



A SYSTEM OF CHARACTER BUILDING *THE GOTRA VIGYAN*

1. **Object:-** This system started in order to establish identification of a person in the society. The inspiration which appears to have been derived in India goes back to Mahabharat period. When Arjuna a famous warrior introduced himself in a big assembly in the following way :-

“ I am Drona Shishya, Pandu Putra- Arjuna”,

Since '*Drona*' was a highly respected and righteous Brahmin guru of the Mahabharat times and famous for all kinds of warfare techniques, therefore Arjuna learnt the war techniques from him. So while introducing himself, Arjuna, named his guru first and *Pandu* the name of his father as second. It seems that there was a tradition to relate oneself with his guru (teacher). The object was to maintain high moral character of each individual in the society through gotra system. *Thus gotra means a sort of vow by the individual, that his teacher is a respectable person and he will not hurt his respect under any circumstances by his wrong and unrighteous behaviour.*

2. **Formation of various Gotras:-** Thus the people linked their names with chief '*Rishi Gurus*' like Gargeya, Maitreya, Gautam, Bhardwaj Shandilya and Vatsalya etc.

(i) They took spiritual teachings from these gurus. These teachings were transferred through Gotra tradition to the following generations, and thus writing of their names with the names of their Guru continued. This is how the term Gotra is derived from the term Guru remained the identity of the particular family. The people of '*Brahmin-varna*' decided to maintain the original names of these '*Rishi-Gurus*', whereas to keep difference, they advised the vaishyas (Business community) to make slight change. Thus the business class altered as Garg; Mittal; Goel; Bhaddal; Singhal and Bansal etc. *This alteration was just for maintaining difference between the two 'varnas' even though their Gurus remained the same.*

(ii) Some people from Brahmin family chose to relate their identity by the prestigious work they were doing e.g. remembering the entire text of one Veda named themselves as Vedi, remembering text of two Vedas named Dwivedi, of three Vedas as Trivedi and four Vedas as Chaturvedi.

(iii) Some people chose to be known in the society by the name of some of their great and noble ancestors. This is prevalent in Sindhi society such as- Chandwani, Hemrajani, Rai Singhani etc.

(iv) Many of the individuals decided to be identified by the business, they do e.g. Lohia (dealing with loha i.e. iron) Gandhi (dealing with gandh i.e. scent), Kapadia (dealing with kapda i.e. cloth) Bhandari and Kothari (handing stores) etc.

(v) Some persons preferred to be known from the name of their village where they live e.g. Varnala, Jhunjhunwala and Palkiwala etc.

(vi) In south India people related their identity with the names of grand father, then father, then village then his own name and at last the varna e.g. T.S.L.V. Sharma. 'T' stands for grand father, 'S' for father 'L' for village, 'V' his name and sharma is his varna.

In spite of the varying identities (Gotras) chosen by the people, every family received spiritual teachings from some guru. Mostly people felt respectful by linking themselves with the ideology of the guru. Those persons, who could not receive teachings from the '*Chief Rishi gurus*' mentioned above, they linked themselves with a guru popularly known as '*Kashyap*' and continued calling themselves as the offsprings of Rishi '*kashyap*'. A disciple is considered equal to the son, because he is supposed to carry forward the teacher's ideals. *In fact the entire 'gotra-system' is the part of a greater plan of the Rishis for the formation of Mokshha-oriented society.*

3. The Essence:- In nut-shell, the object of the above discussion is to explain that these surnames are only to emphasize identification of the person and were aimed to inspire high moral values in the individual. Because this way every individual claimed to be *the man of high character by witnessing the name of his Rishi Guru, Veda, business, village, ancestors and so on. Due to passage of time, people forgot the analysis and started treating these surnames as caste.* Thus in India there are thousands of castes and sub-castes. In this way the society divided into very small branches. This has harmed the society too much. In fact there are four **varnas** only, not only in India, but all over

the world e.g. (a) Teacher, Researcher, guide (b) Defence personnel (c) Business class (d) Service personel. *If the above facts are brought to the public, then the curse of casteism can be wiped away from the country.*

Producing offsprings in scientific way:- With the invention of theory of '*Genes*', it is now well understood, that the offsprings inherit several habits, diseases, physique etc. from parents. Since marriage is the source for producing progeny and inheritance contributes a lot in this field, therefore to carry forward the special characteristics and the tendencies of the parents in the offsprings, *it is essential to marry such couple, who can reinforce and transfer specialties earned by their parents during their life time*, say business family girl should marry a boy of business class, defence personel with defence, Researcher/ guide should marry with the similar class. *This is a logical approach and is aimed to maintain specialization of work in the society. More or less at present this is what is already in practice in the Vedic society. In case of the service personnel often the offspring may be of lower calibre. In that case, the male member should be of higher intellectual level, which will produce a higher category of offspring. Better education, good food, religious living and *teachings of law of karma etc.* will improve the qualities of all the four classes. Thus the high moral character shall be maintained, which is the sole object of *Gotra Vigyan* (science of Gotra system) and shall go long way in maintaining law and order. The scholar of social sciences, religious teachers and the Govt. should keep an eye on the issue, that the *people continue to stick to high moral values for the benefit of the society, race and the nation. Modern trend of reckless marriages like animals should strictly be prohibited. Marriage should be treated a sacred act. Every couple must hold responsibility of producing an offspring of high moral character.* For guidance how to produce a noble progeny Readers may kindly refer Session no. III.*

-Hari Om Tat Sat-