



## GAYATRI MANTRA THE RESEARCH OF SCIENCE OF SYMBOLISM

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः, तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यम्  
भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि, धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।

Gayatri Mantra is highly respected by all the sections of Vedic Dharm. It is also known as 'Savitri' and 'Ved-mata'. It is regarded as mahamantra i.e. supreme of all the mantras. Following lines will reveal the main features of this mantra.

1. **Common Meaning:-** The meaning of this mantra commonly prevailing amongst the masses is -

*“Oh Lord! of the form of truth, consciousness and bliss. Oh omniscient, omnipotent, inspiring and enlightening. You are omnipresent, you are the ocean of divine powers, whose glory is manifest in the form of suns. You are the bestower of fearlessness. You are the creator and you are greater than the greatest. We meditate upon the dazzling light of that revered deity. Oh Lord! benevolent and kind. Please infuse spiritual energy in us and always lead our body, intellect and speech towards righteousness”*

Since the above interpretation is replete with several prayerful words e.g. Oh creator, ocean of divine powers, bestower of fearlessness and so on, therefore this meaning obviously seems to be an emotionally charged prayer. Moreover, this meaning can not be derived from the Sanskrit version of the mantra, yet the mantra has definitely some speciality. This shall be explained subsequently in this essay.

2. **Continuous blows on Vedic Dharm:-** Since the Mahabharat war and upto the British rule in India, several notable events took place e.g.:-



(a) Annihilation of warriors, scholars and scientists in the Mahabharat war followed by a long period of ignorance.

(b) Repetitive invasions from West Asia and destruction of scriptures.

(c) Abduction of the Sanskrit manuscripts and *manipulations* in them.

Thus the reliability of available records is not beyond doubt. Since we are now living in the era of physical sciences, therefore the facts lost in the past have been researched in light of astrophysics and are discussed in the following lines.

**3. Modern Astrophysics:-** Our galaxy approximately contains one hundred billion of stars ( $10^{11}$  stars). Several stars are bigger than our sun. Many of those may be having their family also like our sun. Our sun completes one round of the galaxy in 22 ½ crores of years. Like our galaxy there are approximately one hundred billion galaxies ( $10^{11}$ ) more. The scientists say, that all these galaxies are racing away from the centre at an average velocity of 20,000 miles / second. Our galaxy is approximately one lakh light years long (one light year =  $9.46 \times 10^{12}$  km). Our sun is 32,000 light years away from the centre of the galaxy and so on.

This is noteworthy here, that simple ceiling fan when moving at the rate of 900 r.p.m. produces an audible sound, then how much terrific sound may be occurring by the vast universe moving at the rate of 20000 miles/ second. It is strange, that this sound does not reach to our ears whereas the Rishis heard this echo during the state of Samadhi and named it as '*Naad Brahm*' - (नाद ब्रह्म) the greatest echo. However this echo was not like the Pop music (cracking sound), but was a melodious sound occurring in the space. It was therefore named as '*udgeeth*'.

**4. Framing of Mantra:-** Sanskrit is a sweet language and the formation of a mantra in this language has certain speciality. It seems, that the researchers had the vision of the forms of the entire series of alphabets in Samadhi state and then while forming mantra, they used brief and symbolic style as in a mathematical formulae. Unlike prose writing full sentences have not been framed. Now in the said background, let us try to understand their framing style and the interpretation thereof.



**5. Interpretation:-**

5. (a) Search of name:- (ॐ भूः भुवः स्वः)

(OM Bhuh Bhuvah Swah)

Bhuh = Entire solid mass

Bhuvah = Those which are revolving e.g. earth, moon planets etc.

Swah = All galaxies

Now this is a commonly known fact, that our mother earth and planets revolve around our sun and rotate also. Billions of stars and galaxies also go around some centre with terrific velocity. Naturally, therefore, there has to be the sound. The Rishis heard this echo of 'OM' (ॐ) in the state of Samadhi. They cried out '*ureka, ureka, ureka*' (we have found). In fact they were searching the creator of this vast universe. They thought that there is a creator, who is Almighty, but invisible and formless. Rishi Vishwamitra proposed to recognize the echo of OM as the name of the Almighty and the same was unanimously accepted by all the researchers including the group of eighty eight thousand scientists, known as '*Shaunak*'.

Since this echo is produced without any dashing or blows, therefore has been termed as '*Anhad*' (without dashing). This echo has also been termed as '*Pranava*' i.e. store house of energy because tremendous amount of kinetic energy is being produced by the motion of galaxies. Even though there is no medium to transmit this echo to us, but it was heard by the Rishis. Such contradictions are observed in nature e.g. particles behave as solids as well as waves. (Refer an article – "*OM (ॐ)-An Echo- The Scientific View*" and the fig. of galaxies therein).

**Identification:-** To identify any person, we have to know at least two things about him (1) name and (2) form. We have by now known the name of Brahm i.e. '*Echo of OM*' (ॐ) Srimad Bhagwad Geeta<sup>1</sup> confirms this name. It says –

*"The name of God is OM (ॐ), which contains only one syllable"*. Now we have to find out the form.

5. (b) Search for form:- तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यम्  
(Tat Savitur Varenyam)

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<sup>1</sup> Srimad Bhagwad Geeta – 8/13.



Tat = That formless God

Savitur = Billions of stars emitting light.

Varenyam = Choose / select as representative symbol.

Here Rishi Vishwamitra points out, that the dazzling light emitted by billions of stars is worthy of respect. He further affirms, that this light is manifest from that formless God.

Therefore the second identification of God should be accepted as the light. While fixing '**Light**' as the identification of God the point in view held is that the light is also eternal as God. Thus this was also accepted unanimously.

After the approval of dazzling light as the form and '**OM**' as the name of God, the principle of symbolism was universally accepted. Thus Gayatri served as a bridge between monotheism and dualism.

5. (c) **Guidance for Prayer:-** ( भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि )  
(Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi)

Bhargo = Dazzling light.

Devasya = of the deity

Dheemahi = Meditate upon

Now the Rishi gives clear instructions how to pray and attain the formless Almighty '**Brahm**'. He advises to meditate upon the dazzling light and also do japa of the syllable '**OM**' (ॐ) simultaneously.

5. (d) **Prayer for help to control mind:-** ( धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् )  
(Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat)

Dhiyo = Intellect

Yo = That

Nah = of all of us

Prachodayat = lead us to the path of righteousness

For meditation the biggest obstacle is the flickering mind. Hence Rishi, out of his practical experience advises the practitioner for praying God to lead his intellect on the path of righteousness, so that he succeeds in meditation<sup>1</sup> and attains him. Here it is very clear *that meditation technique is the sole methodology for attaining bliss*. The research

<sup>1</sup> For general guidance on meditation refer Session no. VII of the book. For detailed information one should read Patanjali Yog Darshan.



*in the field of yoga, meditation and Samadhi is the supreme contribution of the Vedic Rishis.*

5. (e) **Total meaning of mantra:-** The terrific motion of earth, moon, planets, stars and galaxies are producing the Echo of 'OM' (ॐ), which is accepted as the name of God. The dazzling light emitted from trillions of stars is worthy of prostration and is accepted as the form of God. Hence the Rishi Vishwamitra has advised for meditating upon the dazzling light and doing japa simultaneously. The practitioner is also advised to pray God to lead his intellect towards righteousness, so that the flickering mind remains under control and the practitioner experiences the ultimate peace (bliss).

5. (f) **Points for attention:-** Since the echo of 'OM' (ॐ) and the light emitted by the stars both are eternal, hence if the practitioner meditates upon light and does japa of 'OM', then his sub-conscious gets connected with sound waves of 'OM' (ॐ) and the light. In that state he experiences the bliss.

**Essence:-** Some scholars feel that '*Gayatri Mantra*' is the prayer of '*Sun-god*'. This can logically be accepted, because due to the passage of time, the scientific explanation discussed above got lost. The guides of the society while trying to explain simpler technique to the masses advocated sun-god as the symbol of God, because sun-god is visibly emitting light, energy and is everything for the beings living on earth.

The research of this mantra was made at the transition period when all scholars worshipped God as formless and without qualities. *In brief, this is a research mantra*, wherein Rishi Vishwamitra has advised the technique of praying Him (God) through definite form. Any new proposition must face controversy and opposition in every period, therefore the scholars of that era vehemently opposed the proposal. The people could not visualize, that the proposition was intended to search the formless through the scientific technique of definite form. It is a simple mathematical equation. If  $x^2 + y^2 = 9$  and if  $x = 1$  then  $y = 3$ . Rishi Vishwamitra came out victorious after a long controversy and the daggers drawn against each other. The scholars ultimately realized, that this technique is simpler and very useful for the common man. Therefore in the larger interest the research proposed was applauded and Rishi Vishwamitra was awarded the title of '*Brahm Rishi*', something



like the '*Noble Laureate*' of the modern times. Admitting the great importance of the new technique, the scholars adorned '*Gayatri*' as *Mahamantra* (supreme mantra), '*Vedmata*' (mother of Vedas) and '*Savitri*' (that has brilliance like sun-god) etc.

Lord Krishna in Srimad Bhagwad Geeta<sup>1</sup> says:- "*I am the Gayatri*". It depicts the great importance of Gayatri, which has been stated to be equal to the lord.

It appears, that after the recognition of the principle of symbolism, elaborate literature containing stories, tales and metaphors was composed and compiled in Puranas.

**6. Main Characteristics of Vedic Dharm:-** The Rishis studied the Nature very minutely and discovered the laws on which it functions. All these laws are eternal and Vedas are the ocean of such knowledge. Out of that ocean of knowledge, few laws are described below:-

1. Law of cycle / changeability / re-birth.
2. Law of Anulom-vilom or law of opposites / complementarity.
3. Law of karma (action and reaction).
4. Law of life beyond or law of hell/ heaven.
5. Composition of subtle-body (a) thinking mind (b) intellect (c) sub-conscious and (d) EGO.
6. As the microcosm, so the macrocosm.
7. Prana (magnetic energy + light energy) or Electro magnetic energy.
8. Law of totality.
9. Law of Microfication.
10. As you think, so you become.
11. Attainment of liberation / salvation through the practice of yoga, meditation and Samadhi.
12. Samskars (impressions recorded on the alpha plate of sub-conscious) and *Varnashram-system*.
13. "*Eko Brahm Dwitoyo naasti*" (There exists only Brahm and none else). The duality visible is an illusion of human mind.
14. Principles of Maya (illusion) and Mukti / Mokshha (liberation / salvation).

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<sup>1</sup> Srimad Bhagwad Geeta-10/35.



15. Four goals (Dharm, Artha, Kaama and Mokshha) of human life.

16. Creation is eternal. Total creation never gets annihilated. From time to time on completion of life cycle, the galaxies are created and annihilated.

17. Nirgun Nirakar (Monotheism) prayer technique.

18. Sagun Saakar (Dualism) prayer technique.

### 7. Evolution of Vedic Dharm:-

7. (a) **Monotheism**:- In the beginning of sathya yuga the technique of prayer was based only on monotheism (Adwait). This means, that God and the spirit are both same. But under the influence of Maya (fascination of world of matter), the spirit has come in the cycle of death and birth. It, therefore, has to merge back to the source i.e. God.

It appears, that during that period, there were only four 'mantras' in practice as under:-

1. Tatvamasī = Tat + Twam + Asi  
(तत्त्वमेसि) That God + You + are  
You are the same God.

2. Soham = Sah + Aham  
(सोऽहम्) He (God) + I (am)  
I am the same God.

3. Ayam Atma Brahm = Ayam + Atma + Brahm  
(अयम् आत्मा ब्रह्म) This + Atma (is) + Brahm  
(spirit)  
This spirit itself is Brahm.

4. Aham Brahmasmi = Aham + Brahm + Asmi  
(अहम् ब्रह्मास्मि) I + Brahm + Am  
I am myself Brahm.

Since all the four mantras carry the same sense, therefore when the practitioner after long term of contemplation over the mantra develops a firm thought of himself being the Brahm, he then visualizes himself in every entity of nature. Thus by continuously repeating and pondering upon the



mantra till the last breath, the practitioner finally merges into God. On experiencing the *Brahm* the practitioner goes beyond the illusion of duality (Maya). In the technique of *Adwait* (monotheism) the science has an important role. This methodology is meant for intellectual class of '*sadhakas*'. This is why this technique was found difficult for the common man.

7. (b) **Dualism**:- Majority of the people belong to the category of emotional class, therefore they loose restraint on themselves and get involved in enjoying the world of matter. In plain words, it means, that the common man instead of using the comforts bestowed by the nature starts enjoying them without restraint, which compels him to suffer innumerable pains and sorrows in life. This leads him to the cycle of death and birth. In order to liberate him from this cycle, the path of dualism was devised. In the beginning, God was in the state of non-duality, but became in the state of duality, when he expanded himself in the form of creation (this is the hypothesis).

In this technique, even though the spirit is not accepted as equivalent to God, yet it can establish relationship of love and affection with the Almighty e.g. father, mother, son, brother etc. and worship Him. In order to establish such relationship, the emotions and sentiments of the practitioner as well as the faith with reverence play a vital role. Since such emotional qualities are normally found in the common man, therefore the technique of '*Dualism*' was widely welcomed by the masses and the literature of the taste of common man was composed in large scale and propagated. This vast literature alongwith the literature comprising of *Adwait* technique in due course was known as "*Sanatan Dharm*".

8. **Contribution of Gayatri**:- Since it was difficult for the common man to meditate upon formless God, therefore this lacuna was mended after the research of the principle of symbolism. This followed by the designing of number of visible and invisible godforces of nature having human forms e.g. Fire, Air, Indra, Sun, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Durga etc. These forms were interwoven with their names and qualities into the mantra of each deity. Varieties of worship techniques were also searched and extensively used. Since this technique was exported and propagated on the entire globe and the same due to its flexibility, was able to accommodate regional conditions also, therefore, it was applauded in the



whole world. Thus Gayatri contributed a lot in bridging between the Monotheism and dualism i.e. worship of formless God and God with definite form. This resulted in giving Gayatri with superb class of adornments as discussed above already.

In spite of the propagation of Dualism in the society, the Rishis still gave priority to the attainment of **salvation**, which state is only possible through the technique of monotheism (Adwait). The Rishis felt, that the two same elements can only dissolve in each other, hence if the spirit caught in the fetters of karma is to liberate itself from the cycle of life and death once for all, then the practitioner must follow the path of monotheism. *The sequence of evolution of monotheism to dualism is lost due to the passage of time and has* caused deep confusion amongst the masses in many ways. It is hoped, that the above discussion should help in restoring the right knowledge to the people.

**9. Traditional Meaning:-** The traditional meaning prevailing in the society is:- O God! Thou art, Almighty, Omniscient, Dazzling Light, we meditate upon your such qualities. Kindly bestow us noble intellect and so on. According to the law "*what you think, so you become*", such prayer can also lead to the goal. Therefore even if the practitioner is not aware of the above analysis, then also he is benefited.

**Oh God! Bestow noble intellect to all of us.**

**-Hari Om Tat Sat-**