of Mysteries' contains illustration of the British Isles and her other possessions. Dark spots mark the locations of various kinds of stone-structures and other monuments. Some of these are: Calanish, Stenes Bradgar, Clava, Newganze, Arburlow, Stenton Duroilrite Stones, Stonehenge, Carnak etc. These are some of the oldest and the most mysterious structures ever built by man - huge and tall pillars and columns, stone-circles, earthen dunes, burial chambers etc. These are scattered in a 2500 km. long belt along the Atlantic coast of Europe. The oldest of these remains goes back to a mind numbing antiquity while the climactic achievement of these lost civilizations appears to be the Stonehenge structures.

What motivated the ancients to spend so much labour and energy in cutting and dragging such large and heavy monoliths? At some locations, the construction sites lie several miles away from the quarry. The black slabs of Stonehenge have come from distant Presley Mountains of Wales, about 200 km away. Stonehenge evokes reverential wonder, but even bigger pieces have been used elsewhere. In Lake Mariaker area of France, there is a monolith named 'Grand Menhir Brize'. Once this giant column stood 50 meters tall and weighed 340 tons. At Karnack, there are rows and rows of rocks planted erect

in the earth. Numbering more than 3000, they stretch farther than the eye can see. In fact, these rocks originally formed even a bigger geometric pattern.

A recent theory is that these places were probably charged with some kind of special energy and this knowledge had been somehow obtained from careful astronomical surveys. For a deeper probe into this aspect, a new branch of study, astro-archaeology, has emerged. Alexander Thomas considers these remains as the pinnacle of geometrical attainments of which any engineer in the history of mankind – of any time and place – could be proud.

Using such varied and locally available positional marks as rock projections, narrow mountain valleys, specially erected square stone-blocks and the like, they had turned these circles of stone into observatories. They calculated not only simpler occurrences like mid-summer or mid-winter sunrise but also measured very minute astronomical movements and changes requiring purity level of 1:1000. They even knew about the momentary stoppage of the lunar motion.

How did these astronomer-priests acquire this knowledge? How was this knowledge transmitted from generation to generation? The British astrophysicist Sir Fred Hoyle quips, "Some Newton or Einstein must have been at work on this. May be, there was a kind of university where students were taught till they mastered this science."

Mentioned above are only a few of the numerous achievements of a time when man was considered to have been backward, ignorant and resourceless. Upon objective and serious rethinking, it would appear that man has indeed treaded the path of gradual progress but even during the so-called primitiveness of the Stone Age he was not always devoid of highly evolved scientific mind.

* * *

THE AMAZING CHEMISTRY OF THE HUMAN BRAIN

Elucidation of the complexity of the structure and enormous functions of the human body is like revealing the secrets of a mysterious world. Most astonishing part of this marvelous creation is the brain. It is the conductor of the conscious and unconscious, known and unknown functions of a human being. The multiple decision making and regulatory functions performed continuously by this organ can be roughly compared to the activities of administrative problem-solving, supervision, and management, etc.

It is said that sitting beneath the *kalpvṛkṣā* (a celestial wish-fulfilling tree described in the *Puraṇās*) fulfils all desires. The existence of such a tree might be doubtful. However, the brain is a tangible manifestation of the *kalpvṛkṣā* naturally bestowed on every human being. The ‘worship’ (by due recognition, respect and creative use of its potentials) of this ‘heavenly gift’ can certainly endow an individual with all the virtues and powers, which he aspires for in life.

Physically a human being is born from the mother’s womb. But, the birth of a wicked, dullard or a wretched character, or, an eminent, ascetic or dignified personality, etc., originate from the layers of unconscious and subconscious mind operative in the deeper depths of his/her own brain. The key of character development lies in these arcane layers of human brain. The talents of spiritual masters, erudite scholars, eminent philosophers, scientists, artists etc. all sprout from the subtle cores of the brain. Imbalance or disorderly function of this center can turn one into a fool, cranky or an insane person. A healthy brain is the source of enormous positive potentials. Arousing of its super-conscious activities can enhance an

individual’s talents up to the highest realms of physical, mental, and spiritual strength and enlightenment.

Every activity — including that at the cellular and molecular level - of the human body is controlled by the brain. Besides the supernatural attainments of spirituality in its sublime state, the ordinary, even the routine functions of the human mind are also majestic. The power of thinking, variety of feelings — of sorrow, cheerfulness, satisfaction etc., the potentials of contemplation and resolution of unlimited types of problems are indeed remarkable.

It has been found that there are specific centers in the brain. These, if stimulated, can eliminate all the pains of severe bodily injuries and mental agonies. These centers could be awakened by introspective search, contemplation and spiritual *sādhana*s. Several centuries ago, the use of intoxicating substances like morphine as painkillers was common like that of the analgesic medicines today. However, it has now become clear that the use of such external means causes more harm in the long run as compared to their instant, though, short-lived positive effects. Experts opine that the occurrence of pain in any portion of the body indicates that there is something abnormal in the physiological or biochemical state of this portion; that is why it is functioning out of harmony with the nervous system. There are two types of pains — short-term, prickling and chronic or long-term. Both create uneasiness in the body. The long lasting pains disturb the mental state, too. This situation induces mental tension and often gives rise to the psychosomatic disorders such as — schizophrenia, illusions, paranoia etc.

Slight disordering in the functional regions of the brain disturbs the entire body and mental system. Often, one uses instant remedies of analgesic medicines against the complaints like headache etc. Removal of mental stresses of higher intensity is sought with the help of intoxication. People of weak inner strength tend to use Morphine, Methadone, Heroin, Melsadine, L.S.D., and several types of narcotics in order to get relief from despair and depressive and stressful agonies of life. These drugs virtually paralyze the normal perceptibility of different organs and suppress the sensitivity of the nervous system towards pain. People get addicted to such 'remedies' and eventually lose their physical and mental well-being forever.

Medical experts consider that the limbic system in human brain can secrete specific neurochemicals, which alleviate the sensation of pain or counter the tension caused by mental stress. Emotions are supposed to trigger the activities of the limbic system. As the sensory nerves carry the sensation of pain to the spinal cord, the efferent receptors of the limbic region in a healthy brain are activated and they secrete two phaline peptides that serve as natural 'pain killers'. Betalypotramine (LPH) is found to be the forerunner of enkephalin.

Experiment in immunohistochemistry have shown that a large number of neurons — filled with enkephalin - are clustered at different levels of the cerebrospinal axis; these clusters are denser near specific pain-sensing center on the gelatinosa of the spinal column. The neurons are also present near the nerves connected to the digestive system. The techniques like acupuncture activate the secretion of enkephalin at specific centers as and when required and thereby offer healing from pain without any medicine or other

treatments. Many surgical operations are performed successfully by suppressing the sensation with the help of acupuncture without using any anesthesia.

Frontline researchers in Parapsychology consider that the secretion and concentration of different painkilling hormones like enkephalin, endogens, etc can be regulated by harmonizing the activities of brain with the help of *dhyān* (deep meditation). *Dhyān* is a risk-free spiritual exercise, which offers enormous benefits. Meditation experts prescribe it as an effective remedy against pain and mental stress and strain, instead of the killer medicines, steroids and intoxicating drugs.

Collaborative research in neurochemistry, neurophysiology, psychology and other areas of neurosciences has unraveled only a fraction of the unlimited potentiality of human brain. The unknown aspects of human consciousness are enormous as compared to what have been deciphered by the modern sciences so far. The real power of human brain is beyond imagination. One would be amazed to find what an astonishing system exists in the tiny 'pocket' of the skull. It is unfortunate that only a small fraction of this colossal source of conscious energy is used in the physical, mental and intellectual activities of most humans. Maximum of its creative power remains in a dormant state throughout one's life. Authentic examples of strong willpower, clairvoyance, exceptional intuitive intellect, etc present only a glimpse of the super conscious levels of the human brain. Activating the unused hidden layers of consciousness in human brain could awaken supernatural potentials and talents. The simile of *kalpvṛakṣa* therefore appears to be quite appropriate here.

* * *

Time is the most precious gift of life. If you love life, do not squander it in indolence.

THE ARCAINE WORLD OF THE INNER LAYERS OF MIND

Deep and wide-ranging insights of scholars, writers, scientists, philosophers and other intellectuals and the extraordinary talents of artists, successful businessmen, industrialists, politicians, etc reflect the multiple dimensions of creativity of the conscious mind. The above-mentioned extraordinary faculties of the conscious mind are well known. However, few people realize the existence of the unconscious, subconscious and super-conscious levels of human mind. These subtle layers of mind are full of mysteries and paradoxes. Thorough research in deeper aspects of psychology also indicates that the micro levels of mind are extremely powerful. However, owing to their subtle nature their existence remains latent and unknown to most people. Because of this the experimental analysis of these faculties of the mind has not been possible by external means and the attempts of arousing the latent potential of the mind remain confined to spiritual practices only.

The researchers in Gnostic Psychology have analyzed only about 7% of the active domain of the unconscious mind. It is argued on the basis of these research findings that the natural tendencies, hobbies, inherited habits and adaptability to acquired nature — all originate from the unconscious mind. Parapsychologists consider the latter as the most wonderful, powerful and sophisticated creation; they state that if its immense potentials were discovered, sublimated and used like those of the

conscious mind the human race would make thousand times greater progress than the most advanced developments of today. They believe that by awakening the latent energies of the inner layers of mind, we can naturally perform all the wondrous tasks, which at present are carried out only with the help of sophisticated instruments and advanced technology. The scientific area of research in these aspects of the human mind is known as “Psychocybernetics”.

The experts of the spiritual science of supernatural faculties have mentioned that the agility of the conscious mind prevents the expression and realization of the unconscious and subtler levels of the human mind. The ever-active tides of an ocean can be seen by anybody. However, the vision and acquisition of the riches lying at bottoms becomes possible only for those adventurous divers who plunge deep beneath the surface and search for this hidden treasure. The same is the case with the gigantic ocean of consciousness enclosed in the human brain. Whatever has been elucidated about the activities of the human brain with the help of modern techniques like EEG pertains only to the bio- electrical impulses of its conscious part. This, at the most, corresponds to about 13 % of the total bioelectrical activity of the brain in a normal human being.

Routine functions of hearing and vision are normally performed by our conscious mind. However, there are instances when the conscious mind is not able

to perceive any sound or light. The perception of sound and visual cognition then take place in the domain of unconscious mind. Such situations often arise when the type of sound or scene produced encountered is beyond the audible or visible range of the conscious faculties of mind. The instances of this kind also occur in the state of deep sleep when the conscious mind is not available to recognize and process the signals received from the sense organs. The unconscious mind is never asleep. The sonic or visual signals perceived by the unconscious mind create intense impressions on the inner self. The assimilated effects are sometimes manifested in drastic changes in one's behavior and attitude. The examples stated below illustrate the impact of the subconscious and the unconscious levels of mind, which could be potentially used in psychotherapies.

In the summer of 1997, a team of researchers had arranged for transmission of a vague message — “Eat parched rice and drink Coca-Cola...” after every five minutes during a film show for customers arranged in Photoplay, New Jersey. The message was of no importance to the conscious mind but its repeated reflections induced in the unconscious mind were seen in surprising outcomes of the experiment. The records in that market soon after showed an increase of about 5.75 % in the sales of parched rice and over 38 % in that of Coca-Cola.

Dr. Hall Bracker of the Medical Electronics Department of the Louisiana University has developed a tacistoscopic projection device for experimenting on the unconscious mind. In one such experiment he repeatedly conveyed the recorded message “I am honest, I will not steal. It is wrong to steal. If I steal, I will be caught...” — to a group of his patients. As a result, significant

positive effects were recorded in terms of the change in the patient's behavior; even those who had criminal mentality were found to have become sincere and sober... Whether it is hypnotism or some kind of conditioning of the unconscious mind by audiovisual signals, the experiments of this kind resemble, to some extent, the elementary training phase of spiritual practices.

Dr. Harvard Chevron of Michigan University has analyzed (with the help of EEGs) the signals received in the unconscious state of body, on the brain waves. Matthew Irdaily, expert psychologist of the Brooklyn College has also experimented on repeated reflections of such signals/messages on many human subjects during conversational and (day) dreaming states. Both kinds of experiments have illustrated significant potential of the unconscious mind. Newer kinds of experiments involve inducing positive effects or ‘advice’ by biofeedback techniques adjusted according to the on-line EEG records of the DC potentials. The success of such experiments on unconscious mind also shows that the *yoga-sādhana*s, aimed at awakening and controlling the unconscious mind, are derived from logical and scientifically verifiable grounds.

During his experimental studies in psychology, Lloyd Silverman of the New York University had conducted a specific experiment several times on some chronic cases of mental instability and addictions. In each daily sitting, the teenager patients were sent a motto — “Mummy (mother) and I are one...”, vocally for five minutes. The message was repeated at such a rapid pace that the conscious mind was hardly able to concentrate on it. The results of this experiment — conducted for 10 successive

years — were quite remarkable; many of the subjects were able to get rid of their mental perversities and addictions; many others, who were averse to studies and hard work, started making progress in their schools and colleges. In a similar experiment on autosuggestions to inspire the unconscious mind conducted in 1975, mental tensions and obesity of over 30 women patients were alleviated in record times. Some counselors (psychologists) in the Montana University had also used Silverman's technique; in a single year — 1979 itself, they had helped many people in getting relief from the addiction of smoking.

In view of the creative effects of his auto-suggestive and biofeedback methods, Silverman had challenged those who considered Freud's Principle — of the influence of unconscious mind on one's personality — as being an imaginary hypothesis only. Dr. Nathan of Washington University had presented an independent but supporting opinion in the 1980 issue of the Annual Reviews of Psychology. He considers unconscious mind as a major factor to be focused upon for thorough psychological analysis of human beings. He argues that — “Freud's theory emphasized only a narrow domain of the impact of the unconscious mind, namely, that related with sexual desires. This is an incomplete and erroneous conclusion, which has created misconceptions about the real potentials of the unconscious mind. Deeper research in this field should focus on the analysis and use of the power of unconscious mind to help development of positive and creative faculties and elevation of personality rather than the negative aspects which trigger animal instincts and suppressive complexes”.

In the ancient Indian healing systems, music was developed as a powerful medium for psychotherapy. The *Sāmveda* emphasizes the majestic role of divine music in conditioning and sublimating the mental potentials. The *rishis* had composed and compiled classical music through afflatus. They had sincerely used this music for controlling their mind and rousing its immense qualities at the subtler levels of consciousness. They had attained supernatural talents and knowledge by such experiments on adept use of music in their disciplined and ascetic life.

As long ago as 600 BC, the renowned geometrician and philosopher, Pythagoras had also propagated the importance of music in psychotherapy. Lambolycus of Syria too had supported the use of music as a remedy against complications caused by mental tensions and stresses of over-ambitious life style. Positive effects of calm music on mental health have received substantial recognition in the modern age as well. Experimental studies of the impact of music on unconscious mind add to the series of the above-mentioned observations on the assimilation of audio-signals in the unconscious mind.

Effects of visual perception are also considered important in inspiring the unconscious mind. Intensive research of a reputed psychologist — Professor Kampbell, has shown that the visual reflections create significant impressions on the unconscious mind. He says that the unconscious mind stimulates specific bio-electrochemical reactions according to the type of the visuals perceived by it. These reactions affect the entire body.

Kampbell had studied the reflections in the subject's mind when the latter is engrossed in watching the glow of a flame.

His analysis suggests that waves of immense bliss are generated and the person feels deep peace in this state of meditation. Experimental research of Dr. Lasslie M Lecron of America has also proved that the flame of a lamp or a candle has significant applications in psychological and psychiatric healing. The practice of *trātak* in the *bindu yoga sādhanā* is a refined experiment of this sort.

The practice of *trātaka* significantly helps restraining the agility of mind, streamlining the thoughts and helps in mental concentration — which is a great achievement in view of the immense power of the controlled mind. The traditions of igniting lamps in the temples, candles in the churches and worshipping fire in the *agyārasis* (place of worship of the *Parsis*) at the time of prayers are indicative of the above-mentioned psychological effects.

Eminent experts of the Indian *yoga sādhanā* have been, since the time of yore, successful in awakening the unconscious, subconscious and the super-conscious layers of mind with the help of dedicated practices

of *pratyāhār*, *dhyān*, *dhārṇā* etc. This is how the great *yogis* attain supernatural faculties of hearing or seeing beyond the limits of space and time. Telepathy, clairvoyance, prophecy, knowledge of latent objects, thoughts or emotions, etc, are usual offshoots of such attainments. The *rishis* were regarded as superbly evolved beings because of their astonishing mastery in the external, physical, as well as internal — pertaining to thoughts, emotions and spirituality — domains of life. Today's man has lost his inner strength and is living in a pathetic state of mental and emotional weakness, disorder and stupor. The situation will certainly improve if the *yoga* practices as devised by our ancestors are experimented in modern scientific light and brought back in the mainstream of human life. Everybody would then be able to realize and make the best use of the internal potentials of his own mind to live with self-confidence and self-mastery.

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A rich person came to the famous Gayatri devotee and AryaSamaj leader, Mahatma Ananda Swami. He owned many factories. All his children were busy in their work. His wife had passed away. He was immensely rich but he felt very lonely at heart. He neither felt hungry nor could sleep well at night. He narrated his problem to Swamiji. Mahatma replied, "You gave importance to mechanically earn wealth and possessions, ignoring the warm feelings of your heart. To end the drabness and loneliness of your heart you should start sharing your love, money and labor with the needy. Share your affection; help the orphans and the poor to be self-reliant. Give your physical labor too as much as you can to this holy work. Discipline your routine work. You will get back your hunger and will have deep sleep too." A steady qualitative transformation started in the rich man's life. He found himself changed miraculously into a healthy, peaceful and happy individual.

YOUR HEALTH: GUIDELINES FROM AYURVEDA –VI

For most of us, food is meant to be only for satisfying hunger and nourishing the body. However, as per Vedic Scriptures, what we eat and drink significantly, though subliminally, affect our subtle and astral bodies as well. For instance, the Chhandogya Upanishad says—

Āhārasuddhau Sattvasuddhiḥ Sattvasuddhau Dhruvā Smṛatiḥ,

Smṛatilambhe Sarvagrānthīnām Vipramokśaḥ |

Meaning: Purity of food helps in purifying the inner self. Purification of the inner self and hence of the mind and intellect, accelerates elimination of illusions and ignorance. This in turn, paves the way for salvation of the soul.

The sages of the Vedic times, the *rishis*, had researched and categorized the gross and subtle qualities and effects of food in three categories — *sātvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. They had also enjoined that those desirous of having the purity, piety and sagacity of thoughts, feelings and emotions along with the vibrant health of the body, should avoid *tāmasika* and *rājasika* food and take only *sātvika* food.

In the Gita (17 | 7) the Divine Teacher says—

Āhārastwapi Sarvasya, Trividho Bhavati Priyaḥ |

Yagyastapastathā Dānam, Teṣām Bhedamimam Śṛuṇu ||

Meaning: What kind of food one likes is also of three types according to one's own intrinsic nature. Similarly, *yagya*, *tapa* and alms are also of three types (*sātvika*, *rājasika*

and *tāmasika*). Let me tell you their (broad) differences.

Āyuh Satvabalārogya, Sukhaprītivivardhanāḥ | Rasyāḥ Snigdhaḥ Sthirā Hṛadyā, Āhārāḥ Sātwikapriyāḥ ||

Kaṭvamlalavaṇātyuṣṇa, Tikśnarūksavidāhinaḥ | Āhārā Rājasasyeṣṭhā, Dukhaśokāmayapradāḥ || Yātayāmaṁ Gatarasaṁ Pūti, Paryuṣitaṁ Cha Yat |

Uchchhiṣṭamapi Chāmedhyam, Bhojanam Tāmaspriyam ||

Meaning: Pure, health-giving, juicy (watery), smooth (e.g. boiled vegetables), fresh and naturally soothing eatables that enhance life, vigor, mental strength and sharpen the intellect — are liked and used as food by the people having *sātvika* tendency. Sour, salty, bitter, hot, spicy, fried and dry kinds of food stuffs, which are of highly stimulating taste, but are usually difficult to digest and cause burning sensation in the stomach — are mostly liked by the people of *rājasika* tendency. Those having *tāmasika* tendency generally like half-cooked, raw and pungent, stale, foul-smelling, juice-less foodstuffs; they don't even care for the cleanliness and purity of food.

All, who care for physical, mental and spiritual health, should remember the above guidelines of the Gita. We should modify our eating habits accordingly. The Shastric saying “*annau vai manaḥ*” affirms that what we eat (and drink) also contributes to the making of the tendencies of our minds. Similar views are expressed in the Scriptures dealing with spiritual *sādhanās*. That is why

Ayurveda lays so much emphasis on purity and subtle properties of foodstuffs and cautions us about what to eat and what not to eat.

Our mental and emotional state while eating, the feelings with which we take our food, all have subliminal but intense impact upon our subtle and astral bodies. Our *rishis* had therefore taught that food should be treated as sacred as the *naivaidya* (consecrated ‘food’ offered to a deity). They had also founded the tradition of sitting with clean body and calm mind and chanting specific mantras before having meals. These mantras include the great Gayatri Mantra and the prayer-mantras like —

“*sahanāvavatu, sahanaubhunaktu saha vīryam karavāvahai*”, or, “*Brahmārpaṇa Brahmahavirbrahmāgnau Brahmaṇā Hutam*”, etc.

The intrinsic sentiment associated with each of these prayers is that what we are eating should nourish and purify us from inside-out; we should eat with the notion that the food is not being eaten for this ‘visible physical self’, rather, we are sacrificing it to the omnipresent *Brahm̄*. Such sentiments emanating from within us sanctify our food and make it like a *naivaidya*, every morsel of which purifies our gross as well the inner body.

As we had discussed earlier, food should be pure and austere and earned and prepared by righteous methods. If we search for pure, austere and nourishing food, which enhances the vitality and physical strength and also sharpens the intellectual potential and mental concentration, the best choice would be that of the vegetarian food recommended as *pathya* under Ayurveda. Cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables and milk, prepared without destroying their natural qualities (i.e., without putting excessive

spices or frying or overcooking the food) are most suitable, as explained in detail in the earlier installments of this series.

The Charak Samhita cautions —

Na Rāgānnāpyavijñānād, Āhārānupayojayet | Parīkśya Hitamaśnīyād Dehohyāhāra Sambhavaḥ ||

Meaning: Don’t eat because of the greed of the tongue or in forgetfulness. Be aware of what you should eat and eat everything carefully, because what you eat makes your gross body. Before consuming it you should test and make sure that your food is of *sātvika* (or *satoguṇī*) tendency, for, this will give righteous nourishment to your mental tendencies.

Referring to similar aspects (pertaining to the subtle effects of food), the Manu Samhita highlights —

Pujitam Hyaśanam Nityam, Balamurjam Cha Yachchhati | Apūjitam Tu Tad Bhuktam, Ubhayam Nāśayedidam ||

Meaning: Purified and ‘consecrated’ food provides energy and power whereas impure, unconsecrated food causes adverse effects. Here, by ‘consecrated’ is meant – sanctified by offering to the Deity and eaten gracefully with corresponding feelings; it is found to have healthful, ennobling effects on the gross and the subtle bodies.

The following *Mantra* from the “Chhandogya Upanishad” also elucidates the hidden effects of what we eat and further illustrates the majestic insights of the *rishis* of *vedic* times:

Annamaśitam Tredhā Vidhīyate Tasya Yaḥ Sthaviṣṭho Dhātustatpurīṣam Bhavati Yo Madhyamastanmāñsam Yo~ṇiṣṭhastanmanah |

Meaning: Food has three parts. Whatever is eaten has three simultaneous effects accordingly. The gross part is what is not

consumed by the body (by metabolism) and is excreted; the subtler part, referred as ‘*rasa*’ (in Ayurveda) is used in making the elements (flesh, bone, etc) of the gross body; the subtlest, invisible part contributes to nourishing the mind.

The above-mentioned subtler properties and effects of the food we eat are most sensitive to the sentiments with which the food is prepared and eaten. If we pay attention to this fact and adopt the disciplines laid down by the *rishis* and the ancient experts of Ayurveda, the food we eat could provide enormous benefits to our physical, mental and spiritual health.

More and more people are being attracted now-a-days towards the so-called fast-foods, eating anything preferred as ‘tasty’ food outside in the gardens or roadside stalls, restaurants, hotels, etc. They are driven by the greed of the tongue and suffer from varieties of health hazards as a consequence. It has therefore become extremely important that we understand and care for the role of food in our life from all angles. The scenario of physical and psychological health would improve, and more importantly, the rising trend of mental vices would be checked, if people realized the significance of the perceivable and subtle properties of food and adopt the disciplines of eating pure, properly cleaned and cooked, naturally healthy foods with the feeling of consecration and sanctification.

It is stated in “Brahhaspati” that — “*Sarveśāmeva Śaucanāmanna Śaucam Viśiṣyate*” (Meaning: Purification of food is the most important purification”).

The *rishi* author of “Mahabharata” writes —

*Mitam Bhukte Samvibhajyāśritebhyo
Mitamswapityamitamkarmakṛatwā |
D a d ā t y a m i t r e ṣ v a p i y ā c i t a ḥ
Sanstamātmavantam Prajahatyanarthāḥ ||*

Meaning: All diseases and sorrows escape from the life of the one who observes self-contenance, who eats only minimal necessary quantity of food after offering it to his dependents; who works hard during the day for good purposes and sleeps in night only for the duration essential for healthy relaxation of the body and who is generous to even those not friendly to him or not known to him.

This *Shloka* conveys that it is not only sufficient to just eat. We should be attentive to— proper quality and quantity; and eat after sharing the food with the needy around us rather than just grabbing and gobbling; we should also practice appropriate physical exercise and adopt disciplined work habits and self-restraint over sense organs; take sufficient sleep but avoid lethargy and dullness. Being humble and kind even to those who may not be favorably disposed towards us is also important for our health (especially of the subtle body).

Our hunger often increases or is suppressed depending upon what type of food is kept before us; at times, our mood also varies accordingly after seeing the food in front of us and thus affects our health. Analogous effect is induced in the reverse direction as well — the quality (especially the subtle impact on health) of food changes according to the state of our mind, the level of our thoughts and feelings while eating. The same food would have healthier effects if eaten in a happy mood, whereas mental excitement, disturbance or depression etc, would make it harmful or less suitable to our health. As many of us might have

experienced, the food eaten in a state of anger or tension is not digested properly and causes acidity, constipation, etc.

The negative effects of mental state upon food are equally significant for our spiritual health. An Ayurvedic scripture “Bhava Prakasha” warns in this regard —

*Irṣyābhayakrodha Samanviten, Lubdhena
Rugdainya Nipīditena |
Vidweṣayuktena Ca Sevyamānam, Annam Na
Samyakparipākameti ||*

Meaning: If there is any sentiment of jealousy, fear, anger, greed, lust, gloom, sorrow, hatred, etc, or there is an attack of some disease while eating, then the food consumed cannot be digested (and will be hazardous to health).

In short, it is repeatedly warned that the sickness of mind or having a negative emotional state while eating is as pernicious as eating in a state of physical ailment. In fact it is more damaging, as it not only causes

immediate untoward effects on physical health, but, if it occurs frequently, it eventually becomes a cause of chronic diseases and psychosomatic disorders as well.

The practice of chanting *mantras* before having food eliminates such risks and increases the chances of positive, healthy effects in two ways. Contemplation over the meaning of the *mantra* and the associated feelings calm down and purify our mind. The vibrations of *mantra* induce soothing effects on the endocrine glands and also generate sublime currents of healthy spiritual impact. The latter kinds of benefits are achieved only after the practice of physical and mental purification and chanting the *mantras* before eating becomes a regular habit, observed sincerely with due mental and emotional engrossment.

(To be continued)

In the year 1885, in a function of the New English High school in Pune, a volunteer was posted at the entrance gate so that after inspecting the invitation cards he could guide the guests to their respective seats in the hall. Chief guest of that function was Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade. As he reached the entrance gate he was stopped by the volunteer who requested him to show the invitation card. “ My boy, I don’t have any invitation card.” Ranade said. “Then you are not entitled to go inside,” was the volunteer’s polite answer. Seeing Justice stuck at the gate, members of the welcome committee approached him and tried to take him to the stage, but the volunteer obstructed them saying, “Sir, if the members of the welcome committee themselves will hinder me from performance of my duty, how can I do it sincerely? As per instructions given to all guests’ invitation cards I cannot be partial”. The same volunteer later became the great Gopal Krishna Gokhale whom Gandhiji considered as his political Guru.

Gāyatrī Mahimā

On the auspicious occasion of Gayatri Jayanti (May 29, 2004) we give below the excerpts of the introduction given by Shraddheya Dr Pranav Pandya, Chief Editor, in the beginning of the episodes of the serial “Gayatri Mahima” being telecast by the national TV channel, Door Darshan, at 10.00 A.M. on Sundays.

-Editorial Team

1. The opening invocation and the first component of *Tripadā Gāyatrī* — the first segment of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*—signifies implicit faith in the Divine Source of Existence. The underlying meanings of “*Om Bhurbhuvah Swah*” are – “I believe in the existence of the Supreme Power which is Omnipresent; which is reflected in the limitless opulence of Nature. If I believe that God is omnisciently present, I will not feel, think and do anything wrong. I will always feel His presence in all dimensions of existence, perception and conception – in the *Bhuḥ, Bhuvah, Swah Lokas* – and therefore be mindful of what I do. Faith in the Almighty means faith in Divine Law of *Karma*. That means, I shall always remember that I have to reap as my destiny, what I sow as my *karma* (actions) today – irrespective of whether someone is seeing it or not in the gross world. Divine consciousness force is pervading subliminally all around me, all the time; therefore, all my actions and thoughts ought to be pure, noble and altruistic. Such a devotee of *Ādya śakti Gāyatrī* ultimately attains Immortality and Divine Bliss.

2. The first part of *Tripadā Gāyatrī* guides us to *Bhakti Yoga*. *Bhakti* means devotion to the “*Ishta*”, the divine ideal manifestation of God. Sincere devotion of *Gāyatrī Mahāśakti* bestows divine intelligence, which leads to enormous talents and supramental

attainments. *Bhakti* is practiced by *Upāsanā*. *Upāsanā* of God means sitting near an indwelling divinity. It naturally induces divine virtues within us. Anything kept near fire gets warm. If our devotion to *Mahāśakti Gāyatrī* is true, at least a fraction of Her infinite universe of divine qualities would be inculcated in our inner self. The immediate sign of this would be the liberation of our mind from all tensions, worries, stress, jealousy and other vices and transmutation of our thoughts and sentiments.

Upāsanā of *Gāyatrī* is practiced with meditation upon the soothing, bright glow of the rising Sun and associated emotional engrossment in the feeling of absorbing the divine radiance of God *Savitā* (the sublime source of the subtle body of the Sun) into our being. A dirty drain also becomes pure and sacred by immersing in the holy Ganges. We also can become sinless and full of vibrant spiritual energy and pure joy. The purifying brilliance (*tejas*) of *Savitā* can sparkle in our beings and transform all darkness (ignorance) within us into effulgent light (Supreme knowledge). This is what is the gist of *Gāyatrī Upāsanā*. Millions of *parijans* of the *Gayatri Pariwar* have devoted themselves in this *Upāsanā* of *Ādiśakti Bhagvati Gāyatrī*.

3. The second component of *Tripadā Gāyatrī* teaches us to awaken an ardent

aspiration for spiritual seeking within us. The second segment of the *Gāyatrī* Mantra – “*Tatsaviturvarenyam, Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi*” enfolds astonishing implications in it. Once our faith in God and the feeling of devotion has been deepened and firmly rooted within by *sāadhanā-upāsanā* in the first phase, there would be natural enlightenment of our inner-selves, emergence of the enlightened intelligence within us. This is what is prayed for here in the second phase – “May the divine radiance of God *Savitā*, which is the destroyer of all sins and ignorance, the *tejas* which embodies divine light, illuminate our being”.

God is regarded as an absolute ensemble of all virtues, preeminence, and righteousness. In this component of the *Mahāmantra* it is prayed that the grace of God may awaken noble qualities in us. As the blotting paper absorbs water or ink completely, we should also learn to assimilate the divine qualities, the grace of *Gāyatrī*, the pre-eminence of *Savitā* in our personalities. We should unite with divinity and become “*tatsam*” – same as That. This is what spirituality is all about. What goes on in the name of religion or spiritual practices today is only lifeless ritualism. The essence of religion is to cultivate virtuous qualities, the characteristics of divinity in our lives, in our conduct, in our deeds.

4. *Gāyatrī Mahāmantra* has three components. The first one takes us to *Bhakti Yoga*. The second teaches us *Gyān Yoga*. It guides us towards *Sāadhanā*. *Sāadhanā* means – self-refinement, self-transformation through self-restraint and self-discipline. Inadvertently, in our ignorance, we continue accumulating a medley of evil and junk thoughts and animal urges. We must have conscious control over the flow of our

thoughts. Once we practice this, our mind begins to concentrate on the focus of our meditation, our *Iṣṭadev* - be that Lord Ganesh, Yogeshwar Krishna, Shri Ram, Mahakaal Shiva or any other symbol of God. The second segment of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* inspires us to discipline and refine our thoughts. One, who has mastered the thinking process and attained the ability of positive, constructive, enlightened thinking has indeed perfected the art of living a fulfilling and purposeful life.

Control over thoughts makes it easy to master our speech and all other sense organs and enables us to make constructive use of our time and resources. These four disciplines of thought, speech, time and resources are the key to all success in the material as well as spiritual domains of life. This is what is true *Yoga*. We as devotees of *Gāyatrī* should become true *Sādhaks* and achieve the supreme aim of human life.

5. We should well understand that focused *Sāadhanā* is the only certain means of “*siddhi*” – supernormal attainments. If anyone has achieved anything worthwhile in this world, it has been accomplished through unflinching hard work and sincere endeavors – *tapa*, coupled with mental discipline. These two are necessary for success in *Sāadhanā*. If *Sāadhanā* is practiced with sincerity and unflinching faith, one attains everything worthwhile for which he or she aspires. Be it material success, prosperity or spiritual upliftment; these “*siddhis*” are not showered indiscriminately. These are the end-results of corresponding *Sāadhanā*.

The *Sāadhanā* of *Gāyatrī Mahāśakti* surely endows a devotee with majestic *siddhis*. Glorious success in the material and spiritual domains flow from the energy generated by this *Sāadhanā* in the inner

recesses of our consciousness. It also bestows “*Ātma Gyān*” the *siddhi* of ultimate self-realization, after which nothing remains to be known or attained. *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* enables mental control and gradual awakening of the otherwise dormant powers of the higher and illumined ranges of the mind. It bestows the knowledge and potential of unifying individual consciousness with the cosmic and supra-cosmic realms.

6. The third component of *Tripadā Gāyatrī* links us with the essence of “religiousness”. Whatever be our faith or mode of devotion, understanding the truth of religion and hence following the righteous path – this is what the third segment “*Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayāt*” of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* exhorts us to aspire for. *Dhiyah* means intellect, *Yah* means That, *Naḥ* means our, *prachodayāt* means inspire towards righteous path. It will not be an exaggeration to say that this gives the quintessence of all religions; and is the formula of the true universal religion of mankind. True religiousness indeed transforms selfishness into unbounded selflessness. This is what is prayed for in the third segment of this *Mahāmantra* – “May the divine radiance of Lord *Savitā* inspire and lead us towards the illumined path of righteousness”. We should never think of any evil; never think of harming or hurting anyone in any way. Global welfare and bright future for all is what we should work towards and pray for. It is indeed this component of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*, which makes it a *Mahāmantra*, the essence of the *Vedic Dharma*. In today’s world of religious bigotry leading to communal conflicts of the worst kind, every human being should understand and mindfully live a meaningful and genuine religious life. May the

inspirations of the third segment of the *Gāyatrī Mahāmantra* awaken and enlighten the whole human race with the true import of religion.

7. *Ārāadhanā* means — altruist action for the welfare of all sentient beings. *Gāyatrī Mahāmantra* is referred to as “*Tripadā*” – having three segments, three parts. It inspires divine devotion, spiritual seeking and religiousness. It illuminates our intellect and exhorts us towards the righteous path and teaches us to live an altruist life of selfless sharing and caring. We are born as human beings to nurture, guard and glorify this marvelous creation of God, Mother Earth and its children. This world is like a garden planted by God. Human greed and perversity have pushed this grand creation, the entire earth to edge of extinction; the very existence of life on Earth is in danger. It is an alarming situation. We should hurt no life form in any way. We should try our level best to nurture, to protect and beautify this magnificent creation of the Almighty. Eradication of selfishness, ignorance, infirmity, backwardness, etc should be our prime goal. Literacy, education, awakening and uplifting of the masses are the avenues through which we can practically express our gratitude toward the society, the nation, and the world at large. This is what is the call of the day. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, the seer-sage of this era has taught by example that — self-enlightenment is the best service of the society. If each of us sincerely takes up the triple self-effort of *upāsana*, *sādhanā* and *ārāadhanā* and thus become more and more selfless, altruistic and enlightened, it is bound to have its ripple effect and the dawn of the new Age of Truth, (a fulfillment of his Yug Nirman Yojna) will soon appear on the horizon of human consciousness.

8. *Gāyatrī* Mantra consists of 24 letters of *Devnagri* script. Its last word *prachodayāt* appears to be the most remarkable in its meaning and impact. It means – “Inspire us to take the righteous path”. It is a prayer to God *Savitā*, to divine mother *Gāyatrī* to illumine our intellect to follow the path of Light. This is what the radiance of *Savitā*, the power of *Gāyatrī* bestows – divine enlightenment. The moral anarchy, corruption and perversities of today are the outcome of the perverted collective human psyche. *Sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī Mahāśakti* activates within us the divine forces that would destroy all the demoniac powers and lead us into the golden Age of Truth.

9. Initiated by *Sadguru*, through *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* one can attain enlightenment. *Gāyatrī Mantra* is also the *Guru Mantra* and Scriptures describe *Gāyatrī Mantra* as the Eternal Word. Proper initiation into *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* under noble guidance of *Sadguru* is essential for divine accomplishments. ‘*Gāyatrī* and *Guru*’ is essentially an inseparable pair representing the pre-eminent Eternal power of creation and Supreme Creator—the combined spiritual inspiration and guidance - which purify the physical and subtle bodies of the *Sādhak*. Therefore protection and guidance of a *Siddha Guru* is essential for success in *Gāyatrī Sādhanā*. *Siddha Guru* is one who has accomplished the feats of the great Vedic sages *Vashishta* and *Vishwamitra*. The physical presence of *Sadguru* is immaterial. *Guru* can guide from subtle and causal realms and elevate the

consciousness of *Sādhak* towards the illumined realms of intuition and beyond. In *Gayatri Teerth*, *Shantikunj*, disciples are initiated into *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* in the sublime presence of its patron - founders *Sadguru Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharyaji* and *Mata Bhagwati Devi*. Millions of elevated souls bear testimony to the miraculous effects of the *Tap Sādhanā* of the *Yug Rishi Couple*.

10. The literal meaning of *Gāyatrī Mantra* is – “We adore the Primordial Life-giving, Evil-destroying, Omnipresent Light of God embodied in our souls. May that Divine Radiance inspire our intellect to tread the righteous path”. The occult vibrations generated by *Gāyatrī Mantra Jap* transmute the personality and lead the *Gāyatrī Sādhak* out of the darkness of ignorance into the Light of Supreme Knowledge. The deity of *Gāyatrī* is *Savitā* – the visible form of which is the rising Sun. Ardent prayers are offered to *Savitā Devatā* so that His life force may empower and illuminate our souls. “*Suvati Prerayati Karma Vilokam iti Suryaḥ*” – the divine entity that is perpetually engaged in altruistic *Karma* and inspires every one to become *Karmayogi* is called *Surya*. *Gāyatrī Jap* focused in meditation on the rising Sun is the key to paranormal attainments. According to *Rishi Vishwamitra* – “*Gāyatrī Sarvakāmadhuka*” – “*Gāyatrī* fulfils all the desires”. Therefore, all are invited to take up *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* in right earnest to be able to accomplish the Supreme aim of life.

* * *

In life two types of people meet failure: one who thinks right and does not follow up with action and the other, who does the actions without thinking.

Interview with the *Ris̥is* in the inaccessible *Himālayas* (Autobiography of Poojya Gurudev Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya)

The first day was spent in having a glimpse of the Supreme Spirit in the natural beauty of Nandanvan. I did not know when the Sun set and the night approached. I was directed to go to a nearby specific cave to sleep. It seemed as if the main purpose was not as much of sleep as of protection of my unacclimatised physique from the intense cold of the region. There was a possibility of a meeting with *Gurudev* again in the night. *Gurudev* suddenly appeared that night in the cave. It was a full-moon night of *pūr̥ṇimā*. Bright golden light of the moon was scattered all over the *Himālayas*. There was drizzling of golden particles of snow and it appeared as if drops of gold were raining far and wide. With the appearance of *Gurudev* a circle of warmth was formed, otherwise in that terrific stormy cold night, it would have been difficult to stir out.

I did not enquire about the purpose of his visit at this odd time because I understood that *Gurudev* had been showering his grace on me for some specific purposes. I followed him outside the cave. My feet were moving above the surface. I realised that day why there was the necessity to acquire *siddhis* (supernatural powers) of flying in the air, walking in the space. It was more difficult to walk on a rough and rugged glacial snowy surface than to walk on the surface of water. Now-a-days, one may not feel the necessity of such *siddhis*, but they were definitely needed in those days for movement in those inhospitable regions.

I came out of the cave trembling with bitter cold and started moving behind *Gurudev* like his tail in mid-air over the golden *Himālayas*. The purpose of that day's pilgrimage was to introduce me to the *tapasthalī* (place of worship) of ancient *Ris̥is*. They had all cast off their physical bodies but most of them had retained their astral bodies. Causal bodies of some of them could also be glimpsed through their astral bodies. I suddenly found myself in a posture of folded hands with my head bowed down in deferential salutation. I was being introduced today to *Ris̥is* living in their astral and causal bodies in the *Himālayas*. That night was extremely important and fortunate for me.

Earlier, I had seen only those caves of Utrakhand during my journey, which were easily approachable. I realised today that there was far more unseen compared to what I had seen so far. Small caves were being used by wild animals but bigger ones were orderly, neat and clean and were meant for *Ris̥is* who were living in their astral bodies. They still lived there occasionally on account of their past association. All those *Ris̥is* were in *dhyān-mudrā* (meditative posture). *Gurudev* told me that they often lived in that state. They did not interrupt their meditation without some valid reason. Their astral bodies along with their names were introduced to me. This spiritual treasure is the speciality and uniqueness of this region. They all knew beforehand about my visit with *Gurudev*. So whenever both of us

appeared before them, they opened their eyes with a gentle smile on their lips and nodded their heads slightly in response to our salutations. There was no conversation with any of them. If any person living in astral body has to say or convey anything he does it not by *baikharī* or *madhyamā* speech but by *parā* or *pasyantī* speech, that is, by awakening intuitive faculty of the listener. That day's aim was to see them only and not to converse with them. A new student who had come to join their class was to be introduced so that he could be provided with the necessary help, if needed. Probably the *Risis* had already been informed that I (their embodied spiritual child) could carry forward the divine tasks initiated by them and what my specific role would be and the strategy of action towards that end.

An astral body can arouse inner inspiration and transmit energy waves. But a person in physical body alone can give direct and concrete guidance to embodied human beings and precipitate physical events. Divine beings, therefore, make some physically living person as the instrument for fulfilling their purpose. Till then, I was acting as an instrument of only one guide but now these divine souls of the *Himālayas* could also utilise me as their medium and provide me inspiration, efficacy and competence. With this view *Gurudev* was introducing me to them and all of them without wasting any time and observing any formality, were indicating their acceptance of this offer. Thus this divine impartation continued in the night; and before dawn *Gurudev* returned to his abode leaving me in my cave.

I saw *Riṣi-lok* for the first time that day. I had seen holy places, ponds, and rivers earlier in the course of this pilgrimage but till then I did not know which *Risi* was

associated with which particular location. This I saw that day for the first and the last time. Before sending me back *Gurudev* cautioned me, "Do not try to establish contact on your own with these *Riṣis* and interfere in their work. If they have any direction to give, they would themselves do so. Your understanding with me has also been the same that you will not, on your own, knock at my door. Whenever necessary, I would myself approach you, achieve my purpose and arrange for all the resources. Do not regard this vision which you have seen here as mere satisfaction of a curiosity. All these great divine souls will get their purposes accomplished through you because they cannot do it themselves for want of physical bodies. It has been the tradition to establish mass contact through the medium of some fit instrument like you. Henceforth you should regard instructions of all these *Riṣis* as my own instructions and do whatever you are directed to do." What could I say except nodding my acceptance? *Gurudev* disappeared.

Clarifications about the outline of future programmes

The next day of the stay at Nandanvan was all the more amazing. The vision of seeing *Riṣis* along with *Gurudev* during the previous night was moving before my eyes like a film. As sun spread on the velvety carpet of Nandanvan, it appeared as if heaven had descended on the earth. Flowers of different kinds and colours were thickly scattered on the plain plateau and it appeared as if a multi-hued carpet had been spread out.

All of a sudden *Gurudev* appeared. Unlike the previous night, he was now in the same form of field of light in which he had appeared before me for the first time in my

room of worship. *Gurudev* said, “I was aware of your devotion and courage of past births. This time, I called you here, put you to three tests to make sure that you were morally and mentally fit and strong to undertake more important tasks. I have remained with you throughout this pilgrimage and have been watching all the events and your reactions to them and feel fully assured. If your faith had not been unshakable and your vision transparently clear, *Riṣis*, living in their astral bodies in this region, would not have appeared before you and expressed their souls’ anguish. They want that their incomplete works be completed. Great souls do not bare their hearts before weak, miserable and incompetent persons. They have expressed their feelings before you, considering you competent”.

“If your surrender is genuine you have to carry out, as life’s only mission, the programmes chalked out for you with full devotion. The first programme is to perform twenty-four *puraścaraṇas* of twenty-four lakh *Gāyatrī mantras* in twenty-four years. Great competence is required for accomplishing great works and so you have been entrusted with this first programme. The second programme is two-fold. You have to continue your study and take up the translation of *Sanskrit* treatises composed by ancient sages into Hindi and arrange for their publication to make them easily available to the masses. This will help in rejuvenating the almost extinct divine culture, which is capable of becoming the bedrock for the future global civilisation. Side by side, so long as you are on the physical plane, you have to facilitate publication of your writings in as many languages as possible, to make available the message of divine life on earth to people at large. This work is related with

the capability acquired by you through your first *sādhanā*. To this end, dedicated and erudite persons will gather around you in due course of time, and will carry forward the work initiated by you”.

“The third work is to play an overt and covert role as a freedom fighter in the struggle for independence. This struggle will last till 1947. By that time most of your *puraścaraṇas* will have been completed. This is the first phase. At present there are no indications that Britishers will easily grant independence to India and quit. But this aim is bound to be achieved even before your *puraścaraṇas* are completed. By that time you will have gained ample in-depth and broad-based experience and capability to undertake with whole-hearted concentration the primary mission of your life: establishment of divinised humanity on earth”.

“A *puraścaraṇa* should culminate in *pūrṇāhuti* by *yagya*. A *Mahāyagya* after the end of twenty-four *puraścaraṇas* should be on such a scale that twenty-four lakh *āhutis* (offerings in sacrificial fire) could be given, so that through its medium you may be able to lay the foundation of an organisation. This needs expenditure of lakhs of rupees and cooperation of lakhs of people. Do not believe that you are alone and you have no money. We are with you behind the energy generated by your *upāsana*. Have complete faith that everything will be done at the appropriate time. People will come to know about the miraculous results of devout austerity and *sādhanā* of a true *sādhak*. This is the first phase of your programme. Go on doing your duty. Do not think that our power is insignificant. You may seem to have limited power but when both of us unite, our power will be multiplied manifold just as one

and one put together make eleven. Always remember that it is a divinely guided *mission*. Then why have any doubt? It is not necessary to chalk out any programme in detail at present. Go on with your studies, *puraścaraņas* and your work as a freedom fighter. Live at present in your birthplace and accomplish all these three programmes of the first phase.

“I may also give an indication of the future plan. The task of publication of literature and setting up of a widespread organisation for moral and spiritual upliftment are to be accomplished at Mathura. *Pūrñāhuti* of the *puraścaraņas* will also be performed there. Press, publication and other activities relating to manifestation of divinity in humanity and descent of heaven on earth will also be initiated in an organised manner at Mathura. This attempt will take the form of an unprecedented historical movement.

“The third phase is to fulfil the will of all these *Riṣis* who live in their astral bodies here. You have to sow the seeds for revival of *Riṣi* - traditions which will sprout and spread worldwide in due time. This work will have to be done in the *Tapobhūmi* of *Sapta-Riṣis* at *Sapta Sarovar*, *Hardwar*. At present, I have given you only a hint. In course of time, you will be summoned here and detailed outlines will be explained to you. You will be summoned thrice for these three purposes”.

“During the fourth phase you will have to shoulder the most difficult work relating to the extremely intricate and formidable global problems. You will know, in due course, what is required of you and it will be accomplished.”

I had heard that *siddha puruṣas* lived in the caves of the *Himālayas* and by merely

seeing them a person could get occult powers. In my journey, I found no truth behind such beliefs. Without my saying so, *Gurudev* knew my suspense. He placed his hand on my shoulder and asked, “Why do you feel the need of a *siddha puruṣa*? Are you not satisfied by having a glimpse of the astral bodies of the *Riṣis*? Are you not satisfied with what has been revealed to you through me?”

It was not a matter of lack of confidence but a mere curiosity. *Gurudev* read my mind and said in a jovial mood, “There are such *siddha puruṣas*, no doubt; but two new factors have intervened, requiring these divine souls to withdraw into their astral bodies. First, the easy and rapid means of communication and transport have increased manifold the rush of tourists (as opposed to pilgrims) to these regions, making uninterrupted *sādhanā* impossible. Secondly, if they shifted to still higher regions, it would have become well nigh impossible to sustain their physical bodies under those inhospitable conditions. So they have abandoned their physical bodies and now live in their astral bodies, which are not physically visible, and they are not required to do anything to satisfy their physical needs. Therefore, all these divine souls have not only shed their physical forms but also the location of their stay. They have even changed their routine of *sādhanā*. Moreover, they can be visible only to *genuine sādhanaks* who have familiarity with occult planes of consciousness; and they do not shower their grace on undeserving persons masquerading as seekers of truth. When you come to the *Himālayas* next time, you will have a glimpse of such *siddha puruṣas*.”

When *Gurudev* had appeared before me for the first time in my room to guide me, I had come to know how *Devātmās*, who are consciously aware of the Infinite

(*Parabrahma*) live in astral bodies. It was my own childish ignorance which entertained this curiosity. I was truly blessed by seeing the *Riṣis* in their astral bodies and by the assurance given by *Gurudev* that I would have their glimpse during my next visit to the *Himālayas*.

Gurudev said, “When I summon you again you have to be here for a period extending from six months to one year. Your body has now become fit for living in conditions prevalent here. You will have to come here three times to strengthen and ripen all that you have practised here and all arrangements will be made to fulfil all your basic physical needs. This *tapasyā* in seclusion and solitude is also necessary because you will be able to learn patience and endurance, which are needed for shifting from the physical body into the astral and from astral into the causal. The human body is afflicted by hunger, thirst, cold, heat, sleep and fatigue. One can hardly overcome them living at home because all facilities are available there and there is no challenge for practising devout austerities, penance and endurance. In the same way, mind is overwhelmed by six kinds of impurities, which are inherent in the ordinary day-to-day life of the world, and it is essential to retire to a secluded place to overcome and transcend them. These are: passion (lust), anger, avarice, delusion, pride and jealousy. You have to live separately in solitude in the *Himālayas* to practise physical endurance and mental austerity and penance to fight against internal infirmities. Thus, by living three times for a total period of about three years in the *Himālayas* and by establishing

public contacts during the rest of the time you will be put to a test to ensure that your devout austerity has become well-grounded.” This programme was chalked out by *Devātma Gurudev* and was in tune with my own inner aspirations. As a result of my association with saintly persons (*satsang*) and regular studies and contemplation (*swādhyāya*), I was fully convinced that by exercising control over the ten organs of sensation and action and the invisible mind, a person can get rid of dispersion of life energy and his inner powers can be awakened. This is the highway for becoming a *siddha puruṣa* even while living in this physical life. Restraint of the organs, restraint in respect of use of material wealth and time and restraint of thoughts; these are four kinds of *sanyam* (self-control). Once these are fully regulated and controlled a person gets liberated from lust, anger, greed, and attachment, attains self-transformation and acquires *siddhis*.

I wanted to remain engrossed in *tapāścaryā*. But how could I do that? One who has surrendered himself to the divine will, has no choice of his own. Therefore, when I heard from *Gurudev* what I was required to do I was too happy to contain myself and started waiting anxiously for the appropriate time.

Gurudev said, “Our talks are now over. Go to Gangotri where arrangements have been made for your stay, food etc. and start your *sāadhanā* sitting on Bhagirath Shila, Gouri Kund. After completing austerities in solitude return to your home. I will be watching over you regularly”.

(To be continued)

If the elders practice what they preach to their children, this world will become a heaven.

LORD SHIVA AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF HIS DEVOTION

(Translation of the original discourse in Hindi: “*Bhagvāna Śiva Aur Unakā Tatva Darśan*”)

Let us begin with the collective chanting of the Gayatri Mantra:

“*Om Bhur Bhuvah Swah,
Tatsaviturvarenyam Bhargo Devasya
Dhīmahi, Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayāt ||*”

Sisters and Brothers,

When Goswami Tulasidasji began to write the holy and sublime Epic “*Ramcharit Manas*”, he first prayed to Lord *Shiva* and Goddess *Parvati* as –

“*Bhavāni Śankarau Vande Śraddhā
Viśwāsarupiṇau |
Yabhyam Vinā Na Paśyanti Siddhah
Swantasthmiswaram ||*”

The saint poet firmly believed that the great Epic being written by him through divine inspiration could not serve the purpose of enlightening the masses and liberating them from the agonies and sufferings of the world without the divine grace of *Bhavāni-Śankar (Parvati and Shiva)*. Therefore, he ardently invoked the grace of *Bhavāni-Śankar*. The above śloka (couplet) originated from the depths of his aspiring soul and is the key to the understanding of the basic divine attributes of masculine-feminine divinity, which actually manifests as *Śiva - Śakti* or *Bhavāni-Śankar*

This evening, we too have prayed to *Bhavāni-Śankar*. Let us try to grasp the great message conveyed through the above salutation.

“*Bhavāni Śankarau Vande*” means “We pray to the Goddess *Bhavāni (Parvati)*

and God *Śankar (Shiva)*”. Who are they? “*Śraddhā Viśwāsa Rupiṇau*” – *Parvati* is *śraddhā* and *Shiva* is *viśwāsa*. *Śraddha* – absolute intrinsic faith that inspires and inculcates divine virtues and values, and *Viśwāsa* – unperturbed confidence and inner belief, together prepare the ground for the manifestation of the divine force of *Shiva-Parvati*. Their idols, which we worship in the temples by offerings of flowers, ablution, *kumkum*, etc are only symbols to help us focus our faith and devotion. The rituals of worship are also symbolic. We have to clearly understand that the key to receiving divine grace lies in *śraddhā* and *viśwāsa*. “*Yabhyam Binā Na Paśyanti...*” – without which, no one, not even a *siddha*, can have a vision of the Indwelling Divinity.

I recall here a story from the *Puranas* that explains the above fact more clearly. The anecdote (pertains to the pre-historic time before the Era of Lord *Ram*): “Once upon a time, when Rishi *Parshuram* learnt that the world was suffering from anarchy, corruption, injustice, exploitation and immorality in every walk of life, he could not sit like a silent observer. In reflective silence he prayed for guidance and light to be able to find an effective remedy. He retired to Uttarkashi and engaged himself in rigorous worship of Lord *Shiva*. Pleased by his *tapa* Lord *Shiva* blessed him with an angelic axe (*parśu*) and bid him to use it for the eradication and uprooting of all the evils and vices that had spread in the society of that

time. Indeed *Parashuram* did liberate the earth from all the evil forces and immoral trends; nothing could stand before the infinite might of *Shiva's* weapon”.

The scriptures are full of such descriptions evincing the ultimate, eternal power of Lord *Shiva*. But what has happened today? We also worship and offer our devotion to Lord *Shiva*, still we remain afflicted by so many difficulties and sufferings? Why isn't the divine grace of *Shiva* bestowed upon us? Why and how we have lost the righteous path and sullied our lives despite being His devotees? When will God uplift us? I myself was once quite puzzled by such questions and doubts in my mind. But soon a story from *Shiva Puran* clarified all my doubts and conveyed me the answers.

Why our devotion is of no avail?

I had read it while translating the eighteen *Puranas* from Sanskrit to Hindi. It clarified to me why our devotion to Lord *Shiva* does not result in the kinds of miraculous boons our ancestors were receiving? Why don't we see any signs of His generous boons, which were so easily showered in the ancient times on anyone who did *tapa* for His grace? It is not that people like you and me are per se debarred from receiving such boons; rather, it is the fault in our approach, the half-heartedness of our dedication, insincerity of our devotion and the shaky nature of our faith that hinder accomplishment of our *sāadhanā*. We will have to find out and eliminate our shortcomings, our infirmities. Unless we are honest in our own efforts towards spiritual elevation, how can we gain and demonstrate the immense benefits of spirituality and how could we convince the world that we are the devotees of the Supreme Power and Presence

that can change for the better the course of human history and destiny? So, where has been our major mistake? Well, the root cause of our failure is our misconception. We have only seen the external form in the idols of Lord *Shiva* (and *Parvati*) and have mechanically followed the customary rituals of worship. We have not understood the philosophy, the true meaning, of devotion to Lord *Shiva*.

What we see in the temples as the idol of God is only like the gross representation of His limited manifestation. The gross body is only an outer shell; the source of life, the *prāṇa* lies inside. The external and internal both together make a complete unit; their conjugation is like completion of electrical circuit by connecting the positive and negative poles. The current of divine force would begin to flow in the idol we worship if we realize and activate, by our inner faith and true devotion, the sublime power of the God it symbolizes. We ritually put our heads at the feet of the idol; worship it with flowers, sandalwood powder, and what not. We pray before it, sing devotional songs, etc but that is only an external activity. It remains incomplete without the understanding and the linkage with the inner, the subliminal and the true divine power.

We should know the subtle and causal forms of Lord *Shiva*, which when realized in the idol, would make His presence real for us in that gross physical symbol. What is the inner form of *Shiva* that we should realize in His idols? What is its philosophy? Well, as symbolized by his round globular *linga*, He is Omnipresent; the globe, the entire cosmos is His manifestation. If we regard the universe as His emanation and interact with it accordingly, we would be able to touch the bedrock of spirituality and see the limitless

expression of God that was projected by *Shri Ram* and *Krishna* before their deserving devotees. As described in the *Gita*, when *Arjun* was confused in the battlefield and got ensnared in attachment and despair, Lord *Krishna* appeared before him in the cosmic form and showed him that everything in the world was His play. Every individual manifestation, from the tiniest to the largest, comes out of Him and merges back into Him.

One day, mother *Yashoda* was scolding Lord *Krishna* in His childhood because despite her repeated admonishments the kid had again eaten soil. *Krishna* innocently replied that he had not eaten any soil; he opened his mouth before *Yashoda* as a proof of his innocence. When the mother peeped in His mouth, she was stunned to see the entire cosmos, the revolving galaxies, the infinite life forms, the gamut of Nature's manifestations there. Lord *Ram* had also done a similar feat, as cited in the holy *Ramayana*, when He showed His limitless self, His cosmic form to *Kag Bhushundi*, the great devotee in the form of a crow.

These instances teach us that we should regard the whole world as God made manifest. The round stone worshipped as the '*piṇḍī*' of *Shiva* also indicates this deep aspect of divine philosophy. It reminds us that the cosmic expression is round, it has no beginning or end; an atomic orbit is also round; the earth is also globular. Thus the philosophy of worshipping the '*piṇḍī*' implies worshipping the world –loving service for global welfare. It also tells us that we should treat others with the same respect and warmth, as we would like to receive from the world, because we are all different sparks of the same Light. If we could understand and adopt this philosophy in life, we would no doubt be the true devotees of *Shiva*, and

our power, our knowledge and our potentials would also become grand like those of His true devotees.

Teachings from *Shiva's Idols* in Human Form: Lord *Shiva's* human-image is so beautifully depicted in the scriptures. It depicts the sacred *Ganga* flowing through His hair lock. But it is symbolic. Here '*Ganga*' represents the flow of pure knowledge. Sheer common sense would tell us that a river or spring of water can't flow through one's hair, and if so, the person concerned would not be able to even stand or walk. Instead, he himself would get swept along these currents. The depiction of the '*Ganga*' of Knowledge on *Shiva's* head is also a philosophical teaching. It implies that if we are the true devotees of Lord *Shiva*, our feelings and thoughts should be pure, enlightened and of superior quality.

A low level of thinking, feeling and a life confined to sensual pleasures, satiating the gross urges and a hunger of the senses depicts an animal like existence. Such people can never be the devotees of Lord *Shiva*. How could one be accepted as a worshipper of the Omniscient Divine Power if he can't think and feel beyond the narrow confines of selfishness? One who never cares to ponder over and strive for the wider and deeper domains of the society, the nation, morality, ethics and spirituality, one who is not aware of and committed to his duties, can't even be a good human being, let alone a devotee of God.

The principal attribute of a true devotee of the Lord is that the *Ganga* of pure knowledge flows through his head; that means his mind is illumined and blessed with righteous thinking, which gives peace and bliss to the soul. Attitudes and thoughts of those coming in his contact would also be

purified by the sprinkles of this ‘*Gyan Ganga*’. If your mind and heart also begin to evolve in this direction, then only you will have followed the underlying philosophy behind the specific image of Lord *Shiva*.

We also find a half moon beautifully encircling the forehead of the Lord. Moon is the symbol of soothing serenity. Its presence on *Shiva*’s head teaches that a worshipper of *Shiva* should have a cool, calm and awakened mind. His mind should be stable and strong so that no hardship, adversity or exciting situation could ever perturb his mental peace. Look at the great achievers in human life; they have faced great challenges without losing patience. Those who get anxious or do not have a stable mind cannot do much; they easily get tensed up, or nervous and fritter away their energies and talents. A calm and cool mind alone can contemplate deeply and think rightly. An agitated mind is not dependable. It often triggers one to do what one should not have done; it tends to think erroneously and even immorally.

Today, when the whole world is living under great difficulties and threatening challenges of one kind or the other, it is all the more important that we take shelter at the feet of the ultimate Savior – God *Shiva* and pray that the moon of piety, peace, balance and equanimity on his head may also inspire patience and serenity in our minds. We should pray him to bless us with inner peace, patience, endurance, and courage. Instead of begging for worldly attainments (as we usually do before any deity), had we

prayed for divine inspirations before the infinitely generous Lord *Shiva*, we would have really acquired real peace and happiness in life and lived gracefully like a true devotee.

The images of Lord *Shiva* that we see in pictures depict Him wearing a garland of skulls and with dreaded cobras dangling around his neck. The intimate company of deadly poisonous snakes reveals the secret of divinity, which is – love everyone; it can turn everyone, even the venomous cruel cobra like foes into good friends. See, even the cobras live so amicably with Him! We should understand and adopt this philosophy of a loving and fearless attitude.

The presence of a garland of skulls on the Lord’s chest reminds us that the face, which we identify ourselves with, for which we feel so proud and remain engaged in decorating and taking care of, is only a structure of bone. That is its sole reality. We remain deluded and cheated by the covering of flesh and skin around it; not only that, we use cosmetics and what not upon that skin to make our face look beautiful. But have we ever thought about its reality? Just remove the illusive covering and the fact will be obvious for everyone to see. The garland of skulls conveys that we should not let the falsehood and the associated silly attachments cover up our Real Self. We should learn this important lesson while worshipping Lord *Shiva* or sitting at His feet.

(To be continued)

The fragrance of flowers spreads only in the direction of the wind but the reputation of a noble person spreads in all directions.”