

## Divine light of Vedic heritage



***What stands in the way is the ego with its ignorance, its pride and its physical consciousness which contains inertia that resents and resists any call to change. To watch and to observe nature in silence is to contemplate upon God. That quietness is blissful.***

**India's Divine light of Wisdom**

***“Bharatiya Dharma of the Himalayas”***

**Written and composed by Jyotikar Pattni**

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***Aum Hreem Shreem Vakratundayah MahaKayayah SuryaKotih  
Samaprabhah Ridhi Sidhi ShreeMan\_ MahaGanadhipattaye Namoh  
Namah***

***‘The one embodiment of the Sidhanta Surya ‘effluent Divine Sun’, in  
whom the entire illusion MAYA is submerged in the naval as all  
auspicious dawn and creation divinely sing, dance and wake up the  
Great rhythm of ‘Ridhi’ and ‘Sidhi’ for music is the beginning of life and  
music is the pathless eternal symphonies of Gods of which “AUM” is the  
first primordial sound of Gods.’***



Let us abandon the territorial differentiation of humanity based upon political passports and economic conveniences, sociological irrationality and egotistic discrimination of “yours” and “mine”. There are two worlds of humanity - The world within us sacredly enveloped and world without [the external spiritual world]; the manifest and the un-manifest; the material and the spiritual world; the intuitive and the rationally visible; the mystic and the cystic. What is required of us is that we honour and nourish the sacredness the divine gift and purify our minds to remove all the negativities, hatred, anger, anguish, fears, and human made camouflages.

We will need to understand how to build a bridge between these two worlds. Extreme views are not helpful to the world, nor are they helpful in our own lives. It is best to gain control of our thoughts, sensations, emotions, and urges. Control does not mean stopping pleasures entirely, or over-indulging. Control means balance. To achieve it, we need to calm down the parts of the mind that are running so fast; we will need to rest entirety of our mind, and for that we need to learn ways knowing ourselves and humanity at large through contemplation, spiritual practice and divine devotion. We are given the divine boon to be alive and to breath by the sacred divine creation, we create the world around us by our own initiative and our own desires. When we therefore experience adversities due to our own karma we need ask ourselves what it is that makes us come back alive; because what is needed in the present uncertainty is fearless divinity based on stability and quietness and peaceful contemplation.

The Vedic Godhead comprises Indra, Somam, Varuna, Agnee, Mitra, Aryaman, Vayau, Yamma, Nirriti, Kubera, Vasus, Manus, Ishana, Prajapati, Brahma, Rudra, Shiva, Surya, Narayanayeh, and Rudrani. Of all these Vedic Gods, Ganesh is given the prime minister status or the governing author of the Vedic literature. He is “Shubham Labham” Deva of auspiciousness, wisdom, luck, proliferation, and abundance. Without Ganesh, no auspicious rite, ritual or good occasion is accomplished. Shiva is the cosmic divine guru, the cosmic God of Vedas and the Divine God of Hari, the Hara who upholds and protects the Somam nectar in one hand and slays the evil intentions of devils with another hand in dissolution of death. Death in Vedas is only a change in physical state.

The spiritual journey replenishes with karmic cycles and until the karma nullifies to ‘shunya’ [nothingness].



*Past, present and future; is all Shiva. Shiva is the third eyed Sun, Shiva is the cosmic beholder of moon on his head, Shiva is the God of all spirits, Shiva is the benefactor God of all Serpents; Shiva is the God of all Cosmic Gods because Shiva beholds the nectar of "SOMAM". Shiva is the Hara of Hari. Shiva is timeless [akaal]; divine Brahmah, the divine cosmic soul, the inspiring cosmic dancer, the warrior, the fiery dissolver, the powerful one; Shiva is the 'ArdheNareshwarayah' 'SHAKTI-PURUSHA' dual entity of the world with [pashupattinath] and without [Somam-Rudra-Hara]. Aum is the sound of Vedic Godhead.*



**Bharati** is a sacred land wherein the ancient Vedas unite in fusion the scientist and the pious together upon principles and philosophy of cosmic science, cosmology, and cosmic Gods. One [Scientist] endeavours to ponders and contemplate over the manifestation of matter and its karmic cycle in different stages of evolution; whereas the other contemplates upon the divine spiritual soul in million moments of sacred silent dialogues of Vedic hymns, mantras, and practice in different stages of spiritual evolution. Both merge at the same conclusion towards the same light of the “energy”. “Energy” causes the friction of karma and karma causes the reason for life and death. As much as the life breath is ‘pranna’ [energy of the spirit], the absence of ‘pranna’ becomes the dead matter. Therefore, the myth of soul being in the heart had been dismissed by the Indian scientists long ago before Medicine had even taken shape. Soul was realised and understood in a system of chakras long discovered before medically establishing the anatomy of the lymphatic system. Both are inter-related.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In ancient time, great sages and sears had evolved the highest level of science and culture related to yoga, Vedant, Ayurved, Tantra, Astrology, Astronomy, Mathematics, Chemistry, Metallurgy, Architecture, Sculpture and other things like manufacturing of weapons, ship building, Ornaments of body, made of gold, silver etc as early as 10000-7000 BC or time immemorial. Traces of these achievements were discovered in 3000 BC when civilization of Mohenzodro and Harappa were known. Such development of science and culture by ancient Rishis and Munis is generally known as INDIAN HERITAGE. Bharata means Arjuna [the spirit of life]; Bharati means divine mother of Vedas [India].

The knowledge and the information related to ancient India, scattered in different directions of the world and its discovery by Indian and foreign scholars have led to the firm conviction that in ancient time, India was the mother of science, culture, and religion.

Science of medicine and surgery was as old as 3000 BC and 120 surgical instruments existed in the time of Buddha. As early as second century BC, Na Arjuna who was specialised in mercury had the knowledge of changing the base metal into gold. Atleast, his six works are known which are (1) Rasa Ratnakara (2) Ultar Tantra (3) Arogya Manjari (4) Kakshapita Tantra (5) Yogasalak. Ayurveda, the science of medicine, which has also been mentioned in Rigveda and Athar Veda, is as old as life on the earth. From India, the religion [dharma] spread to China, Indonesia, Tibet, and other eastern territories during the Buddhist era.

Surya Siddhanta occupies very important place in India. Bha drabalu, an astronomer was the author of Astronomical Samhita commenting on Surya Prajnapati. Aryabhat wrote at least two books on Astronomy (1) Arya Bhatiya (2) Arya Bhate Siddanta. Arya Bhatta propounded the theory of rotation of the earth; he had also invented an alphabetical system of notation. Brahma Gupta composed Brahma Phute Siddanta. Our most panchangs are based on the classical astronomical treatise Surya Siddanta. Long before the discovery of the centre of gravity by Newton (1642-1727 AD), Bhaaskaraya Charya

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(1150 AD) had stated in Siddhanta that heavy things fall on earth on account of earth attraction(Madhyakarshana).

The famous Iron Pillar (Qutab minar) which remains un-rusted for 1500 years indicates the advancement of Micro Iron Technology.

India's fine cloth and crafts were famous throughout the world. World wonder temples at Angkor Vat in Cambodia, Borobundar temple in Java, Kailash temple at Ellora and wall paintings of Ananta had surprised the entire world.

India had developed its marine activities as early as 3rd millenium BC which played important role in spreading the trade and cultural contacts with distant lands and our ships sailed, up and down to all quarters of the earth. Archaeological discoveries at sites both coastal and internal have provided eloquent proof of trade and cultural relations between India and Mediterranean world.

The universities of Taxisilla, Ujjain, Amaravati, Nalanda, Kashi, Kanchi, Vikramsila, Madura, Vallabhi, Mithila, Odantapuri, Nadia, and many others were well organised and well equipped as early as 700 BC.

The Patanjali Rishi and Kapil Muni codified the yoga sutras and Vedic science of yoga, which has helped man even to achieve Nirvana.

The Buddhism which spread in many countries such as Sri Lankan, China, Japan, Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Central Asia, Burma as early as 6th and 5th centuries BC had been the shadow of Hinduism in terms of its culture and civilisation.

The amazing discoveries and innovations made by India were highly appreciated by foreign scholars and scientists. They had told the world the remarkable achievements of Indian Past that had virtually been lost during centuries of foreign rule.

The comments of the some of the foreign scholars are quoted below:

Albert Einstein We owe a lot to Indians, who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.

Romain Rolland If there is one place on the face of this earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest day when man began the dream of existence, it is India.

Mark Twain India is, the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grand mother of tradition. Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only. In religion, India is only millionaire; the one land that all men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for all the shows, of all the rest of the globe combined.

Will Durant It is true that even across the Himalayan barrier India has sent to west, such gifts as grammar and logic, philosophy and fables, hypnotism and chess, and above all numerals, and the decimals system.

Thoreau Whenever I have read any part of the Veda, I have felt that some unearthly and unknown light illuminated me. In the great teaching of Vedas, there is no touch of sectarianism. It is of all ages, climbs, and nationalities and is the royal road for the attainment of the great knowledge. When I read it, I feel that I am under the spangled heavens of as summer night.

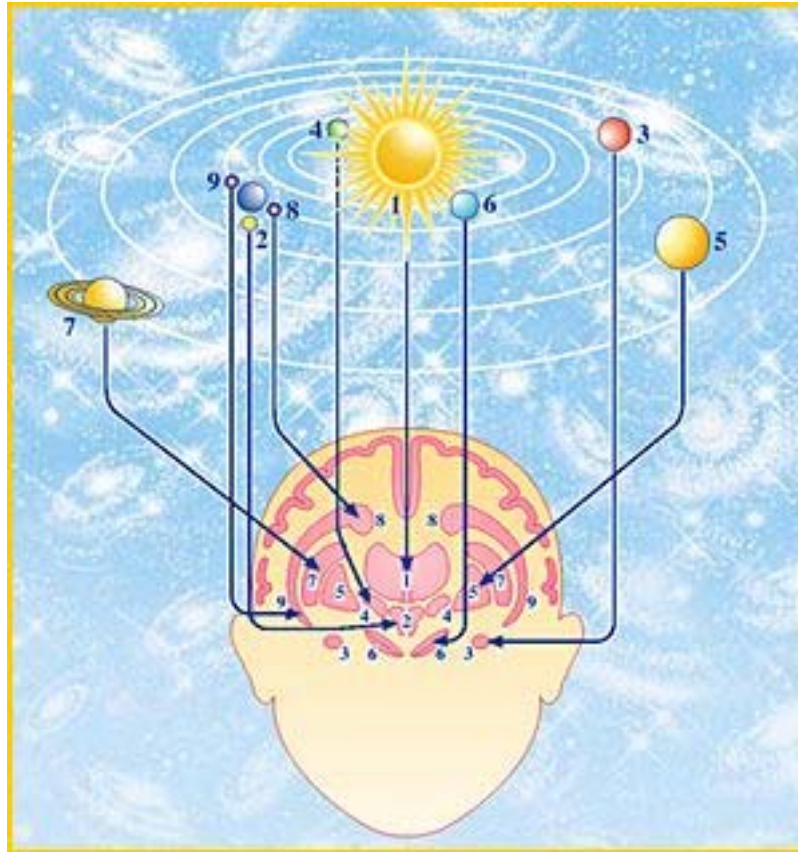


Long before, the west invented metamorphosis of medical compendiums, Indian Sages and Saints, Seers and Rishis, the Himalayan Devas [divine humanbeings] had co-related the un-manifest micro cosmic to the manifest macrocosmic. Each energy centre or hub of human energy could be linked to the energy hub of the galaxy, planets, and energies and derived at magnetic fields, circumferences, and parameters of defining energy in many perspectives namely the physical, the metaphysical, the emotional, the spiritual, and the un-manifest higher form. Brahma and Hari are the two nirguna [formless] and sarguna [form] natures of God we refer to in Vedic Cosmology. Energy is co-related, interrelated, and cross related with each cosmic sphere and to each cosmic points and planets and energies. The Vedas are eternal and the source of all creations and their greatness is to be known in many different ways. "Sanno astu dvipadesancatuspade"-- this occurs in a mantra: the Vedas pray for the good of all creatures including bipeds, quadrupeds etc. Even grass, shrubs, trees, mountains, and the rivers are not excluded from their benign purview. The happy state of all these sentient creatures and inert objects is brought about through the special quality of the Vedas. Vedas are also notable for the lofty truths that find expression in the mantras. The tenets of these scriptures have moved humankind of all faiths with poetic beauty of the hymns, the subtle manner in which principles of social life are dealt with them, the metaphysical truths embedded and expounded in them, and the moral instruction as well as scientific truths contained in them.<sup>2</sup>

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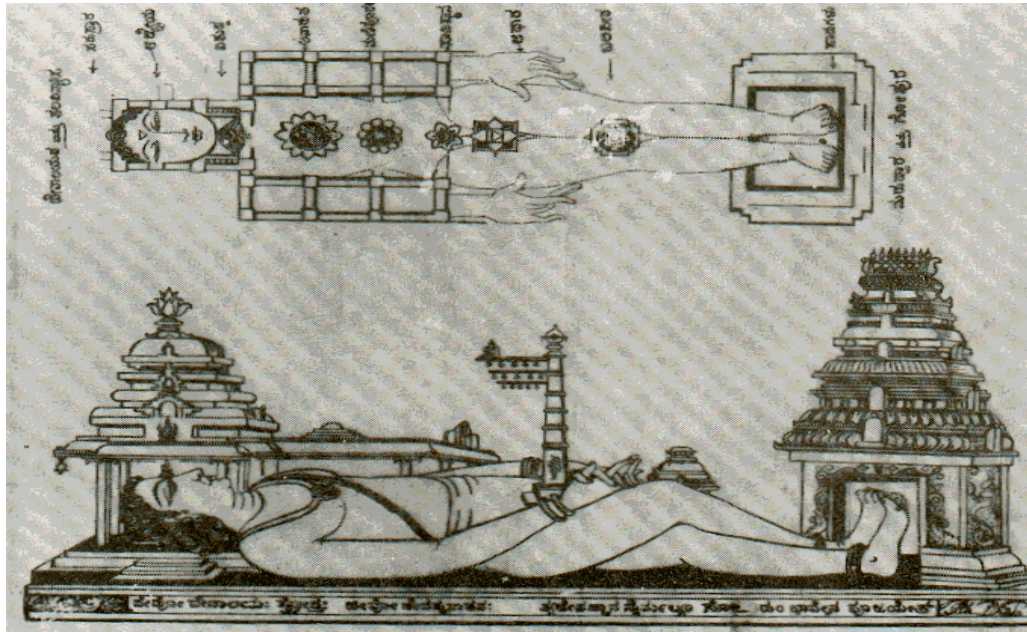
Max Muller If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India. Sir William Jones: The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either. Francois Gautier Here is the actual source of all the languages, all the thoughts and poems of the human spirit, everything without exception comes from India.

<sup>2</sup> It must here be emphasised that on the doctrinal level the Vedas deal both with worldly life and the inner life of the Self. The Vedas are the lawful scriptures of the 'Rtu' the nature and how to live in it.

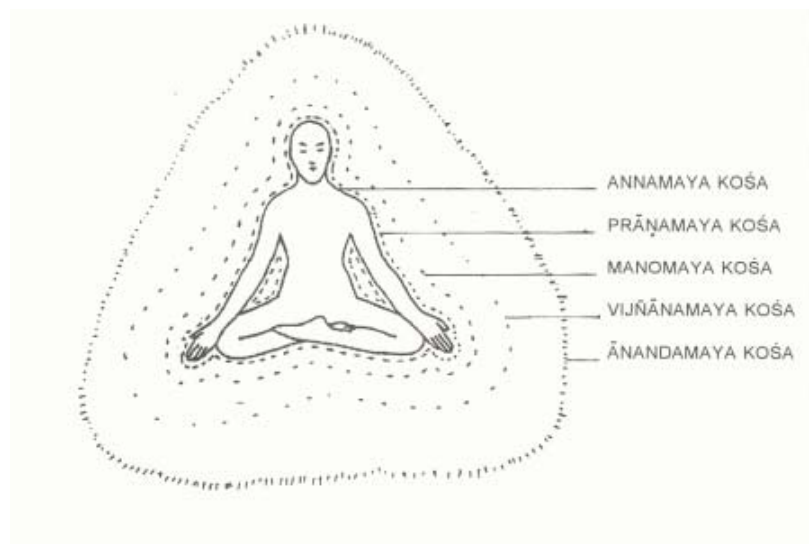
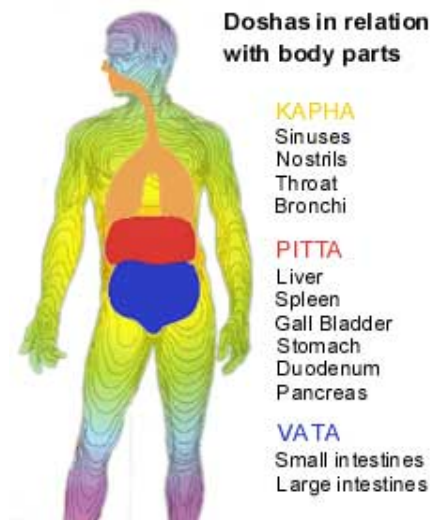


*Mere existence is God, and mere existence also is any kind of divinity operating everywhere. Aum is the first sound of Gods. Gayatri mantra is the mother of Vedas. “Aum Bhur Aum Bhuvah Aum Suvah Aum Mahah Aum Jannah Aum Tappah Aum Sattyamm Aum Tat SaviturVayrenyamm BhargoDevasya Dhimahi DhiyoYoNaha Prachodayyatt Aum Tat Sat. The seven spheres of existence are human chakras.*

The human yantra of chakras, the microcosmic human, and the astrological macrocosmic were co-related and related to prove that the human is a micro or minute molecule of the large atom or macro cosmos and both are similar in manifestation. The human body was thus analysed from a spiritual perspective as below:



The three gunas [qualities of un-manifest nature] namely the sattva [pure divine], rajas [ambitiously karmic] and tammas [desirously lustrous] gave resultant doshas or physical propensities in the human anatomy namely the vata [comprising the seven pranna – vayau or the life breath travelling in the human body from the coccyx to the crown and back]; the pitta/ agnee [the seven different fires in the body maintaining the metabolic functions of the various functions of assimilation and distribution of proteins and cells]; and the kapha [the different bodily fluids that hold the structure and the muscles and fats together to enable longevity]. All three functions of the human body in return build seven cellular body cells called sapta dhattus. The sapta-dhatus [rasa - plasma, rakta – blood cells, mamsa - muscles, medha - fat, asthi - bone, majja – bone marrow and nerves, shukra – reproductive tissues] [and the pancha-mahabhutas [ether, air, fire, water and earth], were long discovered before medicine as a science was even proclaimed in the west. The pancha-koshas namely the five sheaths covering the un-manifest spirit namely the Annamaya kosha – physical food, the Praannamaya kosha – life breath, the Mannomaya kosha – the mental, the vijnana maya kosha consciousness and the AnandaMaya kosha – the divine soul spirit of life. In Vedic scriptures, science had long been invented by the seers as a way of understanding the human being as a micro cosmic image of the grand macro cosmic existence called GOD OR JAGADA PURUSHA. Our own prakruti [body constitution] is similar to that of the existence and vice versa. The layers of constitution from the gross manifest to the subtle spiritual or metaphysical non-manifest in the micro-human form are similar to the macro-universal form of the human universal earth of existence. Beyond the subtlest orb is God Brahma.



**“Impurity”** means toxins, pollution, corruption, fear, imperialism, aggression, and reason for diseases, ailments, decay, and wrath in the human society. Impurity brings ‘vikarma’ [wrongfulness]. Purity brings righteousness. Righteousness is noble. What is true for one is true for all and vice versa. A welfare society free from fear, corruption, and antagonism, is a peaceful society filled with humanity and human compassion.

**“Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides” (Rig Veda)**

Sacredness begins with a society wherein the basic food grains are healthy free from preservations and artificial chemicals, wherein the food is from good earthen soil. Corruption is the main cause of impurity and it enters the human body through ninety-nine sources i.e. nine kinds of corruption enters through five senses, five sense organs, and outward looking mind.

In Ramayana epic, the analogy is described through nine corrupt heads of Ravana amongst one evil ego-head. Rama had to realise and learn from Goddess Durga that Ravana's spirit was in his navel not in his egocentric head. Commemorating victory of divinity over evil, we burn Ravana's nine corrupt heads every year on Dussehra day. Similarly later Mahabharata described 99 sources of entry of corruption through 99 corrupt sons of blind Kauravas king Dhritrashtra. 99 *uritras* (powers of evil) are mentioned in Rig Veda 1-84-13. It further says in 1-104-3 taking bribe for money belonging to the state is misappropriation of public funds. All bribe takers are thieves of God and they get rebirth in the foulest of the womb (confirmed even in Bhagavad-Gita). R.V 3-34-6 and Yajur Veda 30-22, the corrupt people should not be allowed by the ruler to mix with people following *chatvar varnasharam* (four divine professions). Y.V 30-19 and R.V 5-61-8 mention that those persons who praise and justify are also corrupt persons, keep away from them. R.V 1-42-4 even mentions keep away from Gurus (preceptors) who take donations/charity.

### **Causes of Corruption**

The corruption creeps in society when the matter is considered as inert and the members of society do not find any sin in treating the benign mother earth as a quarry. In Rig Vedas spirit of God is in the *shuniya* (cosmic void) of each sub atomic particle of atom- the building block of matter. Hence the matter has unsuspected vitality and its use on need based living is virtue and its excessive use is a sin. Corruption creeps in a society where economics (*artha*) is based on inert matter and the possession of wealth/any kind of matter having predominance of *tamasic guna* of stupor is considered as a matter of pride. MAYA creates a golden lid for such individuals and hides the truth and supreme reality for them.

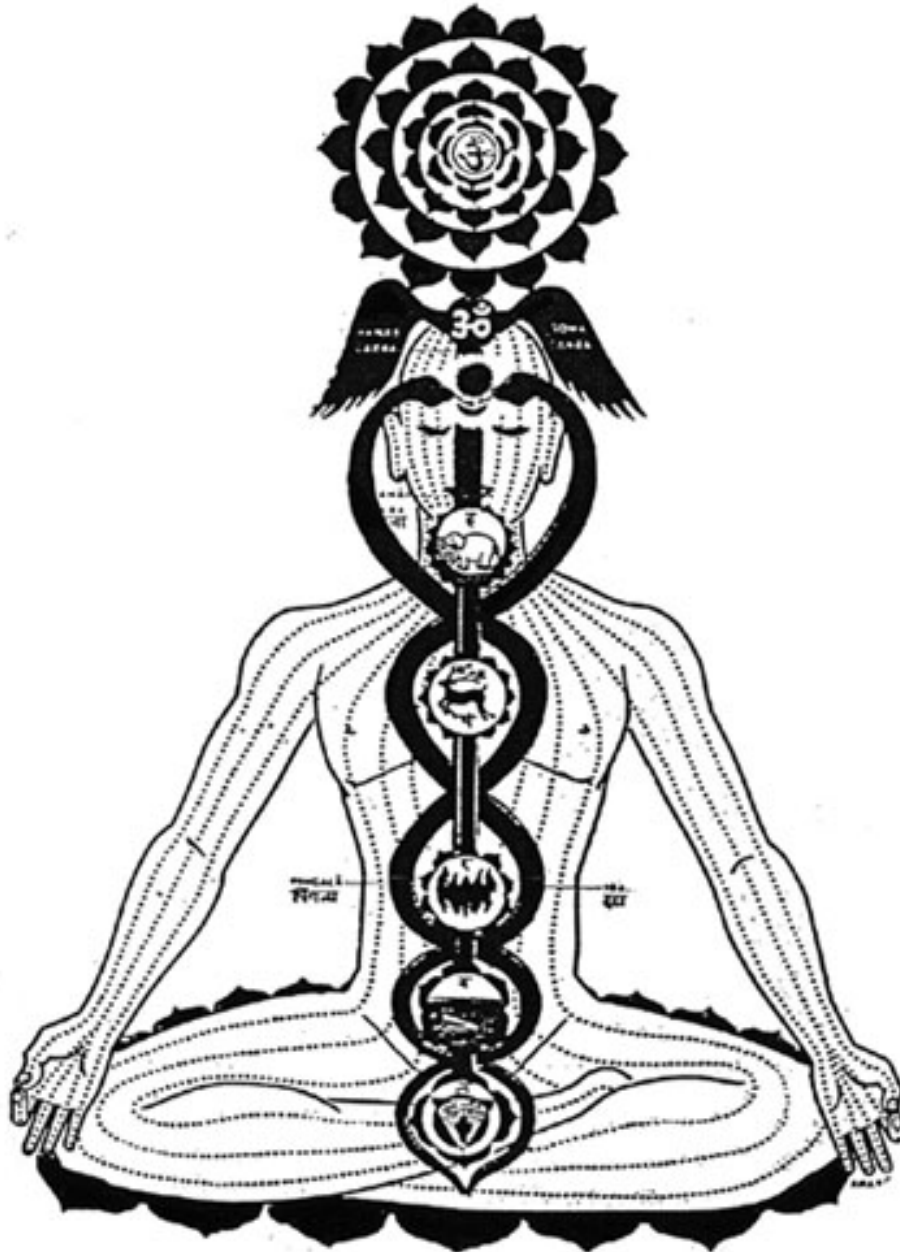
Rig Veda further says that purpose of human birth is to assist the ineffable and formless God who is also Supreme Architect (Viswakarma) in the maintenance of His grand and wondrous Design [jagada]. For the maintenance of this design [universe], God has created Rta- eternal cosmic laws of necessity and adherence. For harmony, all human beings follow the same without prejudice. Having created these eternal laws of nature "He Himself" follows them sternly lest a great harm is done to the cosmic creation. Thus, He and His Laws (RTA) are the same. When the individuals in any society starts ignoring these laws available to human beings through the Book of Nature (which even blind individuals can read), corruption creeps in society.

R.V 10-34-13 also says that any kind of gambling particularly the game of dice is also cause of corruption. The vehement effect of this evil of the game of dice was described in Mahabharata.

Corruption destroys all the noble attributes of human beings due to pursuit of only material knowledge bereft of spiritual and divine knowledge, which in Vedas is ignorance/nescience/*ajnan*. (R.V 1-129-6). Only harmonized divine, spiritual, and material knowledge is true knowledge (*Jnana*) in Vedas. Corruption manifests in ignorance, gross indulgence of physical senses, lustful pleasures, and society filled with selfishness, social imbalances resulting from exploitation and false ownership. Out of all, falsity and false ownership are the worst. Many want to see people saved, not because their lives and deeds hurt and dishonour God, but because they feel sorry for them and do not want to see them go to hell. True saints are upset by sin because it is so dishonouring to God. True spiritualists are distressed when they see anyone sin. It dishonours the Lord even more.

#### Start of Corruption

Rig Veda says when even one human being dies of starvation, it is a signal that corruption has crept in society and *avarnas* (followers of non divine professions) who want honour, power and wealth for themselves have started multiplying. In Kaliyuga (Dark Age), their number far exceeds the followers of divine professions (*Varnas*). Ethics and community welfare becomes the greatest casualty. Rig Veda says the thieves of God (bribe givers/takers) who consider matter as inert become insensitive to hydra headed corruption and resort to ostentatious worship and donations/gift culture to gain social recognition. Most of them drift from darkness to utter darkness through meditation (Isa Upanishad and Yajur Veda). The various virtuous concepts like *iddamm naam mamma* –nothing for self all for society akin to enlightened liberalism of Aristotle, moderation of Vedas/middle path of Buddha and the noble concept of illusion of comfort in the vast turbulent sea of matter (Vedic Phantasmagoria-Cosmic delusion MAYA) are no longer considered as virtue in the materialistic corrupt society dominated by *avarnas*, *vritras*, *kimidin* etc. In India, this evil of corruption is now becoming “Leviathan” and giant demon and is spreading like wild fire. The guidelines given by the wise met physicists (*rsis* of yore) and wandering sages (*munis* of the Vedic period) can help in arresting this nefarious and extremely dangerous drift. “Artha Shastra” (partly based on Vedic metaphysics) clearly says the evil of corruption spreads faster when the state gives lip sympathy to curb corruption and promote honesty.



Each of the human chakra were co-related, inter-related, and cross related to the seven spheres of lokas or existence above the bhumi. The lowest chakra found at the base of coccyx had been co-related to the earthen, desire sphere, or the source of kundalini energy sprouting upwards to the crown chakra, which had been co-related and inter-related with the brahma loka or the spiritually higher order. Therefore, the VEDIC RELIGION did not have dogmatic institutional beliefs or set of divided metaphors different to humankind in religious or tenebrous religious groups. Vedic religion discarded the idea of “religion” as a mechanism of belief. Instead, the Vedas insisted and projected scientifically the core perception of religion as “LIFESTYLE”. Lifestyle comprises one’s habits, routines, attitudes, reactions, tastes, etiquettes, etc.

**Lifestyle** is referred to as medically healthy life embedded with healthy thoughts, healthy eating, healthy social interactions, healthy compassion and healthy character. Healthy character means one is free from the fears of the uncertainties, and one is free from the fear of death. One's way of life, therefore is defined as religion - How we live our lives. Righteous way of life will breed health, whereas wrongful abuse and under utilisation of function will bring fault or imbalance and therefore 'dosha' or fault in the life of a human being and therefore imbalance and disturbance in one's karmic lifestyle and one's spiritual well being.

Vedic religion integrates five types of entities prevailing in human being namely the divine, the spiritual, the emotional, the intellectual, and the physical and ascertains beyond doubts that the wellbeing of the one will bring the well being of the rest and the wellbeing of the rest will bring well being of the one.

Therefore, spiritually, the human existence, the whole of the universe would be a healthier much more happier welfare "concourse of grand universal world of happiness" if within it there were no imbalances, abusive over excessive noise, wastage, wars, hatred, anger, desire, fear, insecurity, jealousy, envy, hasty life styles, corrupted social and political bureaucracies, selfishness, greed, divisions and segregations of race, colour, religion, caste, and status; and intellectual manipulations from the super powers or the imperialists.

An imperialist does not necessarily imply colonial control towers but those who exploit masses based on their level of awareness and spiritual enlightenment. "Satt-Dharma" aka righteousness or otherwise divine humanity therefore is the core and basis upon which a welfare society and a society free from fear will establish social rules that are beneficial to all and beneficial to one. Satt-Dharma implies and entails that one cannot digest more than the necessary amount of food grains and the necessary amount of comfort to live a happy life. According to Ayur-Vedic science, the science of longevity, happiness, and health comes from purity of mind, thoughts, and spirit.

Purity and divinity become the essence of generating sattvic or noble thoughts, devotion and karma. Substantial part of Vedic rejuvenation begins with 'pranayamm' exercises. Alternate Nostril Breathing (Vata Prannayamm): Helps relax the mind and balances the nervous system. This is the best breathing exercise for balancing Vata. The dawn and the dusk are very precious sacred moments to reflect upon the body with breathing exercises and mantra meditation. These times are vital for the 'pranna' [life breath]. Contemplation and reflection induce positive energies to the vital tissues [dhatus].

Therefore, we have to know the nine pillars of disease prevention according to Ayurveda:

1. Dina-charya, the prescribed bodily regulations which cleanses toxins daily.
2. Ritu-charya, consideration of the season; to cleanse in accordance to the weather.
3. Shad-vritta, the proper mental culture; to contemplate.
4. Timely attention to nature's calls

The four subordinate pillars are:

5. Inherent qualities of liquids and solids
6. Rules for eating; MOST OF US ABANDON THIS COMPLETELY.
7. Proper sleep and rejuvenation of the mind.
8. Environmental health
9. Yoga- The nine niyamas and the yaammas.

Yoga is a centrifugal theme of health and practiced on scientific cosmic postures.

However, when one engrosses in the loops of desires and lures in attachment, ownership, and possession, one ends up in decay of disease and finally crumbles during the old age. There are eighty four million unseen energy points and only sixty-four of those are actually manifested through the nada-system of yoga.

HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY—EXPRESSION OF VEDA AND THE VEDIC LITERATURE  
MAHARISHI'S VEDIC SCIENCE AS TRADITIONALLY RECORDED  
IN VEDA AND THE 36 BRANCHES OF THE VEDIC LITERATURE

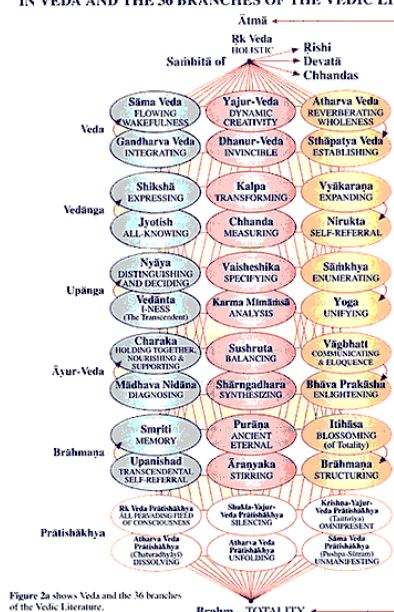


Figure 2a shows Veda and the 36 branches of the Vedic Literature.  
Atma, the source of Veda, fully awake in its potentiality is Totality—Brahm. Atma is lively in its full potential when its self-interacting dynamics, the 36 values of the Vedic Literature, together give rise to the structure of Veda (pure knowledge)—the Laws

THE HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY  
OVERALL VISION OF THE PHYSIOLOGY ORGANIZED  
ACCORDING TO VEDA AND THE VEDIC LITERATURE

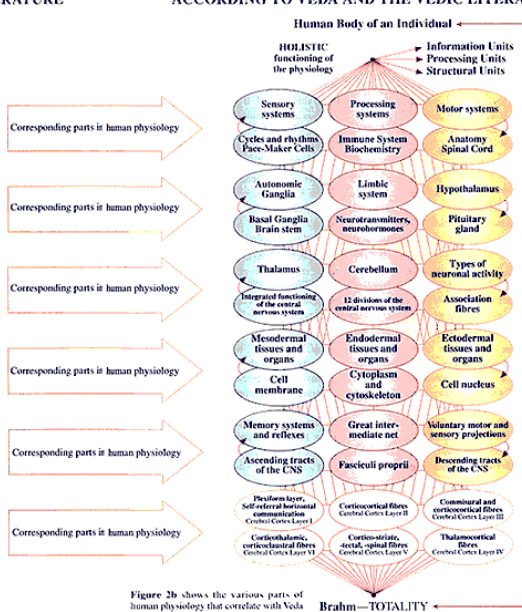
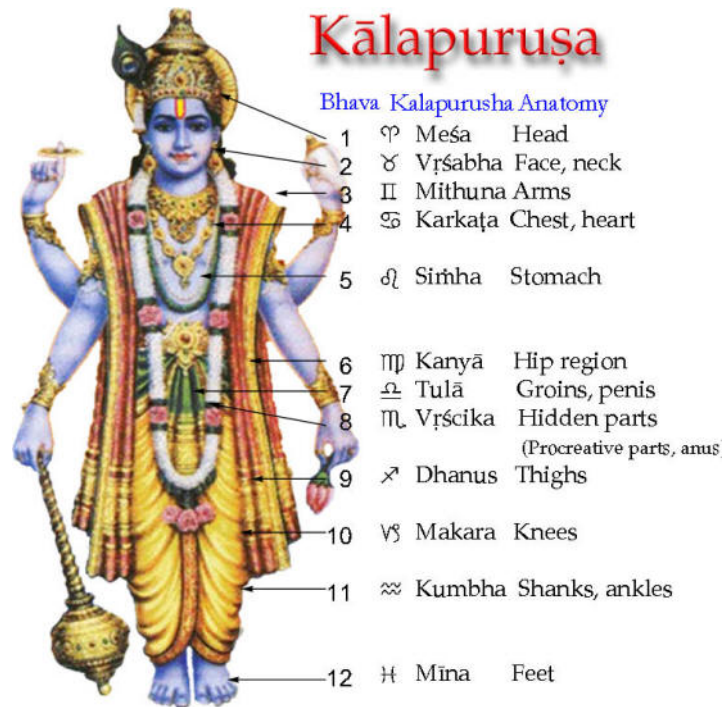


Figure 2b shows the various parts of human physiology that correlate with Veda and the Vedic Literature.  
of Nature, the Constitution of the Universe—which in turn evolve into the physiology and the material creation (Vishva) while ever remaining within the field of Atma. This Atma—Atma with the total memory of Veda and Vishva within it—is Brahman, the totality—Ayam Atma Brahman.



Co-relationship of astro-human to the astro-generic cosmic chart below:



## The VASTU-PURUSHA comprises nine directions.

Each cosmic point has a Vedic God. The Vedic God-Head is based upon Science of Cosmology. The South is 'Yamma' [God of Death], the Ketu [dragon tail]; and the Moon. The South-West is 'Nirriti' [dissolver]; the Shambhava [destroyer]; and the Kalika [fiery goddess]. The 'West' is 'Varuna' [compassion], 'Kubera' [Proliferator] and the Vasus [the givers of abundance] and Mars. The North West is Vayau [WindGod], Saturn, and Rudra [the benefactor]. The North is Somam [nectar], the Venus, and the Rahu. The North East is Shiva, Surya, Narayan, Celestial and the Brahma. The East is Surya. The South East is Agnee. The East is also Indra's seat and the North East is also the seat of Eishan; whereat the 'amrut' nectar hails Devas.

**Love is the firstborn, loftier than the Gods, the Fathers, and men.**

**You, O Love, are the eldest of all, altogether mighty.**

**To you we pay homage! -- *Atharva Veda* ix.2.19**



**The Rig-Veda is the oldest of the four Vedas.** Far from merely expressing human's primitive wonder in confronting the mankind's deities and natural environment, as early Western scholars assumed, it consists of the profound religious insights of Indian sages into the origin, nature, and destiny of the whole manifested cosmos.

This scripture's deep spiritual intent is particularly revealed by the concept of an un-manifest, absolute Oneness or Supreme Power as the central point and common source of all cosmic manifestation, ever imposing divine order and harmony upon it.

A study of this ancient text, believed to have been composed between 3,000 and 3,500 years ago, can throw light on the essential problems of human existence.

During the past three millennia, how much have we learned about understanding and resolving moral issues?

That we are sadly uncertain in this sphere because those in public life who lie and deceive in order to attain demonstrate it desired ends for selfish intentions. Even when the preservation of human lives and values are at stake, such ends do not justify the use of dishonourable means and are indeed tarnished by heroism based on false ownership.

Placing ideas about human conduct in a cosmic perspective helps us to see more clearly, what the moral obligations of the good man and woman should be. The dichotomy between an ethical and a cosmic order is foreign to Vedic thinking, not because the ethical order is ignored but because the existential order is anthrop cosmic and thus includes both the ethical and the cosmic in one.

Dharma is the ethical order that pertains to humanity and humanity is part of the cosmic order, hence the use of the adjective 'anthrop cosmic.'

Cosmic harmony embraces far more than morality since truth, righteousness, and justice are only human value judgments that reflect our vision of universal law but not the whole of it. To think in terms of a cosmic moral order is to bring in a purely human dimension at a level where the purely human is by-passed. The objective moral order of the universe exists solely in man's mind. Its counter-part in the universe is harmony, equilibrium.

Those who conceive the un-manifest One to be the Absolute Good tend to envisage the entire cosmos, both material and spiritual, as being pervaded and sustained by moral law.

How such a law could apply to all non-human manifestation seems beyond our ken; nevertheless, the thought of Supreme Goodness in the cosmos persists as an appropriate expression of the truth, just as does the supremacy of cosmic harmony. Both exist as ideas in the human mind. Either could have objective existence apart from humankind. From the strictly human point of view, however, it is scarcely possible to distinguish between them.

Harmony is the "right" relationship of parts; and what is right can only be good. When human conduct is most right, it is just, honourable, courageous, loyal, kind, generous, and compassionate. If the ultimate source of these qualities transcends the human, then to use them in character designation may involve more than human value judgments. In addition, civilized people everywhere have intuitively grasped that these are noble traits representing the realization of humanity's highest potentials -- which may be divine. With or without religious significance, they have always been regarded as good attributes, while deviations from them are less good and sometimes evil.

The harmonious relationship of peaceful men, which we all seek, is built upon trust and confidence in one another's integrity. To oppose evil forces with dishonourable practices may in the short term, accomplish egotistic ambitions, political and even humanitarian ends; but aggression does not end with counter aggression ever. Those who participate in such actions may be motivated by idealism and a sense of obligation to fight their enemies in the most efficient way they know, even at the cost of personal integrity. Yet wiser people realise that dishonourable means never establish the "right" relations and, in disrupting the divine harmony of the cosmic order, are in the end a disservice to humankind. Nor is patriotic concern, however commendable, the highest duty. Nations and governments come and go as the human race struggles to evolve; our prime obligation is to facilitate its spiritual ascent. Let us recognise that despite all our human frailties, our evolutionary potentials are indeed divine and that earthly trials and tribulations are necessary to become more godlike in thought and action. One's karmic astrology chart may show what specific areas of one's life one ought to focus one's energies the most and it is inevitable that just as the Sun travels through its impartial course in more perfect spheres, its radiance helps us regardless of what we choose to do with it. The gap exists between our consciousnesses; the shortfall prevails in our conscience in comprehending our true spiritual characteristics – who we really are. That is why, consistency, constancy, punctuality and determination of the will is necessary, as is the grace of God. Without the grace of God, we cannot accomplish anything.

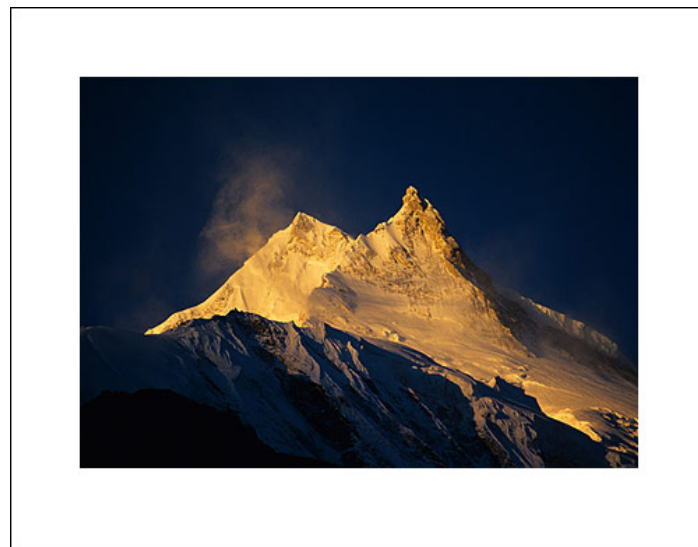
**As the sun is Surya** the soul of the cosmos, the moon is the manas the mind of the cosmos and each other planet play a significant role in Cosmic Godhead. Most hymns are sung for Indra, as Indra is the most illuminated one. Then the Nava-Graha or the nine planets peace oblations are considered very crucial and significant in Vedic puja. One who practices Surya Namaskaram everyday shall be free from illness.



The self, the param-atman, is the Brahma. The self is free from sins and the bondage of karma. The Brahma, is immortal one, the fearless one, the purusha parameishwaar. Our consciousness and conscience are the very emblem within which the levels of awareness and awakening varies from the 'jagrata' [awakened] to the 'svapna' [semi-dream] to the 'svap' [dream state] to the 'sushupti' [deep sleep] to finally 'turiya' [transcendental state]. The Turiya is similar to the hue of the sun.



India's divinity reigns from as early as 5000 BC. India aka Bharat is a divine land of spirituality albeit divided in thirty-six parts. When one removes political circumferences from karmic "India" in collective karmic time and collective karmic history, one learns gracefully that the "Bharati" [India named by invaders], was a mother of divinity. From time memorial, one can acknowledge that the greatest felony of 'Bharati's' fragmentation in sociological and political economy has been a result of controversy between the class system through which most foreign invaders took advantage. Bharati is a "she", but the present "India" ought to be re-named or addressed as Mother India or Bharati. The most ancient language, Sanskrit, is the spirit of humaneness that has been the undercurrent. It has found expression in the philosophies, in non-violence, religious tolerance, renunciation and in temporal achievements in all areas of science and technology. 'Sanksrutee' [Sanskrit culture] represents the triumph of the human mind and hence are a matter of pride for the human species irrespective of nationality. **The Vedas are a source of TRUTH.**





**The wheel of samnsahr** or the cycle of karma showing Rahu and Ketu holding the orb of Kaal, the eternal time in a flux of lokas [spheres] and manifestations of desire, attachment, greed, ownership, possession, egocentricity, intellectual camouflage, jealousy, envy, corruption, aggression, and competition based on falsity and differentiation based on discrimination. This is the fengshui version of the wheel of samnsahr adapted from the original Himalayan model wherein the Rahu and Ketu are shown as kaal sarpa yoga below. Kaal sarpa yoga implies entrapment of life in karma between one lifetime and another lifetime. Existing within kaal means living in a loka [sphere] that is not immortal because of 'sin'. Hence, Dharma keeps us in God.

*Sanataana Dharma is the universal religion of the UpAnishads, Gita and the Bhagwatam which Bharatvarsh has introduced for the whole world.* The religion which eternally exists in God, which is revealed by God, which describes the names, forms, virtues and the abodes of God, and which reveals the true path of God realization for all the souls is called Sanataana Dharma – the universal religion for the whole world – the religion of humankind – the religion of human life science. Vedic gods are devas [to sixty four thousand in the main and 33 million Demi-Gods or Devas in the secondary]. The word *dharma* is formed from the root word *dhryana* (*dhryana dharane*); it means such actions and such spiritual or religious practices that finally result in all good for a soul. A general description of *dharma* is satt-karma [divine deeds]; with divine intentions, thoughts and practices that promote physical and mental happiness in the human world [abhyudaya] that protects and nurtures humanity and ensures God-Realisation [nishreyas] in Self-realisation [mokhshahartim] in human lifetime is closely more appropriately related to Sanatana Dharma. <sup>3</sup> The samnsahr or the wheel of life is MAYA, and the human is imperfect because of the level of ignorance embedded in the mind due to the false attachments.

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<sup>3</sup> There are two kinds of *dharma*s: (a) *Apara dharma*, or *varnashram dharma*, or *seemit dharma*, or general *dharma*, and (b) *par dharma* or *bhagawatt dharma*.

(a) *Apara dharma*, *varnashram dharma*, *seemit dharma*, or general *dharma*. The word *dharma* means the religious practices and thoughts that are aimed to fulfil a pious goal in life. Accordingly, the *apara* or *varnashram dharma* is the religious discipline and injunctions of do's and don'ts that are explained in the scriptures for uplifting the *sattvic* qualities of a human being in general. *Varnashram* word refers to all kinds and classes of people of this world living various orders of life (like a family man, a priest, a monk or a *Sanyasi*), and 'apara' word means 'secondary' or 'general' or 'preliminary' because it is not the absolute or prime *dharma*, it is the preliminary *dharma* for everyone in the world. The discipline and rules of *apara dharma* vary according to the state of the spiritual consciousness of a person, and its rigidness also varies from age to age, that is, from *satyug* to *kaliyug*. In short you can understand that (for the existing age) all kinds of good deeds and philanthropic works that are beneficial to the society, and sincere observance of the religious discipline of the 'order of life' (religious student, family man, or a renounced person) you are following, come in this category, provided, that they are done with *sattvic* motivation. *Sattvic* motivation means having faith in God and then doing all the good *karmas* only to please God and not for any kind of personal gain. Even if you think of receiving compliments for your good *karmas* or the religious practices, which you observe, it will not be classified as *sattvic*, it will become *rajas*, because you desired for the compliments and you have received them. Thus, you have already availed the outcome of your so-called good deeds. According to the Gita: There is hardly any further good outcome of such good looking *karmas* in the next lifetime. So 'apara dharma' means good *karmas* with *sattvic*[divine] motivation where a person is devoted to God in a conventional manner; which imply a general faith in all the forms of God.

This kaal Maya or the deluding maya can be known by God realisation. <sup>4</sup>

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Such good *karmas* pacify the mind of the doer in the existing life, and in the next lifetime they create a good destiny which is called '*abhyudaya*' that brings physical and mental well-being in a person's life.

(b) *Para dharma* or *bhagwat dharma*. This is the main *dharma* which brings the absolute good (the *nishreyas*) of a soul, and the absolute good of a soul is only God realization which happens through the direct devotion to God in His personal form. It is called *bhakti*. It gives both, peace and happiness in life as well as God realization. *Apar dharma* is the general *dharma* for all and is only a preliminary *dharma*, which is like the preparatory practice for entering into *bhakti* for those who cannot accept it in their life right away. *Bhakti* is above all the religious formalities, rituals and intellectual practices of meditation. In one sentence you can say that *bhakti* is the true 'love' for your soul-beloved God. Any person of the world could observe it. It is universal; it is for every age; it is said and revealed by God Himself; and it is *sanatana*, which means eternal. Thus, the *dharma*, which is based on such *bhakti*, which is eternally established in *bhakti*, and which establishes *bhakti* for God as a universal religion of the world, is called Sanatana Dharm. God is: "*dharmadhishtan*." It means that the Sanatana (eternal) Dharm is established in God and resides in God as a Divine power. It is revealed by God through Brahma before the human civilization and is represented through the Upanishads and the Puranas.

<sup>4</sup> Material beings are eternally under the bondage of *maya* and are ignorant. Therefore, the Divine matters are beyond the reach of human mind. It is thus quite obvious that a material mind can never find a way to approach the Divine. It cannot even know the nature of the Divine power on its own. It is thus only God Who Himself reveals His knowledge to the human beings. It is seen in the world that nature produces milk in the bosom of a woman before the birth of a child, as the child may need it immediately on birth. Therefore, even before the birth of human beings on this earth planet, God produces the knowledge of His attainment through the Upanishads, and the Puranas. These scriptures reveal the form of God, personality of God, nature of God, greatness of God, Graciousness of God, path to God and also the procedure of the path. This path is called *bhakti* or divine-love-consciousness. Everything that relates to God is eternal because God is eternal. Thus, all the knowledge's of the Upanishads and the Puranas along with the path of *bhakti* are eternal. *Bhakti* and the Grace of God are very closely related to each other. The definition of *bhakti* (devotion). *Bhakti* is the submission of the deep loving feelings of a devotee's heart for his beloved God where all of his personal requisites are merged into his Divine beloved's overwhelming Grace, which He imparts for His loving devotee. This loving submission has been described in the scriptures and in the writings of the *acharyas* and Saints in many ways. It means that a devotee should be humble, forgiving, forbearing, respecting to the devotional feelings of others but not desiring for any personal compliments for himself. With such a humble heart, which is yearning for the love and the vision of his beloved Krishna, the devotee should sing and chant the *sacred hymns and poems*. These are all the descriptions and the definitions of the devotional *bhakti* (*sadhana bhakti*) as to how it should be observed in the practical life. *Bhakti* is eternal. It means that it is the eternally existing path to attain God.

Divine forms and divine abodes of Vedic Gods and Eternal Gods: The Vedic Godhead is build upon seven spheres of Bhur, Bhuvah Svahr Mahar Janahr Tapahr Satyam.<sup>5</sup>

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God is one, so the spiritual path of His attainment is also one, and thus, the same path of *bhakti* ensures the attainment of any of the forms of God. The path of *bhakti* is prevalent in every *brahmand* [walk of life regardless of creed, culture, caste] of this entire universe and it is for all the souls of this universe. ***Brahmand*** also refers to every corner of the grand vast existence of human world – also known as jagada. It remains the same in all the four *yugas* (*satyug*, *treta*, *dwapar*, and *kaliyug*) and, as it is directly related to soul and God, it is above caste, creed, sect, and nationality. Any person of any nation of this world can adopt it, because the supreme God Himself for the benefit of the humankind gifts it; and again, there are no physical requirements in doing *bhakti*. There are no meditation postures to adopt, no concentration techniques to follow and no rituals to observe. Therefore, it can be done by anyone, young, old, or sick, and at any time in twenty-four hours, because *bhakti* is the pure love of your heart that longs to meet the Divine beloved of your soul in this very lifetime. The philosophy of *bhakti* is also described in *Narad Bhakti Sutra* and *Shandilya Bhakti Sutra*. Vedas question intention. Geeta states *bhakti* as yoga. Karma-yoga and gyan-yoga. *Sattvic* good karmas on their own only purify the heart to some extent; but if the doer of good karmas starts doing *bhakti*, his actions are classified as *karma- yoga*, and then, on the perfection of *bhakti*, he receives God realization. Literally, the word *yoga* means ‘the unity.’ Thus, the (Divine) uniting factor, *bhakti*, when it is predominantly added to the *sattvic* good *karmas*; it is then called “*karma yoga*”. Similarly, when *bhakti* is predominantly added to the practice of *gyan* (or *yog*), it is called *gyan yoga*. Therefore, now we know that all kinds of good *karmas* and all kinds of *yog* and *gyan*-related practices are only *sattvic*, but when they are predominated with *bhakti*, they become the means of God realization, because *bhakti unfolds the field of God’s Grace*.

<sup>5</sup> One should not get confused about the celestial gods. Celestial gods are only the *sattvic* manifestations of *maya*. There are 33 main gods. Out of them, eight are important: Indra, Brihaspati, Kuber, Surya (sun god), Varun (god of water), and Agni (god of fire), and Vayu (god of air), and Prajapati; and out of eight, two are prominent: Indra and Prajapati. Brahma is the supreme authority in the celestial world and he is the creator of our *brahmand*. These gods have in no way any relation to devotion to the supreme God. There are mainly six forms of the same one single God that reveal and represent: His knowledge, His vision and Bliss, and His Divine love. They are termed as: *chit shakti*, the power of knowledge; *sandhini shakti*, the power of almightiness which also has Blissfulness; and *hladini shakti*, the power of affection or the Bliss of Bliss whose efflorescence is called ‘Divine love.’ In general, all the forms of God are the form of Bliss with Their special characteristics. All the six forms of God relate to these three powers and every form of God has His own Divine dimension or abode called lok. These forms and Their abode are: (1) *Nirakar brahm* (the formless aspect of God that represents only the knowledge aspect or the *chit shakti* of God). This Divine existence, where all the liberated souls of *Gyanis* and *Yogis* enter, is called *brahm drav*. It is also called *avyakt shaktik brahm*, which means that it is such an aspect of God where all of His Divine attributes and virtues are in an

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absolutely dormant state; that's why it remains formless (*nirakar*). (2) God Vishnu, (3) God Shiv, and (4) Goddess Durga.

The abode of all the three forms of God is collectively called *Vaikunth* (or *param vyom*) and it is the form of *sandhini shakti*. These are the almighty forms of God. (5) God Ram, His abode is called Saket, and (6) God Krishna, He has three abodes, Dwarika, Golok and Vrindaban. Bhagwan Ram and Krishna are the Divine love forms of God. Whereas Bhagwan Ram reveals the modest form of Divine love mixed with almightiness, and Bhagwan Krishna reveals and represents the intimate, more intimate, and the most intimate forms of His Divine love in His three abodes (respectively). These four abodes are related to *hladini Shakti*, the Divine love power. These are thus the six forms of the same one single God. There are some more forms of God, which are mentioned in the scriptures, like Ganesh, Kartikeyya, Gauri, Kali, Nava Durga, and Saraswati etc. All of these forms are the affiliates of the almighty forms of God of Vaikunth abode, God Vishnu, God Shiv, or Goddess Durga. This philosophy of the forms of God and His abodes has been extensively described in the scriptures in various ways and in thousands and thousands of verses. We have compiled, consolidated and reconciled the whole philosophy and kept it here in an easily understandable form. Sometimes some people leisurely ask that the other religions of the world have only one God, why then the Hindu religion have more than one form of God. First thing you should know is that such questioners are just casual talkers. They are not interested in knowing God, because, if they really want to know, they could properly study our religion and find out the greatness of and the depth of the descriptions of God in our scriptures. However, the answer is that the other man made institutional religions of the world either have 'no true Divine God' or have only adopted the 'impersonal aspect of God.' 'No true Divine God' means that although some religions use the word God in the tenets of their religious books but the 'concept of God' whatever they have is only a vague mythology derived on the intellectual grounds of the first promoters of that religion. So the 'word' God is there in their religion, but it does not relate to the true Divine God; and some religions of the world mention God only in an impersonal (*nirakar*) form. Nevertheless, in Hindu religion, the Sanatana Dharma, there is a detailed and complete philosophy of God from *nirakar brahm* to the most loving form of God, Krishna. Therefore, the one and the same Gracious God eternally appears in various forms of His Divine dignity and Divine lusciousness Who is approachable through *bhakti*, which evokes His Grace that reveals any of the forms of God, whatever a devotee desires and the kind of liberation or emancipation. Only bhakti brings true Shakti and bhakti is the communion or marriage of the human spirit to the Grandeur of the maestro through Gjnana yoga [devotion, recital of hymns, mantras, meditation, etc.] and Karma yoga [positive noble deeds to nurture and protect humanity]. Lord Kartikeyya Subrahmanya, the little son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, goes and complains to his father. 'Father, please get rid of this Ganga on your head, Mother is very much upset about it'. The Father replies, 'Oh Six-headed One, where shall I ask her to go? She has been living on my head for long. The six-headed son is angry beyond bounds. He replies in that angry mood. In fact each of his six heads in succession shoots off the same reply (but in six different Sanskrit words!): Ocean, ocean, ocean, ocean, ocean, and ocean!' Liberation from the eternal bondage of *maya* is not the outcome of any amount of good *karma* or spiritual practice or devotion. Sincere, honest, humble,

‘Satt-Karma’ [noble deeds] and ‘bhakti’ [devotion] are both dharma-yoga to God. Vedic life science places much emphasis upon environmental influences vibrations emanated from one’s surrounding. Pure air brings good health. Impure polluted air brings illnesses. As much as pure divinity brings harmony and peace, corruption brings quarrels, epiphany, natural disasters, and sudden tragic deaths. If every humankind is God’s divine spirit of life, therefore, every human spirit is “Brahma” or God’s reflection and as such, the differentiation in many covers is wrong. The so-called prophetic religions therefore are only man made boundaries.<sup>6</sup>

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dedicated, and correct practice of meditation or devotion or selfless good *karma* only evolves the *sattva gun* and purifies the heart of the doer.

On the perfect purification of the heart, which happens with selfless *bhakti*, the *gyani* or *bhakt* devotee receives God realization and then he is liberated from the bondage of *maya*. The liberation is primarily of two kinds: (1) Gyani Saint’s liberation, and (2) *Bhakt* Saint’s liberation. Gyani Saint’s liberation is a nonexperiential state called *Kaivalya moksha*, but *Bhakt* Saint’s liberation is an absolute experience of the Divine Bliss of the Divine abode of the form of God he has worshipped. The Bhagwatam (3/29) details the states of a *Bhakt* Saint’s liberation. The mind of a *gyani* or *yogi* Saint (after his death) is terminated and his soul joins the *nirakar* Divinity called *brahm drav*. His personal identity is permanently terminated and his soul enters an absolutely no-experience (*Kaivalya*) state forever; whereas the *mayic* mind of a *Bhakt* Saint (upon God realization) is instantly replaced with the Divine mind and the Divine senses of that form of God, which he has realized. Thus, his material identity is replaced with the Divine identity (body, mind and senses), and, with this Divine body (after his death) he enters the Divine abode of his beloved God (which is omnipresent) and perceives and enjoys the absolute Bliss of that abode forever. This is the liberation of a *Bhakt* Saint. Thus, a Vishnu *Bhakt* goes to Vishnu’s abode, Shiv *Bhakt* goes to Shiva’s abode, and Durga *Bhakt* goes to Durga’s abode, and so on. All of these abodes of the almighty forms of God are collectively called the Vaikunth abode. A Ram *Bhakt* goes to Saket and a Krishna *Bhakt* goes to Krishna’s abode. If he has worshipped Dwarikadhish Krishna, he goes to Dwarika abode; if he has worshipped Krishna of Golok, he goes to Golok abode; and if he has worshipped Radha Krishna or Krishna of Vrindaban, he goes to Vrindaban abode. Every *Bhakt* Saint enjoys the unlimited Bliss of the Divine abode he is in, in its absoluteness. However, the lusciousness and the enchanting fascination of the Divine Bliss progressively goes on increasing in an absolute fashion from Vaikunth to Vrindaban abode. Thus, one single Divine Bliss appears in a number of unimaginably amazing forms.

<sup>6</sup> Who so ever is selfish places his one's own happiness above other things of greater value and does not show compassion or consideration towards others. Welfare of humanity is welfare of one's family, one's social community, one's society, and one's environment. Such as the glory of God and the good of the whole creation - the universe called the JAGADA. God is pure and unselfish benevolent and param-ananadam HARI.

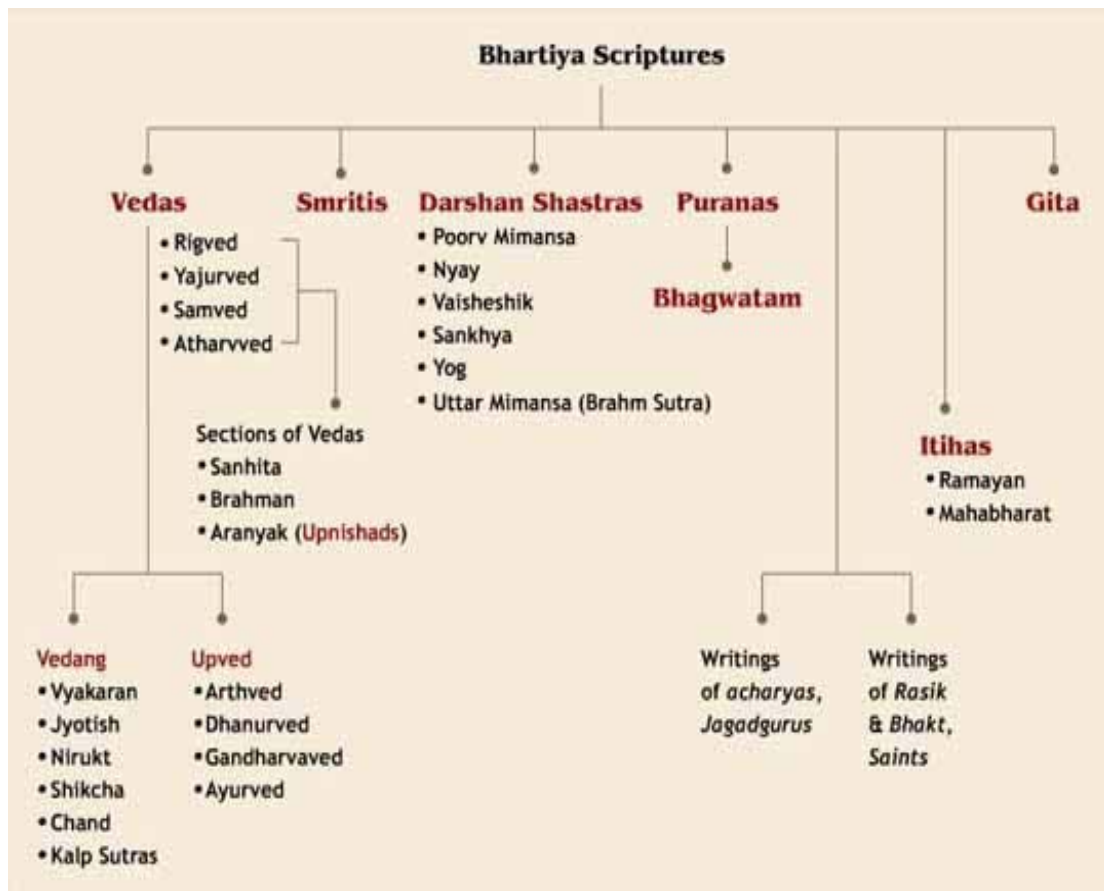
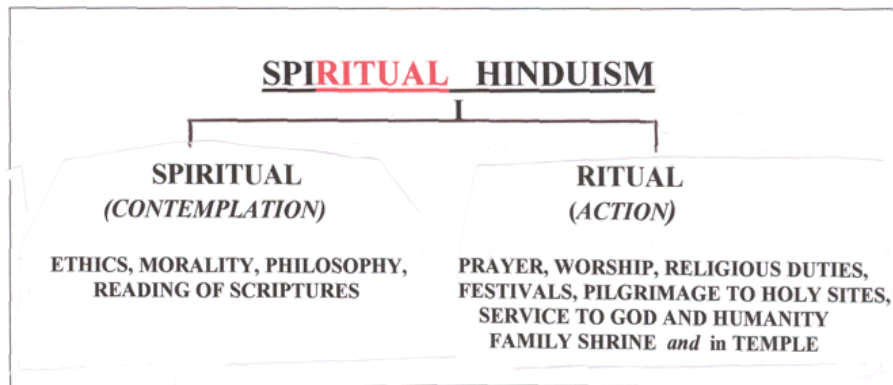
If human is unselfish and loves all spiritual obligations as lore's music, then all obligations are done with love for the HARI. The joy and delight of seeing others happy is of equal significance as it is of obedience to flow in divinity and divine salvation. The humankind naturally dreads harm, hurt and so it is not wrong to avoid it. We may have concern for our own happiness, but only according to its notional sociological values rather than spiritual intentions. Fear therefore, may be the beginning of wisdom, because, out of fear comes the quest and the search for the inner light. Most of us wish to be saved from the agonies of hell and so we become divinely humble upon realising that we are dying and death faces us. Even when we have death in the family, we become somewhat subdued and internally humble towards holiness and sacredness.

The "prakrutee" has seven colours and nine gunas. Therefore, the universe is entitled to be partitioned by seven climatic zones and nine spiritual beliefs.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Today there is tremendous international interest in the science of yoga, meditation, eastern philosophy, stress management, holistic medicine -- all of which has roots in Sanskrit literature. Recently in July 81, adults and children gathered for 9 days in California and had training in *Speak Sanskrit but not about Sanskrit*. The perfect orderliness of the language caught the attention of all. All through the centuries from 1000 A.D. to 1900 A.D., the spirit of humanness was only dormant but did not become extinct despite the historical and political disturbances. In similar circumstances, Greek, Egyptian, Roman, and Mesopotamian civilizations simply vanished. However, the traditions of India and the Sanskrit culture have been preserved without breakdown to the present days. Major part of this tradition is in Sanskrit: Drama, epics, stories, lyric poetry, religious and philosophical literature, thousands of rare manuscripts on subjects not yet studied. Furthermore, the majority of Inscriptional material in our archaeological archives; whether it is dedicatory, ritual or literary or donatives, is in Sanskrit or 'Prakriti'. These inscriptional materials are of particular importance for the study of the Indian world constituting the most detailed and accurate historical and chronological data for nearly all aspects of traditional Indian culture in ancient and medieval times. The Atharva Veda has a beautiful couplet on the true spirit of humanness. Expressed three millennia ago it is still valid and is as fresh as if it was said on the birth of this new millenium, that started only a few months ago: We are the birds of the same nest; we may wear different skins; we may speak different languages; we may believe in different religions; we may belong to different cultures; yet we share the same home - OUR EARTH. Born on the same planet, covered by the same skies, gazing at the same stars, breathing the same air, we must learn to happily progress together or miserably perish together, for human can live individually, but can survive only collectively.

## Overview of Vedic Sanatana Dharma



The concept of Secularism, which has generated confusion in the minds of people, leading to controversy and many heated discussions, has little to do with what we call 'Dharma'. 'Dharma' is not 'Religion' as we commonly understand. 'Dharma' [Spiritual Religion or the Vedic truthfulness or righteousness] is what the scriptures state, '*Dharanayete iti Dharma*' [that is inculcated and imbibed in life is 'Dharma'].

### **In addition, what is required to be inculcated in life?**

Manu Smriti states, '*Dhriti Kshama, Damoasteyam, Shaucham Indriyanigraha, Dheervidya, Satyam, Akrodho, dashakam Dharma Lakshanam*' – Courage, forgiveness, austerity, non-stealing, purity, self restraint, intellect, knowledge, truth and non-anger are the ten salient features of '*Dharma*'. By inculcating these qualities in life and practicing them '*manasa, vachaa, karmana*' – in mind word and deed, human life can be elevated to sublimity. In fact, it is in human life alone that the '*Atman*' or the soul gets an opportunity of attaining salvation or '*moksha*'.

The Vedas state '*Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah*' – Dharma protects us only when we safeguard '*Dharma*' and Dharma is safeguarded by adopting an attitude towards life as stated in the first mantra of '*Ishopanishad*'. The mantra states '*Ishavasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyaam jagat, tena tyaktena bhunjeetha ma gridha kasya swidhanam*', the entire universe is pervaded by the presence of God, all that exists in changing world is His, enjoy the worldly pleasures selflessly and in a self sacrificing manner; do not covet others' riches. The entire philosophy of Dharma is contained in nutshell in this one mantra alone. This philosophy is the main guideline of every Hindu. And who is a Hindu? A Hindu is one who follows the basic principles of and tenets of Dharma and practices them in life. '*Dharma*' provides a base to an individual for his spiritual elevation. The process of this elevation is gradual. It starts from the individual himself. The first step in this direction is to learn to be a good human being. Vedas states, '*Manurvahav*' – be a complete human being. A human being is not a physical form only which makes a person look different from other species in the world. A human being is one who shares the joys and sorrows of others, whose eyes moisten on seeing the sufferings of others, whose heart bleeds on beholding poverty, hunger, disease, want misery-chasing people to desperation. He stretches a helping hand to the less privileged to relieve them of their sufferings, for Vedas state '*Atmavatsarvabhuteshu*' – see yourself among all beings. This identification of oneself with others makes a person compassionate, loving, caring, and sharing. The milk of human kindness begins to flow from his heart. He takes the next step towards spiritual ascendancy. He says, '*Mitrasya aham chakshusha sarvaani bhutani samikshe*' – may I look towards all living creatures with an eye of friendship. There is no hatred or animosity left in his heart. '*Dharma*' pervades his entire being and he says '*Mitrasya chakshusha samikshamahe*' – may we look towards each other with an eye of friendship. '*Meetratah*' or friendship is the basis upon which spiritualism develops.

He becomes 'Dharmic' – one who has truly imbibed 'Dharma' in life. He thus qualifies to ascend the ladder of spirituality and universal brotherhood of love and humanity, compassion and understanding, humility and awareness.

The Vedas are perennial source of Divine Knowledge. 'Gyana' or Divine Knowledge is like the sacred Ganga River whose waters purify the body. Similarly, 'Gyana' is for the purification, elevation, and sublimation of one and all, irrespective of colour, caste or creed. The Vedas state '*Yatheman vacham kalyaneemavadani janebhya*' – all people have the right to learn and teach Vedas. Vedic knowledge is not the inheritance of any particular class or society. The Vedas being Divine knowledge and we being '*Amrutasya putrah*' – children of immortality Spiritual deities have inherited the right to acquire that diving knowledge as well the potential to become divine. The classification of society into four distinctive classes or castes was made not according to birth but according to '*gunas, karma, swabhav*' – qualities, actions, and nature or aptitude. '*Shukraniti*' states '*Na jatya brahmanashchatra kshatriyo vaishya eva na shudro na cha vai mlechao, bhedita gunakarmabhih*' – by birth nobody is a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra or mlecho, the distinction is due to qualities and actions or deeds. A Brahmin is one who is engaged in literary pursuits, he who protects and fights for the honour of the country and his people in kinship is Kshatriya, he who is involved in trade or business is vaishya and he who can only serve is a shudra. A person born in a Brahmin family can become a Kshatriya and vice versa by karma and by dharma. An outstanding illustration of this practice is found in the life of sage Vishwamitra. He was a Kshatriya king who ruled over his Kingdom and fought battles. He renounced the worldly pleasures, abdicated his throne, and opted for the life of an ascetic. By severe penance he acquired 'Brahma Gyan' and was conferred to title of 'Bramharishi' by none other than the great sage Vashishtha himself.

Thus, all those people who promise to fulfil the three vows symbolised by the three threads of *Yajnopavit*, have the right to wear the sacred thread, irrespective of any caste or creed they belong to. Firstly, dharma or satt-karma - *gyan karma, upasana* – to acquire knowledge, to do good deeds and to worship God. Secondly, to repay the three debts or obligations that all of us owe to our God, our parents, and gurus – '*Devaruna, Pitraruna, Rishiruna*'. The debt we owe to God for his benevolence and mercy shown to us in innumerable ways in '*Devaruna*'; the debt we owe to our parents for bringing us forth into this world and nourishing and nurturing us in a self-less manner is '*Pitaruna*'; the debt that we owe to our gurus for guiding and moulding us is '*Rishiruna*'.

Thirdly, to resolve to protect our motherland, our *Dharma* and our culture. The three threads of *Yajnopavit* are symbolic and expressive manifestation of all that we uphold as sacred in life. In the last four mantras of **Rigveda**, popularly known as '*Sangathan Sukta*', the democratic current of thought is evident. The mantra states '*Sangachhadhwam, samvadadhwam, samvo manasi janatam*' and '*samano mantrah samitih samani, samanam manah sah chittamesham*' – let us all move together, think and speak in a like manner, let all minds, thoughts and views be the same – all point out to the spirit of equality which is essential in socialistic order. The socialist society aims at the greatest good of the largest number, which is practicable where there is unison of thought and purpose. For this very reason, the Vedic prayers are not for the well-being of one particular person or group but for the entire humanity, entire world.

*'Sarve bhavantu sukhinah, Sarve santu niraamayaah, Sarve bhadrani pashyantu, makashchitadukhbhag bhaveta'* – Let all be happy and free from disease. Let all behold goodness and may nobody be unhappy. This is the greatness of Vedic teachings. Vedic culture venerates womanhood and motherhood. In *Aryavarta*, women have been revered as mothers of creation and were given a respectable position at home as well as in society. **Manu Smriti** states – '*yatra naryastu pujiyante ramante tatra devata*' – where women are respected and worshipped, the gods dwell there. This respectful attitude towards women is basically and essentially 'Vedic' because in our country women are not looked upon as ornamental decorations of the '*haaram*' or as object for the gratification of lust. Our *shastras* state '*Matravat pardareshu*' – look upon other women as mothers. In accordance with Vedas, Vedic rites and rituals, no *yajna* or religious ritual was performed without the active participation of women. In Ramayana, the stage is all set for the performance of '*Ashwamedha Yajna*'. The congregation of priests, seers, and sages have assembled in Ayodhya. All arrangements are complete, still the rituals cannot be performed as Sita, and the wife of Rama is in exile. The wise sages confer and a message is conveyed to Rama that the *yajna* cannot be performed in the absence of '*yajaman patni*' i.e. the wife of the person who performs *yajna*. Some even persuade Rama to marry another princess so that the *yajna* may be performed. Rama does not concede to their wishes. He says, if *yajna* cannot be performed without a patni or wife, then let a golden statue of Sita be made and installed in the '*yajnamantapa*' (the sanctified place where the *yajna* is performed). Consequently, a golden statue of Sita is made and it occupies the prestigious place in the *yajnamantapam* and *Ashwamedha Yajna* was thereafter performed. The Vedas are spoken by the Saints and Rishis and descended from the Gods.

The compilation of Vedic hymns or mantras is attributed not to sages alone. In **Vedas**, several mantras are attributed to the learned '*Rishikas*' who like their male counterparts were '*mantradrishitas*' - preceptors of the holy mantras. Women scholars participated in open discussions of '*shastrarth*' and their views were highly appreciated and accepted by their contemporary scholars and sages. Gargi and Maitreyi were among the host of learned scholars of their times. During the reign of Raja Bhoj of Ujjain, poet Kalidasa's learned wife Vidyothama held a position of veneration among the greatest scholars of the period. This distinctive regard and veneration of women in our Hindu samskruti is a salient feature of Vedic culture. Religious tenets, Philosophy, way of life, attitudes, and aptitudes all reflect the Dharma and culture of a people and in this perspective, Vedic Dharma and Vedic culture is undoubtedly unique. The woman is the '*ABROO*' [emblem of integrity].

I believe that Veda to be the foundation of the Sanātana Dharma; I believe it to be the concealed divinity within Hinduism - but a veil has to be drawn aside, a curtain has to be lifted. I believe it to be knowable and discoverable. The Vedās and Upanishads are not only the sufficient fountain of the Indian Philosophy and religion, but of all Indian art, poetry, and literature. Since our earlier ages the Veda has been the bedrock of all our creeds. Our *Darshana*, *Tantra* and *Purana*, our *Shaivism*, *Shaktism* and *Vaishṇavism*, our orthodoxy, heresy, and heterodoxy have been the imperfect understandings of one Vedic Truth. Our greatest modern minds are mere tributaries of the old Saints and *rishis*. If Indians hardly understand the Vedās at all, the Europeans have systematised a radical misunderstanding all together. Their materialist interpretations, now dominant in cultivated minds, translated into modern tongues, taught in our universities have been fatal to Vedic Truth than our reverential ignorance. By the Vedās, the Hindus mean the accumulated **treasury** of spiritual laws discovered by different Rishis and different Seers and different persons in different time. The discoverers of these laws are called *Rṛṣis*, and we honour them as perfected being and some of the very greatest of them were women; for example SriMata AnandaMayamayee. The collection of books, Vedas, Vedāh, is the holiest and sacred for the Hindus. They are in Vedic Sanskrit. They were preserved orally for a long time before they were committed to writing about two thousand years ago or earlier. The core of all these books are the hymns or *sūktās*. In the beginning, it was a single collection. It was later divided into four collections or samhitās. The four Veda Samhitās contain more than twenty thousand mantrās or verses. It is moreover exquisite poetry. There is no real poetry without extensive symbolism and Rigveda is no exception.

However, the modern thinkers and western philosophers completely ignore the symbolism and write all sorts of essays on it portraying it as silly and devoid of wisdom. They often quote a mistranslation of a small number of verses to support their dubious contentions. The questions raised by its critics can be broadly divided into two categories:

- (i) Some of the shortcomings of the modern Hindu Society can be supposedly traced to the *Rig Veda* since it is its earliest scripture. Hence, how can it be relevant now?
- (ii) Easily understandable Hindu scriptures like *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads* are praised by all. Why bother to read *Rig Veda* at all and try to understand its symbolism?

The question in (i) is based on a false premise. Some of the untoward aspects in modern Hindu Society persist because of ignoring the high ideals mentioned in the Rigveda, its earliest book. The society pictured in Rig Veda had high regard for women including their right for choosing their mates, high regard for the concepts of freedom and equality, respect for sceptics and unbelievers, respect for knowledge coming from all quarters etc. All these ideals are very much relevant and necessary today. In no other religious text do we find mention of such high ideals. Moreover, in all religions, there is a wide gap between precept and practice. The question in (ii) is handled in detail in the section on Upanishads, and that on psychology. It is worthwhile to note that the three Yogas of *Bhagavad Gita* namely yoga of knowledge, yoga of works and yoga of devotion and surrender, personal relation to the deities can be traced to *Rig Veda* directly. The specific yogic methods developed in the Vedās are unique and highly effective. **This is the first, the central teaching: the central aim is the seeking after the attainment of the Truth, Immortality, and Light.** <sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> There are eleven major upanishads, most commonly read, included in a total of 188 published ones. Some of the passages even in the minor ones are so wonderfully beautiful that when one reads them alone one wants to share them with someone, with friends like our readers. Many of these texts have been memorized for thousands of years; for ever since their inception they have been committed to memory in an unbroken lineage. Now in a population of 850 million in India there are 2350 pundits who against all odds of continuous poverty and lack of support still commit to memory the four Vedas and many of the Upanishads comprising perhaps 10,000, perhaps 20,000 perhaps 25,000 verses. Not a single intonation has been changed. These people are known as reciters. This author is not a reciter but only a commentator and a humble scholar. You are fortunate sometimes if you can hear the authentic intonation, which is hypnotic; its sound waves alone uplift you, leave alone the meaning when understood. I am compelled to share with you my wisdom and divinity inevitably with joy.

There is a Truth higher and deeper than the truth of the outer existence, there is a Light greater and higher than the Light of human understanding which comes by extraordinary and transhuman sight, hearing. There is an Immortality towards which the human soul has to rise. We have to find our way to that and get into touch with that Truth and Immortality. We have to be newborn into the truth, to grow in it, to ascend in spirit into the World of Truth and live in it. Such a realization alone is to pass from mortality to Immortality, to unite with the supreme Godhead.

Here is the second doctrine of the Mystics: There is an inferior truth of this world because it is mixed with much falsehood. There is another higher truth, the Home of Truth, The Truth, the Right, and the Vast as taught in the mantrās. True knowledge there is termed *ṛta-chit*, Truth-Consciousness. In addition, there are other worlds, but the highest is the World of Truth and Light. This is the World celebrated as the *svahr*, the Great Heaven.

In addition, this is the substance of the third Doctrine: In the world-journey, our life is a battlefield of the *devās* and *asurās*; the Gods *dev* are the powers of Truth, Light, and Immortality and the *asurās*, the powers of the opposing Darkness. These are Vṛtra, Vala, the Paṇis, the Dasyus and their kings. We have to call in the aid of the Gods *devāh* to destroy these powers of Darkness who cover the Light. We have to invoke the Gods *devāh* in the inner sacrifice by the voice potent with the power of the *mantra*. To them offering of whatever is ours is made; receiving all that is given by them in return, we shall be enabled and competent to ascend the path towards of the goal of all round perfection and bliss.

Finally, this is the supreme secret of the *Vedic ṛishis*: At the summit of all the mystic teaching is 'The One Reality', 'That One' which later became the central goal of the *ṛishis* of the Upanishads, taught with explanation in detail.

Max Muller records an interesting incident. Freidrich Rosen was a noted German scholar, one of the pioneers of western students who turned to Vedic studies in the early years of the last century. It appears one day when he was busy in the British Museum copying out the hymns of the Rig Veda, Raja Ram Mohan Roy—the leading light of the Indian Renaissance—came in and was surprised, disagreeably, at the work Rosen was engaged in. He admonished the scholar not to waste any time on the Vedas and advised him to take to the Upanishads instead. We do not know if Rosen swallowed the advice at all obviously not. For he was still engaged in the Veda at the time of his death and his edition of the First Book of the Rig Veda with Latin translation did appear later. The incident is noteworthy for the light it sheds on the mental attitude of the cultured and educated Indians of the time towards the Veda.

The outlook of the educated section of our countrymen as regards the Vedic hymns has undergone little change even after more than a century today. In addition, this is no wonder. For they have but dutifully followed all along in the footsteps of the European professors who have, as a class, studied and regarded the Vedas, more as specimens of antiquarian and philological interest than as records of any sustaining value. To them the Vedas are study-worthy not for anything intrinsically significant but for the side-lights they throw on the social and other conditions of their times. By themselves, the Vedic hymns are 'singularly deficient in simplicity, natural pathos, or sublimity', they have 'no sublime poetry as in Isaiah or Job or the Psalms of David'. They are primitive chants where 'cows and bullocks are praised in most extravagant expressions' as among the 'Dinkas and Kaffirs in Africa whose present form of economics must be fairly in agreement with that of the Vedic Aryan'. Even such a famous scholar as Oldenburg must needs note that here is 'the grossly flattering garrulousness of an imagination which loves the bright and the garish', while Winterneitz records, with approval evidently, that Leopold Von Schroder finds similarity between some of these hymnal chants and 'notes written down by insane persons which have been preserved by psychiatrists'.

Not all from the West, however, have reacted in the manner noted above. Some have brought to bear a more sympathetic and closer understanding on their studies of the Veda and have confessed to a remarkable widening of the vistas of their higher mental horizons after their study of these Books. There is Brunnhofer, for instance, who is constrained to exclaim: 'The Veda is like the lark's morning trill of humanity awakening to the consciousness of its greatness.'

Indian tradition, however, has revered the Vedas all along; it has invested them with the authority of a revealed scripture, Books of Wisdom. Notwithstanding all the centuries-old efforts at such debunking, the Vedas stand firm as a rock towering like the snow-capped peaks of Kailas overtopping and overlooking the vast panoramic expanse below, drawing its nourishment every moment from the ceaseless streams that flow from above-the huge and hoary expanse of Indian life and culture. What is the secret that has enabled the Vedas to hold the pre-eminent position they have occupied from the beginnings of time in this country? Is there anything in them, which is valuable for man as to exact respect and reverence to the extent they have done? In addition, if the Vedas are really so valuable and so sacred, why is it that they have become the targets of so much criticism? Why is it that the Vedas are today so much enveloped in misunderstanding and condemnation that they are in danger of being completely lost to sight?

### **In addition, what, in the first place, is the Vedas?**

The Vedās are the only extant records of the lives and expressions of our forefathers of an age upon the time-limits of which scholars and historians have been unable to agree with any degree of finality. Indian scholars like Tilak and Europeans like Jacobi are inclined to date the period from Four to Six millenniums before the Christian era while other Western scholars have a strong tendency to advance the date to as near the Christian era as possible. Nevertheless, it is the songs and chants of these fathers of the race—*purve pitarah*—, it is their hymns that form the starting point and the kernel for the vast literature that has flowed from and developed round them and goes by the name VEDA.

At some period of their history, very likely at the close of the epoch during which the hymns were first sung and celebrated, it was found necessary to collect and compile all the available hymns current at that time. The necessity for the compilation may have arisen in order to prevent their loss inevitable with the passage of time and also to preserve them in the form in which they were chanted. Tradition has it that they were compiled under the direction of that Master compiler of the Great Age—Vyasa. Certainly, what have been compiled do not exhaust all the hymns that must have been current; the compilations represent the remnants that had survived the ravages of time and were still extant at the time of the compilation. These hymnal texts had been handed down from mouth to mouth and it was inevitable that they must have suffered diminution in quantity with each generation.

The hymns were collected and arranged in four different compilations, *Samhitās*, each collection being governed by different considerations about the nature of the hymns, the purpose for which they were compiled, etc. Thus hymns, which were largely in the nature of prayers and dedications to Gods, were collected—says the tradition—by Paila under the guidance of Vyasa, and went to form the Rik mantra Samhita. Hymns which were particularly chanted during religious and social functions of the community were compiled by Vaishampayana under the title Yajus mantra Samhita. Jaimini is said to have collected hymns that were set to music and melody—Saman. There is also the fourth collection of hymns and chants ascribed to Sumantu, known as Atharva Samhita. We need not dwell upon the subject of the Atharva mantra Samhita and the controversy around it but recognise the Vedic tradition as has come down to us which includes all the four Samhitās in its fold. Each of these Samhitās was followed gradually by explanations and dissertations in prose and in verse for elucidating the meanings, allusions, legends, etc. of the hymns and their application. These portions are known as Brāhmaṇās.

The concluding portions of these or the portions attached to them are discussions and speculations of a philosophical and spiritual import based certainly on the ideas and texts found in the Hymns. They are called the *Āraṇyakās* and *Upanishads*. Each Veda thus comprises the *Mantra Samhita*, the *Brāhmaṇās*, the *Āraṇyakās* and the *Upanishads*. Very mantra of the four Vedās numbering twenty thousand or more was revealed to a human being called as a *ṛṣhi* or *ṛṣhika* when he/she was in a super-conscious state. In the *Rigveda*, *Sāmaveda*, and *Atharvaveda*, the names of the *ṛṣhis* or *ṛṣhikās* associated with the mantrās in the *sūkta* or hymn are listed in the heading along with the names of the metres associated with the mantrās and also the names of the associated cosmic powers, God (*devi*) or Goddess (*devī*).

It is not correct to state that *ṛṣhis* composed the mantra. RV (1.164.39) declares that "the riks abide in the *immutable supreme ether (parama vyoman) where are seated all the Gods (deva)*". The *ṛṣhi* or *ṛṣhikā* received the revelation of wisdom from this plane and transcribed it into verses or mantrās with appropriate words and metres. The process of transformation of the revelation into the verse is mentioned in many mantrās of *Rig Veda*. "They chanted the mantrās carved out of the heart RV (1.67.2)"; "O seers, the hymn-composer (*mantra kṛtam ṛṣhe*) Kashyapa manifested (*udvardhayan*) the revelation (*giraḥ*) into the lauds (*stomaiḥ*), RV (9.114.2)". See also the section on mantra for more details.

We may recall that *Rig Veda Samhita* has ten mandalās. Of them, the mantrās of six mandalās are associated with six great *ṛṣhis* and their disciples: Mandala 2 with seer *Ghṛtsamada*, mandala 3 with the seer *Vishvāmitra*, mandala 4 with the seer *Vāmadeva*, mandala 5 with the seer *Atri*, mandala 6 with the seer *Bhāradvāja* and mandala 7 with the seer *Vasiṣṭha*. Garga *Bhāradvāja* is a seer of sixth mandala whose daughter is the famous *Gārgi*.

The *sūktās* in the remaining four mandalās are composed by several *ṛṣhis* or *ṛṣhikās*. The 191 *sūktās* of first mandala are composed by *ṛṣhis* or *ṛṣhikās* numbering roughly a hundred.

The first ten *sūktās* are associated with the name of *ṛṣhi* *Madhuchhandas*, disciple of the great seer *Vishvāmitra*. The eleventh *sūkta* is associated with *Jeta*, a disciple of *Madhuchhandas*. Some of the names of the *ṛṣhis* associated with first mandala are *Romashā*, *Brahmavādinī*, *Shunahshepa*, *Ajigarti*, *Gotama*, *Rahūgaṇa*, *Agastya*, *Maitrāvaruṇāḥ*, *Dīrghatamas*, *Auchitya*, *Praskaṇva*, *Kāṇva*, *Kutsa*, *Angirasa*, *Medhātithi*, *Kāṇva*, *Parāshara*, *Shāktyaḥ*, *Paruchchhepa*, *Daivodāsiḥ* known for his use of the long metre *atyāṣṭhi* with 68 syllables and others.

Typically, the name of the *ṛṣhi* along with his lineage is mentioned. For instance, the seer Gotama belonged to the school of Rahūgaṇa. Associated with the mandala 8 are Manur Vaivasvata, Medhatitīh Kāṇva, Jamadagni Bhārgava, Pragatha Ghaura Kāṇvaḥ, Matsyaḥ Sāmmadaḥ, Apālā Ātreya, Sukakṣha Āngīrasa etc. Associated with mandala 9 are Hiraṇyastūpa Āngīrasa (whose name appears in mandala one also), Avatsāra Kāshyapaḥ, Shatam Vaikhānasaḥ, Renur Vaishvāmītra, Kakṣhivān Dairghatama (who appears in mandala one also). The tenth mandala begins with the mantra of Trita Aptya; Some other *ṛṣhis* or *ṛṣhikās* there are Yamī Vaivasvatī, Aditi Dākṣhāyinī, Vāg Ambhriṇī, Savitrī Sūryā (*ṛṣhikā*), Bhudaḥ Saumyaḥ, Mudgala Bhārmyashvaḥ, Yajnaḥ Prājāpatyaḥ, Prajāpati Parameśṭhī, Paulomī Shachī, Sarparājñī etc. The last hymn of the Rig Veda is by Samvanana Āngīrasaḥ delineating universal harmony. We do not mention Sāmaveda separately since most of mantrās are in Rigveda and the same *ṛṣhis* follow.

The entire Shukla Yajurveda was revealed to the seer Yājñavalkya.

Recall that the famous Vyāsa divided the single collection of mantrās into four Samhitās. The persons who carried out the compilation are Paila (Rigveda), Vaishampāyana (Yajurveda), Jaimini (Sāmaveda) and Sumantu (Atharvaveda). Note that Vyāsa and these other four persons did not have revelations of mantra. They are all compilers. Hence they are *kāṇḍarṣhis*. Note that the Kriṣṇa Yajurveda has both rik mantrās and yajur mantrās. Every rik mantra has a metre, whereas the *yajus* is a rhythmic prose passage not bound by a metre. Kriṣṇa Yajurveda has about 700 mantrās from Rig Veda Samhita and their names are well known. The seers of the other mantrās from Kriṣṇa Yajurveda are not known with any degree of finality. Conjectures are there. The sages mentioned with Kriṣṇa Yajurveda are Vaishampāyana, Tittiri, Ātreya, Yāska etc., are all *kāṇḍarṣhis*. The name of a *ṛṣhi* indicates a psychological quality. Gotama means 'most radiant', Gavisthira means 'steadfast in the light'. Bharadvāja means 'those who are full of plenitude (vāja)'. Atri means 'traveler or a destroyer of foes', Vasiṣṭha is 'one who is most opulent', Vishvāmītra is 'one who is friend of all etc. RV is the only scripture among those of all religions in which the Divine Truths are revealed to women sages also and some of these hymns describing the revelation find a prominent place in the Rig Veda Samhitā like the hymn (10.125) (tenth *mandala*, 125 *sūkta* or hymn) attributed to the woman sage *Vāk Ambriṇī*. There are more than thirty women sages in RV with specific hymns associated with them. In all the Semitic religions like Christianity, Islam etc., there is no mention of any revelation to women and no woman is listed among the prominent disciples of the founders or prophets of those religions.

There are numerous hymns in the Rig Veda indicating the high status accorded to women in the *vedic* society. RV (10.27.12) explicitly states that the practice of a lady choosing her own husband was in vogue. The hymn (10.85), the marriage hymn, explicitly states that the daughter-in-law should be treated as a queen, *sāmrajni*, by all the family members especially the mother-in-law, husband, father-in-law. See the box below where the bride was exhorted to address the assembly; 10.85.26: Become the house-hold's mistress; Ruler of the home, you will address the religious assembly.

To be asked to address the assembly was regarded as an honour by most of the sages. **Thus the statement that, "women were oppressed in Hindu society even from the *vedic* times", made orally and in popular writings by some moderns is nothing but patent falsehood.** Some of the quotations given by these critics are from the period of the *sūtra* books, which are dated more than two thousand years later than the Rig Veda. Naturally, these critics suppress quotations, which speak of the high status of women in the society of Rig Vedic period and the period of Upanishads. Even today, some orthodox persons deny the right of chanting the Veda to women. However, they cannot cite any authoritative scripture to support their views. Any book in Sanskrit cannot be accepted as a scripture or divine revelation. When the famous poet, Sanskrit scholar and spiritual savant, Vāsishta Gaṇapati Muni, the foremost disciple of Sri Ramaṇa Maharshi, challenged these orthodox persons to provide evidence to support their claims, no evidence was forth coming.

### ***Epithets for women in Veda***

It is noteworthy that in the Vedic literature although a woman's prime role is portrayed as a wife only, yet several other aspects of feminine form are also suggested by various names and epithets used to denote a woman. It is quite interesting to derive the exact meaning of these words because it may help in giving a better idea of different roles of woman in home and in society. For instance, a woman as wife is denoted by three words; *jāyā*, *jani* and *jaan patni*. Of these, *jāyā* is the woman who gives birth to one's progeny, *jani* is the mother of children, and *patnī* is the co-partner in the religious duties. Typically: a woman is capable of generating ten-man power energy in spiritual terms. A woman is much stronger than male tenfold. Vedic Sanaataana Dharma evolves from 'she' shakti. Unlike other faiths wherein male power is worshipped, Vedic religion worships the tenets of the 'SHE' divinity and considers the female shakti the 'parameishweari-maha-maa-akaal-kali-nava-Durga' to be the divine Goddess of the trine 'Brahma-Vishnoo-Mahesh' in karmic cycles.

To give away a daughter in 'kanyaadaan' marriage ceremony is the highest sacrificial oblation towards karma. <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Similarly woman is designated as:*

1. *Aditi*, because she is not dependent (Nirukta, 4/22)
2. *Aghnyā*, for she is not to be hurt (Y.V. 8/43)
3. *Bṛhatī*, for she is large hearted (Y.V. 11/64)
4. *Chandrā*, because she is happy (Y.V. 8/43)
5. *Devakāmā*, since she is pious. (A.V. 14/1/47)
6. *Devī*, since she is divine (A.V. 14/1/45, Y.V. 4/23)
7. *Dhruvā*, for she is firm (Y.V. 11/64) ā
8. *Havyā*, because she is worthy of invocation (Y.V. 8/43)
9. *Idā*, for she is worshipping (Y.V. 8/43)
10. *Jyotā*, because she is illuminating, bright (Y.V. 8/43)
11. *Kāmyā*, because she is lovable (Y.V. 8/43)
12. *Kshamā*, for she is tolerant/indulgent /patient (A.V. 12/1/29)
13. *Mahī*, since she is great (Y.V. 8/43)
14. *Menā*, because she deserves respect (Nirukta 3/21/2)
15. *Nārī*, for she is not inimical to anyone (A.V. 14/1/59)
16. *Purandhih*, for she is munificent, liberal (Y.V. 22/22)
17. *Rantā*, because she is lovely (Y.V. 8/43)
18. *ṛtāvarī*, *ṛtachit*, for she is the preserver / forester of truth (R.V.2/41/18)
19. *Sanjayā*, since she is victorious (R.V. 10/159/3)
20. *Sarasvatī*, since she is scholarly (Y.V. 20/84)
21. *Simhī*, since she is courageous (Y.V. 5/12)
22. *Shivāni*, for she is benevolent (A.V. 14/1/64)
23. *Shivatamān*, since she is the noblest (R.V. 10/85/37)
24. *Strī*, since she is modest (R.V. 8/33/9, Nirukta 3/21/2)
25. *Subhagā*, because she is fortunate (Y.V. 8/43)
26. *Subhdhā*, for she is knowledgeable (A.V. 14/2.75)

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27. *Sumangalī*, since she is auspicious (A.V. 14/2/26)
  28. *Sushevā*, for she is pleasant (A.V. 14/2/26)
  29. *Suvarchā*, since she is splendid (A.V. 14/4/47)
  30. *Suyamā*, since she is self - disciplined. (A.V. 14/2/18)
  31. *Syonā*, for she is noble (A.V. 14/2/27)
  32. *Vīriṇī*, since she is mother of brave sons (R.V. 10/86/9, 10)
  33. *Vishrutā*, since she is learned (Y.V. 8/43)
  34. *Yashasvatī*, for she is glorious (R.V. 1.79.1)
  35. *Yoṣhā*, because she is intermingled with man, she is not separate (Nirukta 3/15/1)

[Indian Feminism in Vedic perspective, by Shashi Prabha Kumar Reader, Univ. of Delhi, Delhi 110007; Journal of Indian studies, Vol. 1, 1998]

#### **Women ṛṣhis (ṛṣhikā) in the Rig Veda Samhitā**

(one or more mantra was revealed to each ṛṣhikā)

aditi	4.18
aditirdākshāyaṇī	10.72
apālā ātreyaī	8.91
indrāṇī	10.86
ūrvashī	10.85
godhā	10.134
goshā kākshīvatī	10.39, 10.40
juhūrbramhajāyā	10.109
tvaṣṭā garbhakartā	10.184
dakṣiṇā prājāpatyā	10.107
yamī	10.154
yamī vaivasvatī	10.10
rātrīrbhāradvājī	10.127

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lopāmudrā	1.171
vasukrapatnī	10.28
vagāmbhṛṇī	10.125
vishvavārā ātreya	5.28
sashvatyāṅgīrasī	8.1
shradhdā kāmāyāni	10.151
shachī paulomi	10.159
sarparājñī	10.189
sikatā nivāvari	9.86
sūrya savitrī	10.85
romashā	1.126
saramā devashunī	10.108
shikhandinyava psarasau kāshyapan	9.104
jaritā sharṅgah	10.142
sudītīrangirasah	8.71
indra mataro	10.153

(The list is not exhaustive)

The Hindu oral tradition has succeeded through the ages in maintaining largely the purity of pronunciation of the Vedic mantrās with their precise phonetic values. In the Indian tradition the sacredness of the Veda arises not merely by its age; it is important because of its power of self-revelation. The Veda reveals its true meaning to those who hear it or recite it with full faith and with the preparation of askesis *tapas* and who aspire to understand its deep meaning.

As mentioned elsewhere, there are three types of mantrās namely *rik*, *yajus* and *sāma*. Every *rik* mantra is in one of sixteen metres. All the mantrās in Rigveda and Sāmaveda and many mantrās in Yajurveda are *riks*. Yajus is a rhythmic prose composition we focus here on the *riks*.

The Sanskrit word for metre is *chhandas*. Its root is *chad*, to cover i.e., the *rik* mantra compresses or covers the wisdom in it by means of the metre. A mantra may have several levels of meaning. The deeper meaning is accessible only to the aspirant who studies the mantra with faith and *tapas*.

The subject of the metres (*chhandas*) is complex. The classic book is the *Chhandas-Shāstra* by Pingala Āchārya dated 1000 BCE or earlier.

Mantrās in Rigveda are in sixteen different metres. As a first step, each metre is distinguished by the number of syllables in it. For our discussion, a syllable is the smallest group of letters, which ends in a vowel. A pure consonant without an attached vowel cannot be a syllable. The individual Sanskrit letters *ka*, *ki*, *ku* etc., are all single syllables. Take the phrase *vareṇyam* occurring in the famous *gāyatri* mantra of RV (3.62.10). It has 3 syllables, *va*, *re*, *ṇya*.

The index for Rig Veda Samhita mentions that more than 95 percent of the mantrās of Rig Veda Samhita are in seven metres. We give their names and the associated number of syllables in parenthesis.

Gāyatrī (24)	Ushṇih (28)	Anuṣṭubh (32)	Bṛhatī (36)
Panktiḥ (40)	Triṣṭup (44)	Jagatī (48)	

The Taittirīya mantra (TS) Samhitā of Kṛishṇa Yajur Veda mentions all these metres in various *brāhmaṇa* passages in Kāṇḍa 2. Moreover TS (2.5.10) specifically mentions a metre by name *virāj* with 30 akṣharās (syllables). This metre is not found in the Rig Veda Samhitā.

The remaining mantrās of the Rig Veda Samhitā are in ten types of metres listed below.

atijagatī (52)	shakvari (56)	atishakvarī (60)	ashtiḥ (64)
atyāṣṭiḥ (68)	dhṛtiḥ (72)	atidhṛtiḥ (76)	dvipadā (20)
ekapadā (10)			

There are minor variations regarding the number of syllables in each type. Even though the number of syllables in a verse of Gāyatrī metre is 24, the famous Gāyatrī mantra RV (3.62.10) has only 23 letters, the metre being called ‘*nichṛt gāyatrī*’. Gāyatrī metre of 24 syllables is written as having 3 *pādās* or feet each having 8 *akṣharās*. Anuṣṭub verse has 4 feet each having 8 *akṣharās*. A metre like *atyāṣṭiḥ* having 68 is regarded as having 5 feet, with syllables 14,14,14,14,12 respectively. The *ṛishis* have focused on developing methods of chanting which can detect any errors in chanting of a mantra such as omitting a syllable or replacing one syllable by another. For each mantra, there are several different methods of chanting, each method capable of detecting one type of error. For illustration consider one half of the famous *gāyatrī* mantra of the seer Vishvāmitra, RV (3.62.10). The standard method of recitation involving conjunction is called *Samhitā pāṭha* given below.

### Samhitā Pāṭha

tatsaviturvareṇyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi

Separate all compound words into their constituents and number the words:

tat savituḥ vareṇyam bhargaḥ devasya dhīmahi

1            2            3            4            5            6

In the *kramapāṭha* chant, use a text obtained by combining 2 neighbouring words following the rules of *sanshi* resulting in 6 words.

1+2          2+3          3+4          4+5          5+6          6+6

### Krama pāṭhaḥ

tatsavituḥ saviturvareṇyam vareṇyambhargaḥ bhargodevasya devasyadhīmahi dhīmahiti dhimahi. A *Krama pāṭha* expert chants the *krama*-version of all the verses. To understand its error detecting capability, divide the chant into syllables so that the syllable ends with an vowel a, i, u etc. Both the third syllable and sixth syllables are same namely *vi*. Suppose we commit an error and chant the third syllable as *va*.

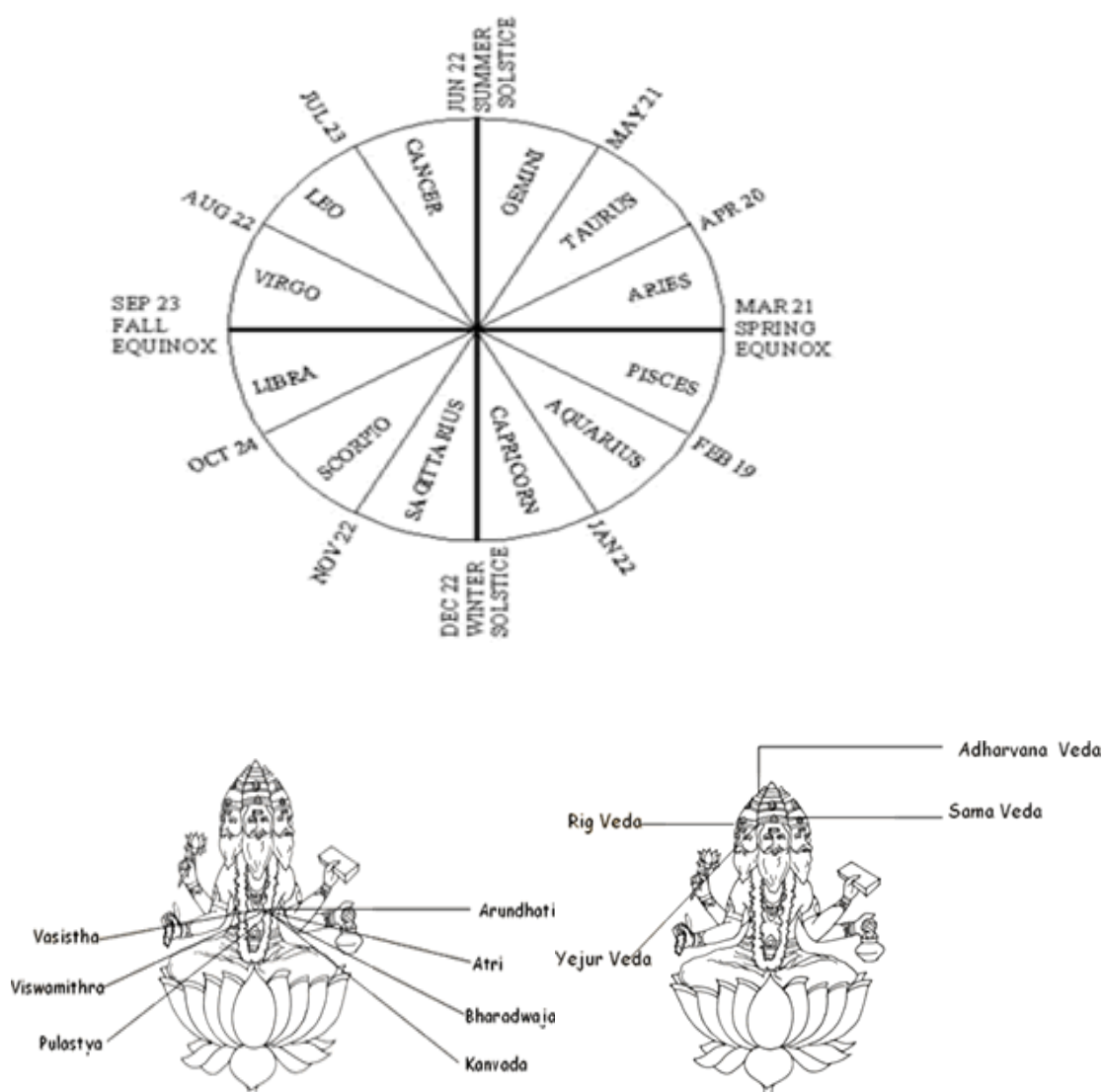
According to the *krama* chanting the sixth syllable should be same as the third syllable. He would pronounce it as *vi*, since we are assuming he will make only one error. Then he notices that an error has taken place since *va* is different from *vi*. An error has obviously occurred, but he does not know which is correct *va* or *vi*? There are other methods which detect these errors and also indicates the correction. The various forms of chanting are called as *vikratīs* and there are eight of them.



Brahmanism is the forerunner of Sanatana dharma or Vedic religion. Both Hinduism and Buddhism perch upon AUM and provide us with the oldest texts (the Vedas) and best preserved metaphysical system of teaching on our planet. Brahman is the term used to refer to transcendental omnipresence, and it is attributed with the characteristics of consciousness and love -- it is a non-manifest yet *living* state of being -- pure spirit. This is expressed in the Sanskrit word Saccidananda, which is a run-together of three words, Sat, Chit, Ananda, meaning, Existence, Consciousness of Existence, and Love of Existence, or simply, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. This is the trikaya, the three-bodied or triple-aspect characteristic of Brahman. The Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva (the Creator, the Preserver, and the Transformer) are personifications of the trikaya. Various cosmic Gods like Agnee, Indra, Brahaspatty, Varuna, and all other gods and enlightened teachers of the tradition, historical and mythological, are manifestations of Narayana-Vishnu. Note the difference between the words *Brahma* and *Brahman*, the former being a masculine noun, the latter being neuter.

As pure metaphysical principles, the trinity is the same in any tradition. The first body of the trikaya is fully transcendental, like the Universal Singularity "just before" the Big Bang. The second body of the trikaya is the shining-forth, the **Dharmakaya**, the perfect embodiment of Divine Law, and is known variably as Prana, Life Force, Cosmic Light, Supermind, Universal Consciousness, Buddha-Consciousness, Christ-Consciousness, the Word, Logos. The third body of the trikaya is Brahman manifest as the Universe, the Divine Play, the cyclic movement of the Cosmic Dance itself.

Underlying the three-fold manifestation, or more like *intrinsic within* this three-fold field, Brahman remains unchanged, timeless and formless -- Brahman is Saccidananda. It is also important and heartening to realize that our three-fold manifestation, our spirit-mind-body state of being, being quite literally a "slice off the old block", is a *direct result* and an *inseparable part* of the three-fold character of the transcendental omnipresence. The earth revolves around the sun in twelve months.



Life is composed of five elements Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Akasha (the nature above the earth) in different proportions. Only a balancing of these five elements leads to health and bliss for human race. The Earth draws Energy from the Sun and gives it back again through the five Elements of nature. This is a Dynamic Equilibrium, any disturbance in nature's balance causes calamity. For this, the saptha rishis used the five elements and the above three manthras consisting of AGNI [fire], VAYU [air] & SABDA [sound] giving rise to twelve suns.

Sapta\_rishis:

<b>Vashistha</b>	<b>- yagna</b>	<b>Vishwamithra</b>	<b>- nature</b>
<b>Pulastya</b>	<b>- air</b>	<b>Kanvadudu</b>	<b>- atoms</b>
<b>Bhardwaja</b>	<b>- water</b>	<b>Atri</b>	<b>- mantra ( sound)</b>
<b>Arundhati</b>	<b>- milky way</b>		

Saptharishis created the twelve suns from the visible sun by the saadhana of three powerful mantras. From these mantras, Sun evolved to create twelve hemispheres.

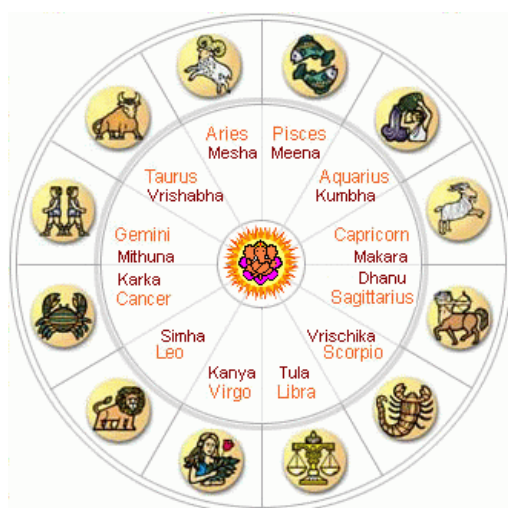
*Om Agni meley purohitam yagnasya deva mrutvijam*

*Hotaaram ratna dhatamam - Rig Veda*

*Isheytvorjye tva vaayavasthopaayavastha devoovaah Savithaa prapayathu  
sreshthatha maayakarmaney – Yajur vedam*

*Agna aayahi veethaye gruhano havyadaathaye*

*Nihothaa sathsi barpishi – Saama Veda*



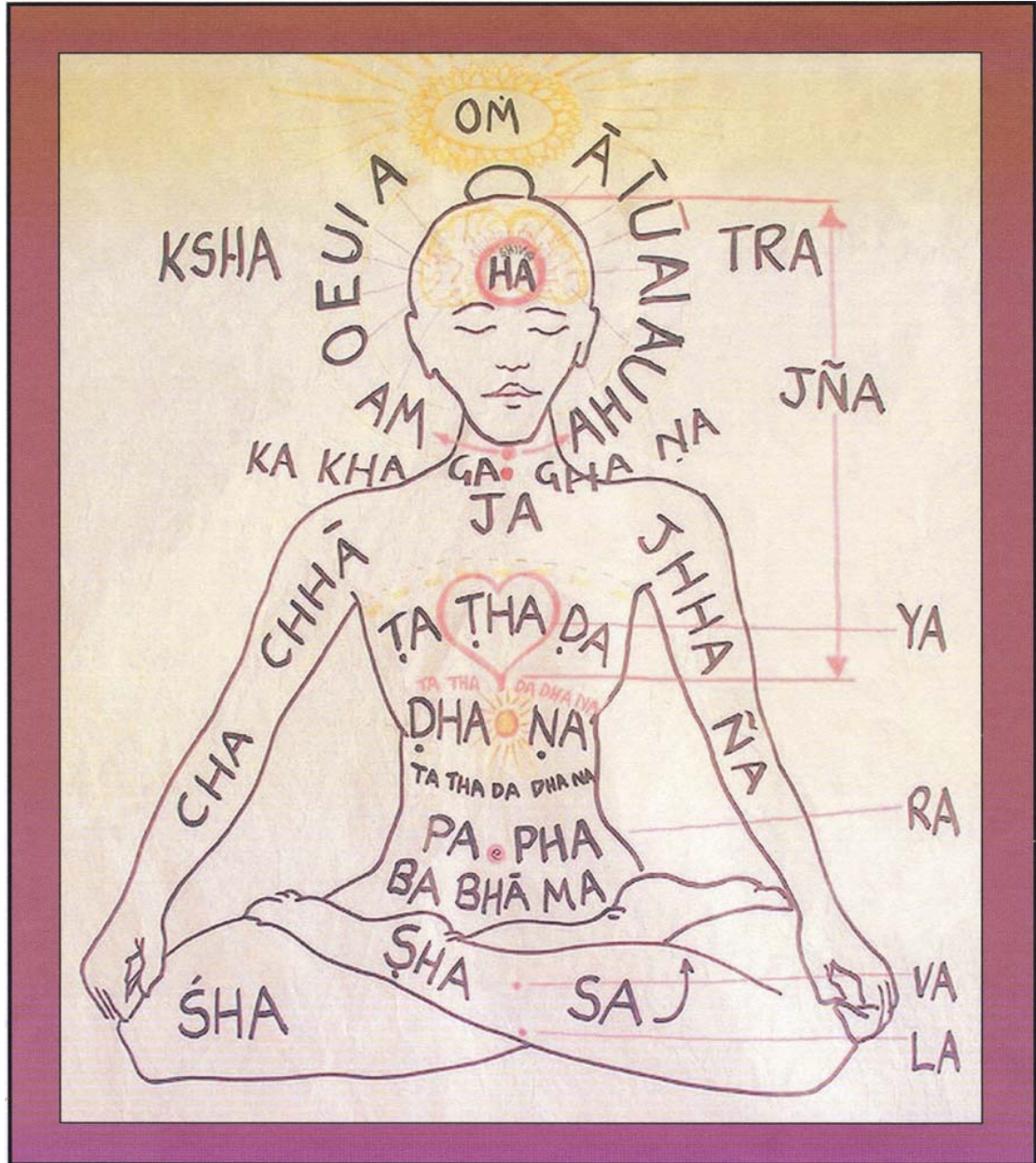
**A year has twelve months and we have twelve SUNS.**

<b>MONTH NAME</b>	<b>NAME OF THE SUN</b>	<b>VEDA MANTRA</b>	<b>Puranokta Mantra</b>	<b>BENIFITS</b>
Chaitra	Mithra	Om Hraam Mithraaya namaha	Om Bhoo rugveda purushaya namaha	Friendship with all
Vaishakha	Ravi	Om Hreem Ravaye Namaha	Om Buvaha Yajurveda purushaya namaha	Praised by all
Jyestha	Surya	Om hrum suryaya namaha	Om suvaha saamaveda purushaya namaha	Stimulator
Aashada	Bhanu	Om hriem bhanave namaha	Om maha itihasa purana purushaya namah	giver of luster and beauty
Sraavana	khaga	Om hrowm khagaya namaha	Om tapaha sarvagama purushaya namaha	Simulator of senses
Bhadrapada	Pushna	Om hraam pushney namaha	Om Bhū Ekapada Gayatridevyei namaha	The nourisher
Aaswija	Hiranyagarbha	Om hiranyagarbhaya namaha	Om bhuvaha dwipada gayatridevyei namaha	One who possesses power to develop energy and vitality
Karthika	Mareecha	Om Hreem mareechai namaha	Om Suvaha tripada gayatri devyei namaha	Destroyer of diseases
Maargasira	Aditya	Om hruum adityaya namaha	Mantra: Om bhurbhuvasuvaha chatuspada gayatridevyei namaha	Attraction
Pushya	Savitra	Om hriem savithrai namaha	Om saha savitri devyei namaha	Begetter (one who gives existence)
Maagha	Arka	Om hroum arkaaya namaha	Om vam vedamataram devyei namaha	Will be revered (will be respected by all)
Phalguna	Bhaskara	Om Hra bhaskaraaya namaha	Om lum prithvi ghandatmaka devyei namaha	Refulgent (shining)

Each element of the cosmic energy is correlated, interrelated and cross related to us.

The Sanskrit alphabet is a mantra based alphabet and therefore are known as Deva-Nagri. Each is co-related to our human anatomy and it is so feasibly possible to visualise the letters in our own mantra meditation.

The Sanskrit Alphabet						
Vowels	A अ	Ā आ	I इ	Ī ई	U उ	Ū ऊ
Whole Brain Area	E ए	AI ऐ	O ओ	AU औ	AM अं	AH अः
Gutturals (Vishuddha) Throat	KA क	KHA ख	GA ग	GHA घ	NA <sub>(NGA)</sub> ङ	
Palatals Top of Lungs and Arms	CHA च	CHHA छ	JA ज	JHHA झ	ÑA <sub>(NYA)</sub> ञ	
Cerebrals (Anahata) Heart & Mid-Lungs	TA ट	THA ठ	DA ड	DHA ढ	NA <sub>(M)</sub> ण	
Dentals Solar Plexus	TA त	THA थ	DA द	DHA ध	NA <sub>(M)</sub> न	
Labials (Manipura) Abdomen	PA प	PHA फ	BA ब	BHA भ	MA <sub>(M)</sub> म	
Semi-Vowels First four Chakras		YA य	RA र	LA ल	VA <sub>(M)</sub> व	
Sibilants & Aspirate Legs and genital region Ajna Chakra		ŚHA <sub>(SY)</sub> श	ṢHA ष	SA स	HA <sub>(M)</sub> ह	
Special Compound Consonants Head and Shoulders			KŚA क्ष	TRA त्र	JÑA ज्ञ	
Bija Mantras (Chakra Seed-Sounds)						
LAM (Lang) Muladhara	VAM (Vang) Swadisthana	RAM (Rang) Manipura	YAM (Yang) Anahata	HAM (Hang) Vishuddha	A Ajna	AUM ॐ Sahasrara



Mantra meditation is listening to the silence and from the silence to extrapolate a language known to the entire nature, the trees, and animals alike. Our Vedic life sciences teach us that Sanskrit is the language of Divinity. Proven without the shadow of the doubt, Plato, Phaedo, Einstein, Flemmings, and many western scientists have acclaimed Sanskrit to be unique language of sound, vision, dance, music, poetry, and philosophical expression of the sublime subtleties. To reach that unreachable by poetry and creative perception, to open to the spirit world with divine expression, and to cast by light of divine delight of the Sun, the glory of the Vedas as sung in a song format comprising mantras, yantras, tantras, rites, rituals, wonderful inter acting ceremonies and colourful cultural support of “togetherness” makes Vedic heritage exceptionally unique, spiritual and universally divine.

The Vedas are wisdom of the knowledge of the Gods. They are not merely knowledge from books or thoughts but wisdom from experiences of the seers and great saints of the Himalayas. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The Vedas subordinates everything to piety and uprightness and requires all acts to be done in strict conformity with the law of nature or law of God. It advocates a social structure based on spiritual values, pacifism, vegetarianism and a single World Government. It has a great message for the upliftment of the whole of humanity in every corner of the globe. Every shade of opinion, every mode of thought, every school of Philosophy must find its expression in the philosophical writings of the Vedas to receive full development in peace and harmony, and progress and prosperity.

The Vedic philosophy is provided with all sorts of implements to increase one's knowledge and all are free for anyone to use. Efforts have to be made to find this knowledge. He who opens the book of nature finds a treasure of information for there is no secret whatsoever which God wants to withhold from man. He who makes a strenuous effort and works hard in the pursuit of knowledge gets a full share of the treasure of knowledge. This approach does not oppose or discourage science or philosophy. Those who are desirous of heaven should endeavor to convert this world into a heaven by means of non-violent, truthful and well-thought out plans. Then they will have no anxiety about their going to heaven or elsewhere after death. Even before they die they would be in heaven, and when they die, their heaven would be ensured. The Vedic knowledge brings humility and integrity to the follower and leaves no room for enmity or hatred. True and meaningful prayers remove hatred and jealousy. God is telling His devotee to concentrate on oneself and leave the foes to his own judgment. The fact is there can be no heaven when hatred and jealousy always occupy the mind.

The six Systems (Shastras) of Philosophy further authenticated the authority of the Vedas as revealed by God. Gautama (Nyaya), Kanada (Vaisheshik), Kapila (Sankhya), Patanjali (Yoga), Veda Vyasa (Vedanta) and Jaimini (Meemansa) all confirmed unanimously that the only revelation by God is in the beginning of the human creation. No sane individual can accuse these logicians and great philosophers, of superstition and blind belief. Therefore, their unanimous verdict on the Revelation of the Vedas with strong and incontrovertible arguments must carry great recognition.

As our parents give knowledge to us for our welfare, so God, Who is our Divine Parent, revealed the Eternal Truths through the Vedas for the well-being of all of us. The hearts of the sages were pure and receptive and God inspired them with knowledge. As God is Omnipresent and Omnipotent, He has no form, so He inwardly prompt the hearts of the sages in order to instill in them perfect knowledge. The Vedas are the source of all true disciplines, that is, justice, morality, righteousness and good conduct, and for those who want to acquire the correct knowledge of cosmic order, the Vedas are the highest authorities. They are the infallible guide to the welfare of all beings who seek the true knowledge. They carry the highest authority in their writings and being the Word of the Eternal God, the Vedas are Eternal. The Vedic knowledge is three-fold in characters, relates to communion, that relating to activity or energy in action of all kinds and that relating to intellectual and scientific enlightenment and perception. These three are so closely intertwined that whatever action or deed was the result of the guidance of a chastened and enlightened intellect, the same was justice and reverse of that injustice.

The Vedas present a vast pantheon of deities (devatas) on many different levels, often said to be innumerable or infinite in number. One of the main early efforts to classify the Vedic Gods (as in the Brihad Devata of Shaunaka) was to reduce them to the three prime deities for the three worlds.

***Agni*** or Fire on Earth (Prithivi)

***Vayu*** or Wind in the Atmosphere (Antariksha)

***Surya*** or the Sun in Heaven (Dyaus)

These three deities are three aspects of the One God or the Purusha, the supreme consciousness principle and higher Self that is pure light.

The celestial is the Brahman Loka, the terrestrial is the Shiva-loka, the spiritual is the Vishnooloka.

In the Deva Purana, the tri-loka are Shiva's swarup as SOMMAMM {celestial}, SHIVA {the spiritual} and the RUDRA {the celestial}.

The cosmic Vedic God Agnee descends God to the earth in the form of light and therefore the first and the last mantra is offered to Agnee. Agnee is the light of darkness that ignites the hue of the Surya [Sun]. In proliferation of sixty four thousand energies and eighty four billion constellations, the cosmos evolves to bring the shakti [energy] into manifestation of gunas. <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Prakriti itself is said to be a composite of three prime qualities as sattva, rajas, and tamas. ***Sattva*** is the power of harmony, balance, light and intelligence - the higher or spiritual potential. ***Rajas*** is the power of energy, action, change and movement - the intermediate or life potential. ***Tamas*** is the power of darkness, inertia form and materiality - the lower or material potential. Perhaps the simplest way to understand the gunas for the modern mind is as matter (tamas), energy (rajas) and light (sattva), the main factors of our physical universe. The three gunas reflect the three worlds of Vedic thought. Earth is the realm of tamas or darkness, physical matter. The Atmosphere, also called rajas in Vedic thought, is the realm of action and change symbolized by the storm with its process of lightning, thunder and rain, but it indicates energy or subtle matter on all levels. Heaven is the realm of harmony and light, sattva. It indicates light as a universal principle which is the causal or original form behind the gross and subtle elements or forms of matter and energy. The entire universe consists of light that moves in the form of energy and demystifies in the form of matter.

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The three great lights of Agni, Vayu and Surya energize these three worlds as the soul spirit within them. The first is Agni or Fire on the Earth. Fire is hidden in our bodies, in plants, in the rocks, and in the very core of the Earth itself. The second is Vayu or Lightning in the Atmosphere. The power of the wind, which creates lightning, circulates through the atmosphere. The third is Surya or the Sun in Heaven. The Sun represents the cosmic light of the stars that pervades the great space beyond this world. These three lights are interrelated. We could say that lightning is the fire in the Atmosphere and the Sun is the fire in Heaven. Or fire is the Sun on Earth and lightning represents the solar force in the atmosphere. Or lightning on Earth creates fire and in Heaven it energizes the Sun. These three lights also reflect the three gunas. Agni is the tamasic form of light, the fire that is hidden in darkness of earthly ego, ignorance and tamasic gross desires. Vayu is the rajasic form of light, light in its active and energetic mode as lightning or electrical force. Surya is the sattvic form of light, light as pure illumination (prakasha). The movement from tamas to sattva is a movement from Earth to Heaven. It occurs through bringing the light out of the Earth (Agni) and raising it to Heaven (Surya). This requires crossing the Atmosphere through using its forces (Vayu).

**The Threefold Purusha:** In the Vedic view these three forms of light (Jyoti) are the three forms of the Purusha or the higher Self that is also defined in terms of light. In the Vedic view light is consciousness, not simply a material force. These three lights are also the three aspects of our being. These visible lights are manifestations of the invisible divine light of consciousness that illumines all things, including visible light and darkness. The three gunas and three worlds exist within us, as do their light forms as our powers of our own awareness.

*Agni - Earth - tamas - body - speech (vak)*

*Vayu - Atmosphere - rajas - breath (prana)*

*Surya - Heaven - sattva - mind (manas)*

In this sense sattva as light is also mind, rajas as energy is also the vital force and tamas as matter is also our bodily expression the foremost of which is speech. *Sattva - light – mind; Rajas - energy – prANa; Tamas - matter – body.*

These three aspects of the Purusha or consciousness principle reflect the three aspects of Prakriti or the material principle. In the Vedic view, therefore, the science of the three gunas connects not only with Prakriti but also with the Purusha. The gunas are not simply the powers of Prakriti; they reflect the nature and presence of the Purusha as well. The Purusha is threefold in its human manifestation as speech (body), breath and mind, just as Prakriti or the world is threefold as earth, atmosphere and heaven or as matter, energy and light. Agni is light or the Purusha in the realm of matter or the earth. Vayu is light or the Purusha in the realm of energy of the atmosphere. Surya is light or the Purusha in the realm of light or heaven. In the Vedic view, the Purusha or consciousness principle is not limited to embodied creatures but pervades these great forces of nature as well.

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Understanding these light forms of the gunas helps us use the science of the gunas not only to understand Prakriti but also to understand the Purusha. The Vedic Yoga works with these three light forms or three forms of the Purusha in order to master and transform the three forms or aspects of Prakriti.

***Agni** - physical body and internal organs - speech - mantra yoga - tamas - matter - five gross elements*

***Vayu** - vital body and motor organs - breath - prana yoga - rajas - energy - five pranas*

***Surya** - mental body and sense organs - mind - Dhyana yoga - sattva - light - five subtle elements*

Agni as the power of speech is the means of purifying and controlling both the physical body and physical matter and mastering the guna or quality of tamas. Through it we can control our internal organs and the gross elements. The Yoga of speech involves chanting, singing, internal repetition of mantras and meditation on mantras. Through it we gain control of the subconscious mind. Vayu as the power of the breath is the means of purifying and controlling the vital body and the realm of energy and mastering the guna of rajas. Through it we can control our motor organs and the five pranas (five motor actions). The Yoga of the breath involves pranayama. Through it we gain control of our emotions. Surya as the power of thought is the means of purifying and controlling the mental body and the realm of light and mastering the guna of sattva. Through it we can control our sense organs and the subtle elements. The Yoga of the mind is meditation. Through it we can control of the rational mind and direct it towards knowledge of the higher Self. Contemplation is dhyanam: through dhyana and samadhi, we can get in touch with our spiritual mode. Therefore, to watch and to observe in silence and to contemplate in quietness reciting jaaps is scientific way of harmonising our chakras with the spiritual mode. In Vedic imagery, Surya or the Vedic god of light is pictured as riding a golden chariot with just one wheel, driven by several powerful steeds that carry him at the speed of three hundred and sixty-four leagues per wink! Riding through the sky he keeps a watchful eye on the world. Who can match the brilliance of the sun! meditate upon the celestial object for but a second and it rises to create everlasting wonder. Who created the sun on whom all life is dependent? Is the big dying star just a scientific phenomenon or is it the powerful and majestic Lord Surya, or Savitr who embodies the spirit of the Vedas and represents the Trinity, Brahma during the day, Shiva at noon and Vishnu in the evening. Were there many suns as some sun – worshipers believe or was that just a manner of saying the sun can be fierce. The source of all energy, light and heat, when did man begin to worship the sun?

Over time, when the forces of nature seemed fierce but more and more comprehensible, man began to reshape his conceptions. Surya as the main deity gave way to the embodiment of aspects of the sun in every God. Personas replaced the elements and the sun though vital became an attribute. The wheel or chakra in Lord Vishnu's hand, the trident in Lord Shiva's hands, the mace of Kubera, the spear of Skanda and the rod of Yama were all representative of the sun. Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu is himself believed to have been born in the Surya vamsha (dynasty).

Uma is the foremost Vedic shakti “Rudrani” emanated from “Rudra” to usher dusk and dawn in “Samndhya” [not night not day – immortal moment of God]. <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In the Rig Veda the goddess Usha is consistently associated with and often identified with the dawn. She reveals herself in the daily coming of light to the world. She has been described in the Rig Veda as a young maiden drawn by one hundred horses. She brings forth light and is followed by the sun who urges her onwards. She is praised for driving away, or is petitioned to drive away, the oppressive darkness. She is asked to chase away evil demons. As the dawn she is said to rouse all life, to set all things in motion and to send people off to do their duties. She sends the curled-up sleepers on their way to offer their sacrifices and thus render service to the other gods. Usha gives strength and fame. She is that which impels life and is associated with the breath and life of all living creatures. She is associated with, or moves with cosmic, social and moral order. As the regularly recurring dawn she reveals and participates in cosmic order and is the foe of chaotic forces that threaten the world. Usha is generally held as an auspicious goddess associated with light and wealth, and is often likened to a cow. In the Rig Veda she is also called 'the mother of cows' and like a cow that yields its udder for the benefit of people, so Usha bares her breasts to bring light for the benefit of human kind. Although she is usually described as a young and beautiful maiden, she is also called 'the mother of the gods and the ashwins'. Considered as mother by her petitioners she tends to all things like a good matron and goddess of the earth. She is said to be 'the eye of the gods' and is referred to as 'she who sees all', but is rarely invoked to forgive human transgressions. It is more typical to invoke her in times of need to drive away or punish one's enemies. Usha is known as the goddess, reality or presence that bears away youth. She is described as 'a skilled huntress who wastes away the lives of people'. In accordance with the ways of Rita she wakes all living things but does not disturb the person who sleeps in death. As the recurring dawn, Usha is not only celebrated for bringing light from darkness, she is also petitioned to grant long life, as she is a constant reminder of peoples' limited time on earth. She is the mistress or marker of time.

The ancient Vedic tradition has viewed Usha as the harbinger of light, awareness, activity. People divided time into the form of day and night. At night all creation rests and in the day the whole of creation is active. The transformation which takes place from night to day is known to be the attribute of Usha, the awareness that stirs up the activity of creation, the light that gives sight to the eyes, that gives power to the senses, that gives power to the mind and intellect, Usha has been regarded as the light, or the dawn of human consciousness. Another goddess commonly referred to in the Rig Veda is the goddess Prithvi who is nearly always associated with the earth, the terrestrial sphere where human beings live. In the Rig Veda furthermore she is always coupled with Dyaus the male deity associated with the sky. So dependent are these two deities in the Rig Veda that Prithvi is rarely addressed alone but almost always as part of the dual compound Dyaus-Prithvi, Sky-Earth. Together they are said to kiss the centre of the world. They sanctify each other in their complementary relationship. Together

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they are said to be the universal parents who created the world and the gods. As might be expected, Dyaus is often called 'father' and Prithvi 'mother'. In addition to her maternal productive characteristics, Prithvi usually, along with Dyaus in the Rig Veda is praised for her supportive nature. She is frequently called 'firm', 'she who upholds and supports all things'. She encompasses all things, is broad and wide, and is motionless. Although elsewhere she is said to move freely, Prithvi with Dyaus is often petitioned for wealth, riches and power. The waters they produce together are described as 'fat, full, nourishing and fertile'. They are also petitioned to protect people from danger, to expiate sin and to bring happiness. Together they represent a wide, firm realm of abundance and safety, a realm pervaded by the order of Rita, which they strengthen and nourish. They are un-wasting, inexhaustible and rich in gems. In a funeral hymn the dead one is asked to go now to the lap of his mother earth, Prithvi who is described as gracious and kind. She is asked not to press down too heavily upon the dead person but to cover him gently as a mother covers her child with her skirt. The most extended hymn in praise of Prithvi in vedic literature is found in the Atharva Veda. The hymn is dedicated to Prithvi alone and no mention is made of Dyaus. The mighty god Indra is her consort and protects her from all dangers. Vishnu strides over her, and Parjanya, Prajapati and Vishwakarma all either protect her, provide for her or are her consorts. Agni is said to pervade her. Despite this association with male deities, the hymn makes it clear that Prithvi is a great deity in her own right. The hymn repeatedly emphasises Prithvi's fertility. She is the source of all plants, crops, and nourishes all creatures that live upon her. She is described as patient and strong, supporting the wicked and the good, the demons and the gods, She is frequently addressed as 'Mother' and is called to nurse all living things. Prithvi is also said to manifest herself in the scent of women and men, to be the luck and light in men and to be the splendid energy of maids. In brief, Prithvi is a stable, fertile and benign presence in Vedic literature-It is clear that those who praise her see her as a warm, nursing goddess who provides sustenance to all those who move upon her firm, broad expanse. The Rig Veda nearly always links her with the male god Dyaus but in the Atharva Veda and later vedic literature she emerges as an independent being.

Tantra is a shakti. Intimately woven into the theory and philosophy of tantra is the science of mantra, yantra and mandala. Tantra is both a philosophy and a practical science, and its sublime theories become efficacious through the use of mantra, yantra and mandala. Here we shall examine the mandala from which arose the rich art of tantric iconography, temples, art, architecture and music. In the traditional idea of Shakti we find a blending of two elements, one empirical and the other speculative. On the empirical side the idea of Shakti is associated with cosmogony. It has been the un-contradicted experience of man from the dawn of understanding that there cannot be any origination whatsoever without the union of the two principles of Shiva and Shakti, the Male and Female aspects. The human analogy was naturally extended to the universe as a whole, and thus we came to the concept of the primordial Father and Mother. Mahamaya, as the Mahashakti, remains absolutely inactive at the time of dissolution and this inactivity of the Shakti lulls the Supreme Being to profound sleep in the ocean of causal potency. Shiva thus is the cosmic transmute, dissolver, transformer, and moksha-“karak data” one who grants solace and salvation to the spirit of life of the dead.

### ***Vedic Philosophy – summary***

Four Vedas, Six Vedangas, Four UpaVedas, and Upanishads constitute Vedic wisdom. Smritis, and shruttis comprise compendiums and scriptures. Puranas are complementary scriptures of the Vedas. The Bhagavad Gita is the divine mother of Vedas. Gayatri mantra is the MAHA-SHAKTI savitur light of Surya God or the Sun God. Gayatri mantra is the mantra of Sun-Surya-illumination. Vishvamitra in the *Rigveda* states that his prayer or Brahma protects the Bharata people. The Gayatri mantra encourages creative thinking, not as mere human invention but as our portion of cosmic intelligence. It exhorts us to attune ourselves to the cosmic mind and its laws of dharma. This chant is as valuable and appropriate in the modern world as it was in ancient times. We can use it whenever we wish to gain new insight and inspiration or to increase memory and concentration, even for mundane tasks. The *Vedas* are said to reside in the rays of the Sun, which hold the Vedic mantras. The *Vedas* are the manifestation of solar intelligence, the light of consciousness on Earth. The sacred syllable OM itself is the sound of the Sun and the essence of the *Vedas*. The Vedic mantras carry light and power both for the body and the mind. India, therefore, should be at the forefront of solar research in order to keep up with its ancient Vedic heritage. One of the main problems in the world today is the energy crisis, which is endangering the very roots of life on the planet. Where can we get the power to run all our new technology, industry, transportation and media? Our energy needs are increasing daily with the growth in population and the increasing affluence of the third world that is now demanding the same conveniences that the western world has enjoyed for decades. Where do we get this additional energy? In addition, how can we create it without destroying the planet by pollution that is the by-product of most of our energy sources? Solar power is the ultimate answer for the energy crisis because it is a clean source of energy that is unlimited; albeit the technology for solar power may take a few decades more to develop further. We must make solar power the priority in energy research. We must return to the Sun to save the Earth. The *Vedas* worship the Sun, Surya, as the source of light for the entire nature; a power of life, love and intelligence. Sun has a presence on our souls through the power of its rays, which not only pervade our environment but also touch our very hearts. By the Sun-Surya the *Vedas* don't simply refer to the outer luminary, the central star of our solar system. They mean the principle of light and consciousness on a universal level, of which the Sun is our local representative; our local God Agnee in the deepam we light in our homes and the light of delight we bring into our souls.

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## **Shad Darshanas** (Six Schools of Vedic Philosophy) and Modern Applications

1. 1. Nyaya - logic
2. 2. Vaisheshika - categorization
3. 3. Samkhya - cosmic principles
4. 4. Yoga - methods of reintegration
5. 5. Mimamsa - ritual
6. 6. Vedanta - theology and ontology
7. **Modern Vedanta**
  1. 1. Neo-Advaita Vedanta
  2. 2. Neo-Yoga Vedanta
  3. 3. Neo-Bhakti Vedanta

## **Vedic Spiritual Practices (Yoga)**

### **Yoga, traditional and modern**

1. 1. Jnana Yoga - Yoga of Knowledge
2. 2. Bhakti Yoga - Yoga of Devotion
3. 3. Karma Yoga - Yoga of Service
4. 4. Raja Yoga - The eightfold Yoga of Patanjali
5. 5. Hatha Yoga - Yoga of the Physical Body
6. 6. Tantric Yoga - Sciences of Mantra, Yantra and Tantra

## ***Vedic Science of rites and rituals***

Yajna-hommam

Daily, Monthly, Seasonal and Yearly Rituals and their effect on the individual, society and nature

Puja: Devata Puja and its usages for Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha for karmic evolution and karmic diffusion.

Samskaras: The usage of sacraments on personal and collective levels

Kriya: Funeral rites and rituals, ancestry rites and rituals.

### ***Vedic Medicine, Ayurveda***

Ayurvedic Life-Style Recommendations

Clinical Ayurveda

Ayurvedic Psychology

### ***Vedic Physics (Jyotish Adhidaiva Vidya)***

Vedic Cosmology, the fourteen worlds (Loka Vidya)

Astronomy (physical influences)

Astrology (spiritual influences), Karma Vidya and Kala Vidya

Natal Chart

Mundane Astrology

Muhurta

Meteorology

### ***Vedic Earth Sciences (Adhibhuta Vidya)***

Hindu Ecology

Vedic Geology

Vedic Botany

Vastu (Sthapatya Veda)

### ***Vedic Social Science (Varnashrama Dharma)***

Social Stratification: Vedic view of family, tribe and community (Varna, Jati, Samaj)

Stages of Life (Ashrama)

Vedic Womens Studies, the Goddess and the Role of Shakti

### ***Vedic History***

Itihasa-Purana - Traditional Accounts of History

Modern Vedic School of History

History of India, History of Native Cultures, World History

History of Science from Vedic perspective

### ***Vedic Arts***

Representational Art and Iconography (Murti Vidya)

Music and Dance (Gandharva Veda)

Poetry, Literature and Drama

### ***Vedic Language Science***

Linguistic Theory

Sanskrit

Mantra

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***May divine light of Vedas awaken my spirit of life  
Long I slept, long was I sleeping  
long are the woes of humankind  
Odin brought it about that I could not break  
the spell of drowsiness  
Let me for now be charmed by the poetry of Vedas  
In the lore of its glory,  
may I drown my last breath in million lights of delight  
With graciousness, may victory greet my death as I sit in quietness to  
contemplate upon my soul divine.  
For now, let me rest in peace. Let me be free, let me be free!***

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