



Divine Message of the Veds

Part 1

The Four Vedas

**Rigved
Yajurved
Atharvaved
Samved**

Vedas are the eternal utterances of God, the Supreme Father. Through the Vedas we get the best type of material and spiritual knowledge. Regular study of the Vedas keeps us away from sins and increases hope and joy in life. Making life peaceful, the Vedas take us away from the bad path and lead to the good path and make life peaceful and pure. Whenever the mind gets disturbed, vedas alert us and also guide us.

The reader is requested to read this book with faith, think deeply on its contents and become determined to go ahead on the path of duty.

Divine Message of the Veds

by Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

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Preface to the first edition published in 1958

The Veds are books on material as well as spiritual knowledge. Because their language is very ancient and not well-known, differences have been found among learned persons regarding their interpretation, but there is absolutely no doubt that high-level spiritual principles, learning, arts and practical knowledge are contained in them. Since all this knowledge has been given very concisely in the form of 'sutras' or axioms in one or two stanzas, all the readers are not able to understand their aims immediately. But on the basis of the 'richas', the learned ones have created great books of large size on spiritualism which have been providing inspiration and guidance for thousands of years to the spiritual seekers who want to progress on the path of excellence.

The speciality of the Veds is that their knowledge is not limited to any particular race, sects or sub-sects with differences of opinions but all persons in the world have the same right to it, because the Veds are universal in their approach and message. Hence they can prove useful at any time to the cultured and spiritually minded men and women in any country. The aims and guidance obtained from the Veds prove beneficial and uplifting to every human being.

The differences in interpretation of the Veds are not a present-day phenomenon only. It used to happen in ancient times also. It is also a widely held belief by the Indian public that the various aggressors who invaded India over more than a thousand years have misinterpreted the Veds in their fanatic zeal to reduce the importance of the Veds and have even gone to the extent of wickedly calling them the songs of the half-civilised shepherds and cowherds. Nevertheless, even ancient Indian learned men have made different interpretations of the Veds. Religious-minded good men have interpreted the Veds from a spiritual viewpoint and others have made distorted interpretations to suit their own ends according to the hideous principles of Vaam Marg (which is something akin to witch-craft). For example, the demon-king *Ravan* misinterpreted the Veds to encourage violence, and some of the followers are seen even to-day.

In this way, such pseudo-religionists have caused great harm to the Veds and have always tried to lower their status and usefulness. It is but natural that when three to four explanations are given for the

same stanza and one expert expresses a completely opposite opinion to another's, doubts and lack of faith will raise their heads in people's minds.

But now the time is ripe to find a solution to these perverse and mutually opposing interpretations spread during the dark medieval periods. Modern scholars have revealed the original aim of the Veds by analysing the Vedic mantras, and have represented in very clear and easily understandable form the core knowledge, advice and the principles of truth enshrined in them, so that even an ordinary reader can understand and benefit from them. The book in your hands contains the essence of selected 'richas' (stanzas) with explanations from an impartial view and with proper aims. By understanding them properly and putting them into conduct, the readers will be convinced that the Veds are in reality mines of gem-like thoughts. By such conduct man becomes free from faults and wickedness and starts living a life of high-level thinking. There is no doubt that every man can make his life successful by benefiting from the immensely valuable advice on the subjects of truth, non-violence, forgiveness, pity, generosity, helping others, good dealings, organisation and co-operative life.

Shriram Sharma Acharya

Preface to the revised third edition

The Veds are the immortal speech of God, the Supreme Father. All the critics of the world acknowledge the fact that the veds are the most ancient scriptures and that they are the jewels in the crown of the entire literature of the world. There is an endless treasure of knowledge and spiritual information, i.e. information on the soul and God in the Veds. Nectar flows forth from their every word. All the fundamental learning of this world has been born from the Veds.

We should very lovingly and with great faith read such invaluable books. We should decide to fulfil our duties by reflecting and contemplating upon them. We get material as well as spiritual knowledge of high level from the veds. The reading of Veds saves us from sins, creates hope and joy in life, makes life peaceful, pure and stable, turns us away from the wrong path and takes us to the right path and when we stray away, then it also warns and alerts us.

The more we reflect on the meanings of the Ved-mantras, the more it will make our life shine. Every mantra is capable of opening up the path to brighten every aspect of man's life.

The revered Gurudev has included specially selected mantras from all the four Veds in this book. With the aim of enabling even the most ordinary man to derive inspiration from this book, after giving the meaning of each mantra, its message has been added in very simple language. It also helps to increase knowledge. But the mantra is not limited to the message alone. With deep reflection and contemplation, we can get many types of messages and inspirations from the same mantra. The message of a total 185 mantras has been given in five parts as follows:

Part 1: *Brahmanatva* or the meaning of being a brahman: Nobody becomes a brahman merely by birth in a race or clan. He becomes a brahman by virtue of his qualities, deeds, excellence of nature and dedication of his life to people's welfare. The mantras included in this part give information on God's existence, His worship and the duties of the brahmans.

Part 2: Atmabal or the power of the soul: Man has to struggle continuously to achieve the objective of life. Tremendous will-power is required for facing the widespread bad customs, wicked activities and corruption and to adopt good activities and honesty in life. Information on mantras which help to achieve this aim is given in this section.

Part 3: Charitra nirman or the formation of good character: For the upliftment of the soul, the foremost requirement is the excellence of character. Lucid explanation of the mantras highlighting the importance of good qualities in life is given in this part.

Part 4: Dushpravrutti nivaran or the eradication of wicked activities: Wicked activities and addictions turn man's joyous life into hell. The inspiration and guidance for liberation from them is given in this part.

Part 5: Parivar aur swasthya or the family and health: Family-life is the backbone of the entire social organisation. Happiness, peace and heavenly atmosphere of prosperity depend only on its excellence. In this section the mantras which can make our lives bright and praiseworthy have been given. These mantras explain the importance of a happy family, a confident and cultured woman and health.

The person who wrote and translated the five parts must have really spent time and labour on it. However the thoughts presented here are of Revered *Gurudev* only and this work has been possible only by his inspiration. The aim of our life can be easily achieved by study, reflection and contemplation of the explanations of the mantras

Lilapat Sharma

Yug Nirman Yojana, Mathura.

A brief introduction to the life of Revered *Gurudev*

Born on 20-9-1911 at *Aanwalkheda* village in Agra district. Father - *Pandit Roopkrishore Sharma*, Mother - *Daankunvri Devi*.

Intense spiritual and devotional activity right from childhood. Always spiritual discussions with classmates. Unlimited love for the Himalayas. Ran away from home at the age of ten. When caught, claimed Himalayas as his home and insisted on going there.

Constructive thinking right from childhood. Accent on village development and self-employment through spinning and weaving in every home. Distribution of leaflets in village bazaars for public-awareness. Unlimited sympathy for untouchables and downtrodden. Treatment of a diseased old untouchable woman despite opposition from people at home.

Initiation into yagyopavit (wearing the holy-thread) and Gayatri mantra at Kashi (Varanasi) by the great Madan Mohan Malaviyaji (the founder of Banaras University) at the age of ten years.

On Vasant Panchami day (5th day of the spring season) visitation by his Guru from Himalayas as a manifestation in a mass of bright light in his own worship-room. He was 15 years of age at that time. His guru gave him a glimpse of his previous births and also gave five directions .

1. Accumulation of divine energy by recitations of Gayatri-mantra purashcharans (i.e. repetitive recitation, each purashcharan of 24,00,000 mantras, 24 such purashcharans were to be made. His only diet during this time was roti (flat baked bread from barley flour) and butter-milk. On the basis of an austere life to plan for nation building.

2. Continuous uninterrupted burning of the holy lamp. (This lamp continues to bum even to-day).

3. Journey into the Himalayas to meet his Guruji (mentor) for receiving guidance and for performing austerities.

4. To establish co-ordination between spirituality and science.

5. To use the householder's life as a support for high-level spiritual endeavours.

Teenager Shriram begins the practice of severe austerities. On the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi, active participation in the freedom-struggle. Enlisted as a Congress-worker, six imprisonments with hard labour, each for six months. During the freedom-struggle at Jaraar, getting severely beaten by the police and despite fainting, not releasing the national flag clenched between the teeth. Therefore nicknamed 'mutt' in Hindi language i.e. intoxicated (with love for the country). Incarceration in Asansol jail with the great Madan Mohan Malaviyaji, Swaruparani Nehru, Devdas Gandhi and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai. They became the foundations for the spread of the mission.

Entry into the field of journalism at a very young age. Active co-operation in 1927-28 in the newspaper '*Sainik*' (soldier) belonging to Shrikrishna Dutt Paliwal. Stoking the fires of freedom with his articles in the columns titled '*Mutt Pralaap*'. After independence, publication of religious books and pamphlets for public-education.

Publication of *Akhand Jyoti* monthly from Mathura and also *Yug Nirman Yojana*, *Yug Shakti Gayatri* and *Mahila Jagaran* from Gayatri Tapobhomi, Mathura. Publication and spread of inspiring literature for the formation and moral regeneration of the individual, family and the society.

Publication of *Gayatri Mahavigyan* in 3 volumes which became the basis for the development of culture, spiritual endeavour, sacraments and spiritualism. Writing, translating and publication of the four Vedas, 108 *upnishads*, 6 *darshans*, 18 *purans* and 2700 books including the *Gita* and '*Brahman Aaranyak*' volumes.

108 *kundiya yagya* (1953) as a finale to the completion of 24 *Mahapurashcharans*, *Narmedh yagya* in 1956 (*Narmedh* means surrendering one's all for serving the public-at-large. In this *yagya*, Gurudev surrendered whatever personal belongings to the Gayatri-

mission and himself for the sole purpose of public-welfare). 1008-kundiya yagya (1958) and auspicious beginning of the Gayatri-family.

As a symbolic gesture of goodwill towards all religions, collection of water and soil from 2400 places. Also started an industry oriented school with education for self-employment at *Gayatri Tapobhoomi*, Mathura.

Establishment of Gayatri-family's branches all over the country. Left Mathura permanently in 1971. Before that five 1008-kundiya Gayatri mahayagya throughout India on a vast scale.

After departure from Mathura in 1971, establishment of 'Shantikunj' at Haridwar in the *sapta-sarovar* area (the area of the seven branches of river Ganga) and proclamation of the principles of the traditions of ancient sages as applicable for the current era.

Establishment of 2400 'pragya sansthans' for moral-spiritual awakening of the public. Rev. Gurudev's journey through the length and breadth of India in 1981 - 82 for inaugurating them.

Training of individuals in *japa* (recitation), *aasan* (yogic exercises), *pranayaam* (yogic breath-control), *mudra* (postures), *dhyana* (meditation) etc. Study by scientific equipment of a person's progress through spiritual treatment.

Guidance for practical life based on changes found in brain-waves, heart's electricity, kirilium halo and endocrine secretions through penance and meditation. Total transformation of life through spiritual systems propounded by Rev. Gurudev. For this purpose, experiments in spiritual endeavour, diet and medicines in accordance with medical science. No discrimination between caste, sex language, religion, sect etc in these workshops.

A Religious Duty

The fundamental basis of the divine Indian culture is the Vedic literature. The Veds contain high level of spiritual principles and knowledge on practical life. In this book 'Divine Message of the Veds' 185 'richas' (stanzas) from all the four Veds viz. Rigved, Yajurved, Samved and Atharvaved have been carefully selected and their explanation has been given in an easy-to-understand style. These stanzas are like pearls of wisdom. Daily study of this divine message makes life peaceful pure and free from passions. By reflecting and contemplating on the divine messages under the five divisions of this book, life's aims can be successfully achieved. The 5 divisions are Brahmanatva (brahman philosophy), Atmabal (Spiritual Power or power of the soul), Charitra nirman (character formation), Dushpravrutti nivaran (eradication of wicked activities) and Parivar aur Swasthya (family and health).

The basis for '*vichar kranti*' i.e. bringing about a change in thinking and attitudes for moral regeneration is *sadgyan-prachar* i.e. spreading of the good-knowledge, that is, the knowledge of morality, spirituality and a code of simple life style. Keeping) his aim in view, a campaign has been started to make this book available in every home.

The Veds advise man to evolve to a higher spiritual level. For that man has to change his thinking and attitudes. This is very much required to-day. Only through a change in the individual, change in the world and the era is possible. To create a heavenly atmosphere on the earth, we will have to change the level of the mind for the removal of selfishness, narrow-mindedness, indiscipline and immorality which have spread their tentacles to-day and in their place establish the goodwill and good activities of gentlemen. This activity is not possible by mere listening, writing and reading. For this, an endeavour will have to be made so that people adopt a life-style in harmony with a pure spiritual viewpoint.

That was the aim of our revered *Gurudev Pandit Sriram Sharma Acharya* and to fulfil his desire is our religious duty.



The basic axiom behind all successes in the world is tremendous will-power. Based on its strength only learning, wealth and gadgets are produced. This is the support on which spiritual 'tapasya' (penances) and 'sadhanas' are dependent. This is that divine strength by which, the man who is born empty handed dazzles the world by becoming rich and powerful. Those who make their will power very strong and then try for progress & success in life, will never be unsuccessful nor disappointed.

- Shriram Sharma Acharya



All our problems can be solved by the Indian culture and the Indian way of thinking. The government can protect your rights but it cannot control the thought process which is the root - cause of all your happiness and misery. This can be achieved by spiritual upliftment only.

The Indian Culture alone has the real strength to turn man into a true human being. It teaches us that man is born to love man and certainly not for quarreling and fighting.

- Bhagwati Devi Sharma



Divine Message of the Veds

Part 1

Brahmanism



Brahmanism

Brahmanatva or the meaning of being a brahman: Nobody becomes a Brahman merely by birth in a race or clan. He becomes a Brahman by virtue of his qualities, deeds, excellence of nature and dedication of his life to people's welfare. The mantras included in this part give information on God's existence, His worship and the duties of the Brahmans.

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो

Indram mitram varunamagnimaahuratho

दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।

Divyaha sa suparno garutman

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति,

Ekam sadvipraa bahudhaa vadanti

अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥

Agni yamam matarishwanmahuhu

(Rigved 1/164/46)

Meaning: The various powers of the Supreme are themselves known as *devatas* but He is only one. Therefore, according to their qualities, deeds and nature worship that Supreme.

Message: The Supreme, the father of all is everywhere. The limitless authority of God or the Supreme is present in each and every particle of this vast world, in the space, in the thousands of universes. He is the ruler, the director, the controller of this world. "*Isha vasyamidam sarvam*" - God's presence is there in everything, in the animate and the inanimate, in every pore of our bodies. He is with us all the time, whether we are awake or sleeping, within us, outside and around us. Just as air is filled in a balloon, it is outside the balloon and all around it too, but we cannot see it. Just as butter is present in every drop of milk, likewise God also is omnipresent. His authority is in every nook and corner of the world, in all living forms - from viruses, bacteria to worms, insects, birds, and animals. For Him there is no distinction of caste or North, East, South, West. For Him everyone is alike.

There are innumerable powers of this omnipresent - one Who is everywhere God. People having different opinions call these powers by different names. God, the Supreme, the Father of all of us is ONE. He is *Indra, Mitra, Varun, Agni, Yama* - all of these. Whether you call him *Ram or Krishna, Durga or Kali, Shiv or Shankar, Allah* or God, - the importance is not of name but of His qualities. God's worship lies in imbibing His qualities in our lives, to act accordingly or to put it into conduct in our dealings, with our own self as well as with others. In other words, worship of God is putting it in our life's conduct. By worshipping in this manner, with frequent practice, that virtue or quality becomes a part of man's nature and gradually with the attainment of excellence man progresses towards divinity.

It is the biggest foolishness to quarrel because of the different names of God. What is there in a name, a rose smells as sweet by any other name! "*Ekam sadavipra bahudha vadanti*". Learned people call the One God by different names. Call HIM by any name, but constantly try to make His qualities an inseparable part of your deeds and nature.

In the present times, most people neither think of God's qualities, nor try to put them into their conduct, but on His name, are so ready to fight and die, as if they only have a right on HIM. They think that His authority is limited only to a place of worship. They wrongly think that God does not look at a person's sinful deeds when committed outside the place of worship. They have almost completely forgotten His Omnipresence i.e. that He is present everywhere. He is with us everywhere in innumerable shapes and forms, present with us at every moment. His Supreme Authority exists throughout the world. It is very important to keep this fact in our minds.

Think continuously of God's names and His qualities.

वेनस्तपश्यन्निरितं गुहा सद्यत्र,
Venastatpashya nnihitlm guhaa sadyatra
विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम्।
Vishvam bhavatyekanidam
तस्मिन्निदं च सै च विचैतिसर्वं च,
Tasminnid ngum sum cha vichaitisarva ngum
सऽओतः प्रोतश्च विभूः प्रजासु॥
saotaha protashcha vibhuh prajaasu

(Yajurved 32/8)

Meaning: The learned people come to know through their knowledge, thinking, contemplation and experience that God is present in every matter. HE astounds everyone. The entire creation has manifested through Him. All living beings are produced by Him and go into oblivion (merge into Him) at the time of deluge.

Message: This world has both believers in God and non-believers in God. Those who do not believe in God, they also believe that there is some 'Power' which runs this entire creation and millions of universes with a definite rhythm, Whether tested. On the basis of intelligence and logic or whether you believe on the basis of faith and trust, there cannot be any doubt in the presence everywhere of God. HE is not actually seen, but we can experience Him in every situation. The only condition for that is that we do not make an effort to prove this wrong by rigidly or dogmatically trapping ourselves in a particular line of thought i.e. by keeping an open mind. God Supreme is present in the entire universe. This entire universe is His form "*Purusha eveda ngum sarvam*".

Man's strength of soul increases by accepting in this manner the presence of God everywhere. By constantly remaining in the presence of a powerful, capable friend and helper, one's own talent, capability and manliness or valour is awakened and mind's activity for good deeds increases. Man himself is saved due to protection by the divine light of God's authority. He is constantly aware that he is not away from God's sight and he will certainly get the result of his good or bad deeds. In this manner when man gets engaged in good deeds, he saves himself from bad or wicked deeds as well as progresses on the road to becoming a *devata* (deity) i.e. on the road to achieving divinity.

Everything in this world has the support of something else. If this support is small and brittle, then the condition of that thing will be wobbly. If this support is strong then that thing will be long-lasting and stable. One who makes the Omnipresent God as his support, is always free from worries. The storms of the universe around him, of attachment, greed, arrogance etc will not be capable of shaking him. He always gets the vision of God in his heart. Our soul is an infinitesimal part of that Supreme Father. The stream of the vital force of life in the body is due to Him only. The never-diminishing treasure of power is within us only, but we are not able to know this fact because of ignorance and always go on crying about our own bad luck. When we think by the knowledge, experience and discretion which; are all within us, then we are able to experience God's boundless powers within us. This power increases the strength of the soul and the road to the conquest of troubles in our life becomes easy. The protecting hand of the kind Father is always on our head and protects us.

Only the shelter of the all-powerful God is capable of liberating us from the world's turbulence.

अग्निस्तिग्मेन शोचिषा य एवं सद्विश्वं न्यत्रिणम् ।

Agnistigmena shochishaa

ya ngum sadvishvum nyatrinum.

अग्निर्नो व एवं सते रयिम् ॥

Agnirno va ngum satey rayim

(Samved 22)

Meaning: O deity of fire! You are always doing justice to all. Please destroy wicked persons and obstructive elements by your powerful flames and please give strength and divinity to those who are religious souls, who worship you and praise you.

Message: God's justness is praised in this mantra. He is not partial to anyone. It is impossible that we turn him in our favour by any type of sycophancy and make him do whatever we want him to do. We can see clearly all around us that innumerable people worship God in various ways, do *anushtans* (reciting certain prayers for a specific number of times) and rituals, even then they remain in want, misery and bad conditions. The reason for this is that their sentiments are always of narrow selfishness and wicked activity. In the scales of justice of God, this type of act of worship is pretentious and deceitful and deserves punishment.

On the other hand those persons who do not perform ritualistic prayers but always behave themselves as ordained for religious conduct (i.e. truthful, fair, just dealing, goodwill, honesty etc), are continuously showered with the grace and blessings of God. All human beings are the children of God and are all alike. They get the results of their deeds according to the type committed by them. "*Avashyamewa bhoktavyam krutam karma shubhashubham*" i.e. one certainly has to bear the consequent result of the good or bad deeds committed by him or her. We actually forget this fact. We will certainly get the results of our deeds today or to-morrow, in this birth or the next, but nobody can save himself from the consequences or fruits of the karma or the deeds. This is the form of the justness of God. The more firm our trust in this fact, the sentiment of moral goodness and simplicity will develop more within us. Moral goodness and simplicity is nothing but the destruction of the lowly tendencies of the mind and its moving towards higher thinking. When the aspiration to develop excellence of character is roused within us and we start striving for it, that is called moral goodness and simplicity. The entire universe has *satva*, *rajas* and *tama* characteristics in it - *satva* element means the characteristics of morality, goodness, simplicity, love, forgiveness, compassion, etc; *rajas* element means the characteristics of continuously running after material wants, riches, luxury, indulgence of desires etc; *tamas* element means darkness, anger, lust, greed, attachment, lowly and heinous tendencies etc. Man's mind is also made up of all these three tendencies. Man has to strive to evolve from lowly '*tamas*' tendencies to the '*rajas*' tendencies and then to discard even these '*rajas*' tendencies and develop the '*satva*' or '*satvik*' tendencies - that is the ultimate goal of Vedic dharma (or Vedic religion). Only this knowledge saves us from bad deeds and wicked tendencies and this knowledge, by manifesting it) every aspect of life, makes it beautiful, excellent and '*satvik*' as described above. When so evolved, the person's vision is always towards '*satva*' characteristic while doing any task big or small. The person is always alert with discretion which does not allow any deed by which one has to suffer the anger of God.

Everyday and every moment we must remember the good resolve that we shall always believe God as just and present everywhere and adopt His law in our lives. Therein lies our salvation. With its help we shall be liberated from the desire for sons, money and fame and save our soul from sins. Only then shall we get the strength of soul, the strength of intelligence, the strength of money and divinity.

That itself is called the worship of God.

कदाचन स्तरीरसि नेन्द्र सश्चसि दाशुषे ।

Kadachana starirasi nendra

sashchasi daashushe.

उपोपेन्नु मघवन् इन्नु ते दानं देवस्य प्रच्यते ॥

Upopennu maghvana bhoooya

innu te daanam devasya prachyate

(Samved 300)

Meaning: God does not nullify anyone's deed at any time and does not punish anyone who has not committed any wrong deed. An organisation has been devised for giving the results of deeds - of this birth and other births - for every human being.

Message: All types of activities in this world are ruled by God's authority. Right from birth to death, all the events in man's life are administered by the righteous and impartial God in accordance with the fruits of man's deeds. It is decided according to the deeds of previous births as to in which country a soul will be born, in which family and how long and at-what level the life has to be lived. Of two children born at the; same: time, one' is born in a king's family and the other is born in a dirty hovel, one is brilliant from birth and the other is stupid, one child strong and the other is constantly sickly. One is long-lived while the other has a short life-span only. It is not that God has filled a person's life with happiness and facility by being partial and has without reason thrown someone in the fire of sorrow and wretched living. All this takes place according to the principal of 'karmaphal' i.e. the results of one's deeds or 'as you sow, so shall you reap'.

The arrangements for a soul's next birth are made depending on his deeds in this birth. The soul is either liberated from the cycle of births and deaths or else it has to wander in the circle of births in 84,00,000 species of life. Its next birth may be as a man or as a dog, cat, pig, snake, owl etc. The soul gets the facilities and comforts depending on the type of good and bad deeds done by him in previous birth. He also gets the occasions for repentance of his deeds in the form of sorrows and troubles.

The society to-day has become strangely peculiar. People have no faith in God nor on his arrangements for providing the results according to a person's deeds. As a result they are becoming impudent, shamelessly bold and self-willed, doing whatever pleases them. When there is no fear of punishment, no worry about what happens in the next birth, who is there to restrain them? In such a case why will discretion also give them company? Wherever they feel nice, wherever they get benefit, wherever they get pleasure, well, they move ahead in that direction. They have no fear, nor restraint nor any shame in causing harm to someone's interest for achieving their selfish interest. This is what the animals actually do. They are interested only in filling their bellies and procreation or producing children. If man cannot put to good use the grace and blessings abundantly given by God, if he cannot make himself a human being in the true sense of the word, then what benefit did he really achieve by being born in the human species? Also, he must surely bear the punishment for the sins of past births. That is why he has to suffer from sorrow and bear hardships in this life. We are not able to repent a little. On the contrary we get trapped in more sins. The result is that the remaining life also becomes hell-like, and one is not aware about the type of punishment in the coming birth. One must think deeply on this truth.

By understanding properly this just and impartial form of God and the importance of the consequences of one's deeds, man always becomes engaged in good thinking and good deeds and is saved from the attack of bad thoughts and bad tendencies.

गुहता गुह्यं तमो वि यात विश्वमत्रिणम्।

Guhataa guhyam tamo

vi yaat vishwamatrinam.

ज्योतिष्कर्ता यदुश्मसि ॥

Jyotishkartaa yadushmasi

(Rigved 1/86/10)

Meaning: O Lord! We have fallen in a dark cave. In this severe darkness many demons are harassing us. We pray to you to destroy this darkness and bless us with the donation of brightness so that we can be liberated from these enemies.

Message: The prayer to God in this mantra is not for removing ordinary darkness which can be dispelled by lighting a lamp or pressing an electric-switch. Here the reference is to the darkness of ignorance. We are surrounded from all sides by this darkness of ignorance in which lust, anger, attachment, selfishness etc are always striving to throw us into the deep chasm of downfall. Thus we are not able to do good to us or to this world.

God gave us this human body as a result of our virtuous deeds in the past births. We are very fortunate to obtain this human body. And He gave it to us for the reason that we make this beautiful world- garden more beautiful by working like a gardener. But gripped by ignorance we are not at all willing to look towards it and remain continuously busy for fulfilling our lowly and base selfish aims. Every time we are manipulating and satisfying our greed, attachment and desires and when faced with obstacles in the path we become angry. We are not able to see beyond the desire for children, fame and money. We want everything in this world without worrying about whether others die of hunger. We become blind to others for fulfilling our selfish desires. We erect such high walls around us that God's divine light is unable to reach us.

Surrounded by darkness, our soul is crying out loudly and we are not able to hear it. We require that divine light, with whose help we can see our soul, can hear its voice and spread all around the divine light of the union of the soul with the Supreme. The brightness of a thousand suns also looks dim in front of the brightness of the soul. 'Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya, asato ma sadgamaya,' this prayer is for leading from darkness to light and from untruth to truth. With the exit of ignorance, the flame of truth enlightens our life. "Mrutyonna amrutamgamaya" - we proceed from mortality to immortality. Only by obtaining the true knowledge, it becomes possible to identify the demons obstructing the true path and then only we realise that those whom we consider our well-wishers, they are digging our graves and those whom we considered our enemies they are our real friends.

This is the essence of the Indian way of life. This is the aim of Indian religious books and knowledge. By enlightenment of the ultimate knowledge, guidance should be available throughout the life - such is the total arrangement here. With the dawn of knowledge in the mind, all the deeds are carried out accordingly and man proceeds with ease on the path of spiritual salvation.

No sooner the ignorance is removed, the achievement of life's goal becomes possible.

वस्यो भूयाय वसुमान यज्ञो वसु वंशिषीय ।

Vasyo bhooyaaya vasumaan

yagyo vasu vanshishiya

वसुमान् भूयासँ वसु मयि धेहि ॥

vasumaan bhooyaasum vasu mayi dhehi

(Atharvaved 16/9/4)

Meaning: O human beings! Have faith in God and always strive in such a way that by serving others, you get the most excellent status in life.

Message: Man has been told about three things in this mantra, first - have faith in God, second - adopt the path of service to others and third - achieve excellence.

Faith in God is a very magnificent idea. An innocent child feels secure in his mother's lap or by holding his father's hand. He has full faith in his parents and because of this faith he becomes free from fear. We also must establish a relationship of total devotion, faith and trust in God. There are plenty of benefits by starting a relationship. When a poor and ordinary girl accepts a king as her husband and surrenders herself completely to him, she becomes the proprietress of all his property as his queen. In thus way, we have all to gain by establishing a relationship with God.

The second point is helping others, serving others, obliging others. We must always remember that there is a part of GOD in every living being. We must strive for upliftment of all while dealing with them with goodwill and love. We should not deal with them in a way which we would not like to be done to us. One should always be eager to organise good people for breaking up immorality and bad customs which prevail in the world and work for the welfare of all by encouraging creative activities.

Man can achieve excellence only by faith in God and service to others. Today people are busy in many types of immoral activities by forgetting God and becoming blind in selfishness. All round there is corruption, dishonesty and looting. People move around here and there by immorally earning millions; but in reality they are creating hell for themselves. We should always remember the word 'varenyam' of the *Gayatri-mantra* which inspires us to save ourselves from the path of lowly tendencies, indulgence of desires, devilishness, wicked conduct and selfishness, and walk on the excellent path of dignity, good conduct, greatness and helping or serving others. Only this excellent path leads to the welfare of all.

The best people are those, who without any selfish-motive, think it to be their duty to work for the welfare of others. By seeing the sorrow of others they feel great pain and for relieving others' sorrow they strive continuously even to the extent of putting their lives at stake. They are in the divine category. Then there are others who do their own work as well as help others. They belong to the human category. The third category is of demoniac people, who while doing and managing their work, spoil others' work.

The more a person has the sentiment of helping others, the more humanity he has. Only such people are successful in life.

तेजो ऽसि तेजो मयि धेहि । वीर्यं मसि वीर्यं मयि धेहि ।

Tejoasi tejo mayi dhehi virya masi viryam mayi dhehi

बलमसि बलं मयि धेहि । ओजो ऽस्योजो मयि धेहि ।

Balamasi balam mayi dhehi, ojasyojo mayi dhehi

मन्युरसि मन्युं मयि धेहि । सहो ऽसि सहो मयि धेहि ॥

Manyurasi manyoom mayi dhehi. sahoasi sahomayī dhehi

(Yajurved 19/9)

Meaning: O Supreme! You are the form of brightness, give me brightness. You are full of valour, make me valorous. You are full of strength, give me strength. You are luminous, give me luminosity. You are a destroyer of wicked persons, give me that power also. Alongwith, that you are also tolerant, make me too similarly tolerant.

Message: Who is called God? He is not any, human being as conceived by us. He is a collection of ideals, principles, excellence, good qualities, good activities etc. Prayer is made here for imbibing within us those qualities - from among the innumerable qualities of God - which are very important in our lives.

The most important is *tejasvita* or brightness or bright intelligence which develops the power of the soul and joins the person into those deeds which destroy material temptations. Brightness is not related to age but to the tendency of a person. It is not external, but internal. It is not superficial but enmeshed in one's nature. The face looks bright because of it. The second necessity is physical strength. God has given this body so that we live a hundred years and do deeds for others' welfare. "*Jivem Sharadah shatam*" - this is possible only if we become strong and valorous. It is possible for us to become bright, healthy and strong only through restraint and proper diet and proper activity. With the coming of all three within the person, the soul brightens up and the person becomes luminous. A man full of mental brightness, manliness, strength and luminosity can do everything in the world. The biggest difficulties cannot obstruct his path. Whatever he resolves to do is achieved. Whatever he does impresses others. Nobody can dare to shrug off what he says.

But that much itself is not enough. Power is necessary to destroy the sinful acts of wicked people. There should be natural anger within us for eradicating injustice. Alongwith that our soul must have limitless power of tolerance, by which we may always remain smiling even in worst difficulties and may not deviate from the path of truth. Even though there be unbearable calamities, we shall patiently solve them and go on progressing on the path of progress.

This is called the art of living. Then a person achieves humanity. When a person achieves humanity, then it is also his duty to strive to make human his family and society. Only a burning lamp can light an extinguished lamp. How can an extinguished lamp light up another extinguished lamp? It is man's duty to become bright, luminous, powerful, patient, valorous and strong and inspire others to do so.

Therein lies the success of man's life.

ब्राह्मणासः सोमिनो वाचमक्रत

Brahmanaasaha somino vachamakrata

ब्रह्म कुण्वन्तः परिवत्सरीणम्।

Brahma krunvantaha parivatsarinam

अध्वर्यवो धार्मिणः सिष्विदाना।

Adhvaryavo dhaarminaha sishvidaanaa

आविर्भवन्ति गुह्या न केचित्॥

Aavirbhavanti guhyaa na kechit

(Rigved 7/103/8)

Meaning: A Brahmin is he who is quiet, ascetic, and *yajanshil* (whose tendency is to worship God constantly). One who is himself knowledgeable and by spreading that knowledge takes the lost ones, the strayed ones on to the right, proper path of goodness is called a Brahman. They should come forward in this world and help others.

Message: Our sages and knowledgeable people created the caste-system on the basis of the nature of work, and from among the 4 castes gave the maximum responsibility to the Brahmans. It was his responsibility, to spread the great knowledge throughout the world. It is a misfortune that to-day the caste-system is being accepted - not on the basis of work - but on the basis of birth. To-day only those born in a brahman-caste are called brahmans even though they may be unlettered or thieves, wicked, lechers, crooked, treacherous or the like.

In reality, a brahman is one who is intelligent, knowledgeable, pure, restrained and disciplined. He is called a '*purohit*' (i.e. a priest) "*agni rishih pavamanaha panchajanya purohitaha*" His duty is to gather maximum knowledge, lead a disciplined and worshipful life of dedication. Further he should carry out the praiseworthy task of educating the public and instruct them about religion. A person who is educated and knowledgeable but uses that knowledge only for selfish achievement, does not impart the knowledge to others, is not fit to be called a brahman.

A brahman's nature must be gentle, quiet, tolerant and restrained. His life should be perfect with physical and mental austerities. Through austerities he should have made the body so tough that in any situation which is bad and full of hardship, he is always absorbed in his work. He is not trapped in laziness and neglect. Through mental austerities he has obtained liberation from illusory thinking, attachment, possessiveness, anger, wicked thinking and bad company. He limits his wants and can carry on his life with only the minimum requirements and is always ready with '*yagyiya bhavna*' (the sentiment of service to mankind) to give up his all for the welfare of others. God, the Supreme Father has given this responsibility of welfare of all creation to the human species and for fulfilling it, the *rishis* established the *brahman varna*.

The biggest enemy of a brahman is his arrogance. Because he is knowledgeable and because he is honoured by all, he is tempted to think himself as superior to others. Among the perversities of human nature such as lust, anger, attachment, greed etc, arrogance is the biggest perversity. It gives birth to lowly sentiments. Because of it, he gets such bad thoughts and he thinks that regarding some special quality or special thing he is ahead of others. The moment he becomes a victim of arrogance, he becomes unbalanced and his brahman's virtues are destroyed.

It is our duty to evolve and become brahmans, and also protect and nourish that brahmanism.

तीक्ष्णीयांसः परशोरग्रेस्तीक्ष्णतरा उत ।

Tikshniyaansaha parashoragnes

tikshanatara uta.

इन्द्रस्य वज्रात तीक्ष्णीयांसो येषामस्मि पुरोहितः ॥

Indrasya vajraat tikshniyaanso

yeshamasmi purohitaha.

(Atharvaved 3/19/4)

Meaning: We, the priests shall keep our hosts active, bright, helpful to others and powerful. We shall never allow them to go on the path of downfall.

Message: Brahmins are considered the source of inspiration for all the strengths of the society and the nation. All the citizens - whether they are *kshatriya* (warriors) or *vaishya* (traders, farmers and those engaged in producing societal-wealth) or *shudra* (the service-class doing labour, sweeping, cleaning, washing etc) - are their hosts and the responsibility of the physical, mental and characterial upliftment of all these three classes lies on them (the brahmins). Therefore it is for them to see that every man becomes a *karmayogi* (i.e. work for his living and develop a work-ethic or work-ethos) and is engaged in good deeds with a sense of duty. He, the host should not, be tempted to adopt an indisciplined and irregular life-style trapped in hopes, desires, temptations and wishful-thinking. He should constantly strive to go forward, to progress, to achieve a better status and be naturally engaged with diligence for further development. The responsibility here lies on the brahmins to see that in the above process there should not be a conflict with a view to selfish interests and instead all should help in achieving progress by mutual co-operation and co-operative efforts.

A brahman must firmly determine that innumerable streams of knowledge, deeds and devotion should flow forth. Knowledge and education should be available equally to all, religious discourses should be regularly arranged so that people are saved from wicked thinking and wicked tendencies. A brahman must deter that every man develops the intelligence to discriminate between right and wrong, truth and untruth, morality and immorality and they create all round an atmosphere of pleasant simplicity, cleanliness and fair, gentlemanly conduct.

It is also the duty of the brahmins to arouse devotion to God large measure in every person in the society. The essence devotion is not in mere ritualistic-worship but to arouse the faith that God's authority is present in every particle in this world. Knowing this very important philosophy, understanding and putting it into personal conduct, we can achieve progress of society and also of the nation.

During India's golden era, every brahman used to fulfil this duty with full faith and dedication. In those days, in this country brahman was called *Jagatguru* (teacher to the world) and used to illumine and enlighten the world with the light of his knowledge. To-day, those calling themselves as 'brahmins' should introspection and search within themselves and find out how much part of that ideal brahmanism exists in them. The root-cause of miserable condition of this country, which we see worsening every moment, is the downfall of brahmanism. Most of them have made Brahmanism as the basis of their profession. With the aim that profession can go on, they fool the people by reciting a few mantras here and there, and achieve their selfish ends. The public also blindly believes them and thinks that to be the easy solution for liberation from their troubles. One or two percent of people benefit from such rituals and then it becomes easy to loot others on their basis. If the brahman himself becomes a fallen-person that way, then how can he uplift others?

Only a true brahman can halt this downfall of brahmanism.

आचार्यो ब्रह्मचारी ब्रह्मचारी प्रजापतिः ।

Aachaaryo brahmachaari,

brahmachaari prajapatihi

प्रजापतिर्वि राजति विराडिन्द्रोऽभवत् वशी ॥

Prajapatirvi raajati

viraadindrao bhavad vashi

(Atharvaved 11/5/16)

Meaning: Our teachers, leaders and government authorities be *brahmchari* (celibates - here it means men of sound moral character), their characters should not be corrupt, otherwise harmful antisocial elements will flourish and there will be a downfall of the nation.

Message: Whatever be the type of social organisation, gradually bad thoughts, selfishness and bad activities start raising their heads. The Vedas had put that responsibility on brahmans according to the *varna*-system with the aim that they will keep the nation alert by themselves remaining alert and save it from ruin, therefore, the injunction "*vayam rashtre jagruyam purohitaha*".

Those running the state are teachers, leaders and government authorities. They are called *rashtranayaks* or national leaders. To-day we can actually see the extent to which all three have taken the nation and themselves into the chasm of downfall by their blind selfishness. Most teachers are busy running after money only and the temples of teaching have become open dens of corruption and adultery. To-day in schools and colleges every type of undersirable events, bullying, gambling, alcoholic and other intoxication, rape etc have become commonplace. Because the teachers lack character, the students gather useless and antisocial knowledge and are spoiling their own and the country's future.

These characterless and corrupted students, after growing up, become leaders and government servants and prove to be 'gums' of their own gurus (teachers). They use their knowledge, science, intelligence and money only for fulfilling their selfish interest. They neither have faith in the land of their birth nor any devotion to their nation. Behind the shield of such leaders and bureaucrats, criminal and anti-social elements boldly loot the country and the public.

The ruin of the public by their indiscriminate conduct can be openly seen to-day. The innocent public is helpless while suffering from the wicked acts of these incapable teachers, leaders and government authorities. Corruption and characterlessness are at their zenith to-day. Every man tries to grab some post of authority. He dreams of looting the country under the pretext of serving the public. For such work help is taken of many types of criminals of lower strata. They conspire to keep the innocent public under their thumb through pacification, money, bullying or by dividing it. The spiritual downfall is to such an extent that they go on creating vicious circles to grab power anyhow and become so inflated with the intoxication of power as to put the demon *Ravan* to shame.

Rigved also mentions clearly that, "*aa devanam bhavaha keturagne*" which means only excellent men should be the leaders of people. Leadership should never be allowed to slide into the hands of characterless people. This was the duty of the brahmans. But to-day they themselves are both characterless and corrupt and are taking the country towards downfall.

It is the duty of every alert citizen to become a true brahman.

शचीभिर्नः शचीवसू दिवा नक्तं दशस्यतम् ।

Shachibhirnaha shachivasu

divaa naktum dashasyatum.

मा वाँ रातिरूप दसत्कदा चनास्मद्रातिः कदा चन ॥

Maa vaam'raatiroopa dasatkada

chanaasmadraatihi Kadachana

(Rigved 1/139/5)

Meaning: In this world the teachers and the preachers should continuously teach and preach about 'sadachar' (good moral conduct in every aspect of life) so that no one's generosity is destroyed.

Message: Brahmans are called the representatives of God. That does not mean that greedy, avaricious, those succumbing to temptations, the teachers or any such persons can be called *brahmans*. A true *brahman* is one who, like the deities, makes all citizens knowledgeable, powerful, virtuous and bright. Wherever he sees the prevalence of ignorance, bad social customs, and wicked thinking, he becomes busy for their eradication, even to the extent of sacrificing his own life. With selflessness, he considers the all-round progress of society as his only aim.

Teachers, preachers, the renouncers in the ancient days were the men from that excellent category of *brahmans* who used to feel joyous by distributing their knowledge obtained through worship and diligence. By considering the upliftment of every living being of this world as God's order to them, they used to be involved in it physically, mentally and financially. Kings and ordinary men, rich and poor, young and old, all used to pay respect to them. Therefore the glory of the nation was always high.

But to-day the situation has reversed. The teacher-class is not paying any attention to its duty. Instead of imparting true knowledge it teaches them wrong modes and pushes them on the wrong path. Preachers, renouncers heads of monasteries and religious sects remain busy in fooling the people and inciting their feelings. They threaten as well as put fear into the minds of people by showing 'miracles' of false gods or incarnations and under cover of religion do whatever they want to do. The result of all this is that we see to-day a large number of selfish, treacherous and cunning men. Their sensitivity has died, their generosity has been destroyed. They lead a life lower than even animals' lives. They are no longer human beings. Instead of becoming devtas they have become demons and devils.

Has God given this human-body replete with qualities and intelligence for giving an education that leads the public astray and then to downfall? No, no! It is not like that. The Veda God's divine message to the human race is to live like the Sun-god. Just as the Sun rises and then moves ahead, similarly man should march ahead on the road to progress. Not only that but the Sun upon rising provides both light and energy to the world - likewise the knowledgeable ones should give to others the light of knowledge. They enlighten the path, give them the strength to live and teach them punctuality and diligence. Just as the Sun destroys filth by powerful heat, likewise the preachers should eradicate others' faults and bad tendencies and establish in their place good qualities. This is the instruction of the Veds to the people. This is what the all-powerful God expects from man.

Our Supreme Father expects even mote from the learned and the brahmans. Every knowledgeable person should imbibe this instruction of the Veds and become a true brahman.

त्वया मन्यो सरथमास्त्रन्तो

Tvaya manyo sarathamaarujanto

हर्षमाणा ह्रुषितासो मस्त्रवन् ।

Harshamaanaa hrushitaaso marutvan

तिग्मेषव आयुधा संशिशाना

Tigmeshava aayudhaa sanshishaanaa

उप प्र यन्तु नरो अग्निस्त्र्याः ॥

Oopa pra yantu naro agniroopaahaa

(Atharvaved 4/31/1)

Meaning: Let our soldiers be brave and be capable of destroying the enemy and always be cheerful. Their weapons be sharp. May they always be eager to sacrifice personal interests for the country's protection?

Message: The soldiers (and the army) are the alert sentry for the country's glory. By protecting the country from outside enemies, they create an atmosphere of internal security and peace. It is essential for the soldiers to be extremely powerful and capable of challenging and battling all types of enemies

But is this all possible by a mere say-so? Is it possible that the soldier can protect the country with dedication, discipline and his entire mind when there is anarchy in the country, looting, corruption, stealing, immorality and wicked conduct all around? No it is impossible. A soldier is not alone. He has left behind his family, his farm, his trade etc. Only when he is confident that all this will be protected, that he will be respected and honoured, his countrymen will look after him in every way, then only he will determinedly jump into the battlefield without even caring for his own life. Alongwith his fighting-skills and knowledge of the battlefield his inner cheer itself will give an edge to his weapons and rouse his self-respect. Self-respect means great liking, love, emotion and faith for something good. Only a self-respecting man can become one with some excellent idea and by making it the mission of his life will accordingly act for achieving the goal. Only the inspirational power of self-respect is capable of rousing the love for the country in the soldier and the desire for protecting the country rouses in them the sentiment of sacrifice. He becomes capable of chopping off his enemies like vegetables, with full dedication, intensity and mental strength. The enemy itself becomes demoralised by looking at his brilliance and valour.

To establish the above firmly is the responsibility of the brahmins and the society at large. Only the profound brilliant and far-sighted men like the ancient philosopher-politician *Chanakya* can keep the society peaceful and protected without any deficiencies and faults. In the present social oddities there is an extreme need for changing the thinking of people and developing their understanding. Only then will the battalions of brave disciplined soldiers, fully equipped with weapons and other means, be able to display valour and unbridled courage; their enthusiasm and dedication will be roused and the nation will shine with glory.

The educated people to-day must understand all this and should fulfil the role of a true brahmin by shedding off selfishness.

निराहावान्कृणोतन सं वरत्रा दधातम्।

Niraahaavaankrunotana

sum varatra dadhaatum

सिञ्चा हा अवत मुद्रिणं वर्यं सुषेकमनुपक्षितम्॥

Sincha ha avata mudrinum

vayum sushekamanu pakshitum.

(Rigved 10/101/5)

Meaning: The farmer is one who by tilling the lands fills the bellies of the people; therefore, he must be accorded the best status in the society. Only the educated people can be good farmers.

Message: God makes advance arrangement for filling the belly of every animal before it is born. First of all the new-born gets the milk of his mother. God has appointed the farmer as his representative for producing grain for filling the bellies of the people throughout the life. Thus the farmer is our 'annadata parameshwar (God, the donor of food).' The farmers produce not only wheat, grams, rice and pulses, but a wide variety of nourishing fruits, vegetables, medicinal plants and herbs. By their labour, they also provide proper food for animals and literally make flow rivers of milk and ghee (butter oil). Only the farmer by his hard labour and diligence gets for us the grant from mother-earth of grains, fruits, medicines, water, air, animals, wealth and means of comfort and happiness. He is our life-force, the supporter of our life, the sustainer of the people. His status is in no way less than God's. Without his co-operation, no work in this world is possible. There is a saying - "bhookhe bhajan na hoye Gopala" which means "one cannot worship on an empty stomach."

This farmer must get the best status in the society. To set an example, king Janak (father of Sita, the consort of the incarnation Ram of Ramayana) himself ploughed the fields to show the importance of the farmer and impart glory to him. But in to-day's economic situation, there is maximum exploitation of the farmer. The political leaders, government officers, the businessmen, traders try to keep all the comforts and facilities in their own possession and it is an irony that despite back-breaking work the farmer is not able to fill his own belly. Why is all this happening? Do we display a lack of desire in observing our limits and civic-duties? The truth is that today our thoughts have become immoral and wicked. We are not able to see anything else because of our selfishness, possessiveness, attachment, greed and distorted thinking.

The *brahman* or the knowledgeable person himself has fallen by blind selfishness. He has forgotten the most important responsibility of rousing the society to do its duty and to become work-conscious. That is why the farmer is also heading towards ruin. He too is now tempted to join the mad rat-race for possessing the material objects all around him. By imitating others he too has started avoiding physical labour and is becoming weak and work-shirker, and his personality is becoming dull. He is not properly utilising his power of discretion, that is why the activeness and profoundness of his body, mind and intelligence are diminishing. In every way the farmer has to suffer loss, disappointment and hopelessness because of his wrong thinking and thoughtless decisions.

The root-cause of this is the lack of education among the farmers. The basic foundations of farming are (6 co-operate with one another, to benefit from each-other's experience and to use collectively the nature's means. It is essential to prevent unnecessary loss of rain-water, to collect it properly and keep the earth green.

It is the duty of the brahamans and the knowledgeable people to provide proper guidance to the farmers.

यादुगेव ददृशौ तादृगुच्यते सं
Yaadrugēva dadrushay tadruguchyate sam
छायया दधिरे सिध्रयाप्स्वा ।
Chhayaya dadhire sidhrayaapswaa
मही मस्मभ्यमुरुषामुरु ज्रयो
Mahimasamyamurushaamuru jrayo
बृहत्सुवीरमनपच्युतं सहः ॥
Bruhatsuvinnana pachyutam sahaḥ ॥

(Rigved 5/44/6)

Meaning: The real preacher is one who-whatever he has in his soul, expresses it in the mind and expresses the same also in his speech. That is, he preaches whatever he puts into his own conduct, so that there is development of knowledge, strength and wealth in all the people. This itself is good preaching.

Message: India is a country of rishis (sages) and *gurus* (spiritual teachers) through whom the world has been getting enlightenment. It is from here that the rishis gave the tradition of high-thinking. Earlier on in the past, the lives of all were happy and of an excellent level, because the tradition was of high-thinking and simple-living. To-day the tradition is of low-thinking. Because of this, the leaders of the country are of lowly-thinking with a desire for selfish gains and they are spreading only such lowly thinking.

The religious heads of monasteries and preachers have interpreted the meaning of brahmanism and spirituality so as to fool the ordinary innocent people by preaching somehow whatever right and wrong that comes to mind. The thoughts of such preachers are of a third-rate level. Their conduct is also lowly. Their only basic maxim is "fool the people in the name of religion". To-day our society has become dilapidated because of the orthodox thinking and corrupt conduct of these preachers. Their speech has no effect because of the lack of excellence in their conduct and even if they tell something good, the people do not accept it. When *Gandhiji* spoke, the effect was on the hearts of millions of people. Preaching is a very sharp weapon but the condition is that first it has to be implemented into one's own conduct.

On the day of the *Shravani parva* (the full-moon day in the *Shravan* month of the Hindu calendar) when wearing the new holy- thread, we perform a ritual worship of the *sapta-rishi* (seven sages). We remember the 7 sages because they have preached us to be engrossed in good works mentally, physically and financially with total honesty. They are our ideal. But to-day the Brahmanism is sinking very low. Therefore, the total onus of the 'revival of the rishi - tradition' is on all of us. The need is to bring unity in our speech and conduct. This is possible only when man adopts the ideal of 'simple living and high-thinking' and always keeps in his heart pure emotions and pure sentiments. If the life is used to simplicity, the mind is neither tempted towards material riches nor does jealousy arise towards others. The emotional perversities of greed, attachment, anger automatically disappear and in their place good qualities and good emotions prosper and flourish.

Our ancient rishis had adopted this way of life. They used to surrender themselves to: works of public-welfare while also being absorbed in the worship of God. To develop arts with a strong moral base they always used to give proper guidance. To make the people bright (with knowledge), luminous, spiritually powerful and knowledgeable, strong and wealthy, they provided proper guidance.

The meaningfulness of Brahmanism lies in this only.

नाराशंसः सुषुदतीमं यज्ञमदाभ्यः ।

Naaraashansaha Sushudtimum yagnamadaabhyaha

कविर्हि मधुहस्त्यः ॥

Kavirhi madhuhastyaha

(*Rigved 5/5/2*)

Meaning: The learned men should aspire that just as a cow makes her owner happy by her milk, they should make the people happy by the good preaching of truth and knowledge.

Message: In the dark medieval ages we accepted such distorted interpretations of religion, spiritualism, philosophy, self-realisation, knowledge about God, spiritual endeavour and religious self-study that the society went into the reverse direction. In the very ancient Vedic times, then during *Ramrajya* (the period when Lord Ram ruled), during the rulership of the *Mourya* and Gupta dynasties, our country was a teacher to the world. The scriptures in those days were the same from which the Indians received inspiration and progressed materially and spiritually. To-day we have reached a state of beggary because distorted interpretations of the same scriptures were made during the dark middle-ages.

To-day's education fulfils only material objectives. To achieve a realistic aim of life, to live in peace and happiness, it is essential that man be knowledgeable, of good moral conduct and do work responsibly. This is real learning, real knowledge. The rishis took both knowledge and education in their hands and made the passage of life easy with the good preaching of truth and knowledge. Because of a want of this knowledge, perversities crept in the society. Just as with the bleeding away of all blood from the body, life goes out of the body, similarly with the ebbing away of truth and knowledge from the conscience, man becomes like a lifeless body.

He is called a rishi or a brahman who understands the sorrow and pain of the society and the culture, and by the good, timely and proper preaching of truth and knowledge eradicates the perversities of the society. As an example, during the time of the ancient *rishi Parshuram* when bands of warriors had spread terror all round, he did not hesitate to hang up his rosary and instead wield the hatchet. Similarly when the sikhs were constantly harassed by the moghuls in India, *Guru Govind Singh* gave the slogan, "Rosary in one hand and spear in the other". "Wield the sword, protect the nation's culture" - this is the religion of the true sage.

Education is an important process in man's evolution. Its aim is to evolve the human being towards uplift. It develops the entire personality of the individual. Swami *Vivekanand* has said, "What is that education which cannot make an ordinary person capable of survival and earning a living, which cannot produce the strength of character, the will to help others and which cannot produce the courage of a lion? Only that education is the right one with which one can stand on one's own legs." In reality, we require an education which moulds character, increases mental capacity and makes a person self-employed with pride.

Our learned people and brahmans should make special efforts for the revival of meaningful education - publicly and at individual level - for the sake of the revival of India's ancient glory and culture. This is the sentiment of "*asato ma sadgamaya*", which means "take me from untruth to truth". This is the real duty of the teachers and preachers.

The learned ones and the brahmans have to fulfil the responsibility of making the nation happy by going on this path.

न ता नशन्ति न दधाति तस्करो ।

Na taa nashanti na dabhaati taskaro

नासामामित्रो व्यथिरा दधर्षति ।

naa saamamitro vyathira dadharshati.

देवांश्च याभिर्यजते ददाति च ।

Devanshcha yabmiryajate dadati cha

ज्योगित्ताभिः सचते गोपतिः सह ॥

jyogittabhihi sachate gopatihi saha

(Rigved 6/28/3, Atharvaved 4/21/3)

Meaning: The best donation in the world is the donation of knowledge, because a thief cannot steal it, nobody can destroy it and it provides permanent happiness to millions.

Message: Comparatively Man is rather more ignorant than knowledgeable. God has given man such a wonderful brain, given such power of understanding, thinking, concentration and contemplation that to-day he has produced mega-computers, has produced innumerable gadgets of comfort through discoveries and inventions, and is not stopping even at that. But the spiritual intelligence of putting knowledge to good use is only in very rare individuals. Most people are ignorant and of the few that are wise and understanding most are trapped by corrupt thinking, corrupt characters, laziness, lethargy and persistence of wicked attitudes.

The duty of the learned people is to show the truth with the knowledge of light to the society wandering in darkness. It is all-right to give money, clothes, food to the needy but its influence is momentary. The best donation is the donation of knowledge, because man gets the right direction with it. It is a permanent wealth whose benefit, the man gets throughout his life and alongwith it there is a Qualitative increase in the wealth Man gets his first education in the mother's lap. Because of affection, closeness and love, the child eagerly obeys his mother's instructions. If mothers fulfil their responsibilities properly, while imparting good thoughts to the child, they can at the same time plant the seeds of rebellion against bad and evil social customs and thus produce healthy, thoughtful and learned citizens in the country. *Maharshi Arvind* also laid emphasis on 5 aspects for perfection in education. These are - material, *pranic* (relating to the life-breath), *manasik* (mental), *antaratmik* (related to soul) and *adhyatmik* (i.e. spiritual). They are related to man's 5 principal activities. All these 5 aspects of education are complementary to each other and give a totality to man's personality throughout the life. Great emphasis shall be laid on these 5 aspects of education right from the childhood. With this type of knowledge, there is an increase in qualities/virtues and the arrangement for the control of thinking and action becomes permanent and it opens the doors to becoming a great man.

With knowledge, man's understanding increases. When understanding increases, man's honesty will increase. If honesty increases, then man will develop responsibility and if responsibility increases, then man will develop bravery. All the four are connected with each other. Such power will then be created in man that he will resist immorality, be ready to give up his life for the complete eradication of wicked activities, bad customs, wicked tendencies and wicked thinking, and can play a leading role in the creation of a healthy progressive society.

One who donates (imparts) knowledge for making others learned, virtuous and good in conduct is a true brahman.

उद्बुध्यध्वं समनसः सखायः
Oodbudhyadhvam samanasaḥ sakhayaḥ
समग्निमिध्वं बहवः सनीलाः ।
Samagnimindhvam bahavaḥ sanilāḥ
दधिक्रामग्निमुषसं च
Dadhikramagnimushasum cha
दवीमिन्द्रावतोऽ वसे नि ह्रूये वः ॥
davimindraavatovase ni hrūye vaḥ

(*Rigved 101101/1*)

Meaning: The society in which more persons are like-minded, think alike and have the same resolve, that society is progressive. The people there are bright.

Message: Man is a social animal. He cannot remain alone and do anything. All his activities are influenced by each-others' actions. Many people have to co-operate for the successful administration of work.

Every man is independent by mind, speech, deeds and nature. He is capable of thinking and doing whatever he wishes to think about and do. But success is not achieved till people come together, think and act for the fulfilment of a resolve. Man is an indivisible part of the society. So long as he thinks of only his selfish interest, he will neither be able to achieve personal nor societal welfare. On the contrary, there will be an atmosphere of anarchy. But when he understands that his interest lies in the interest of the society, he will start restraining his wishes, aspirations and desires, then there will be an atmosphere of peace and happiness in society. Every man will march ahead on the path of progress, be bright, luminous and spiritually strong.

The most important point is that man and woman should be given the same status. A woman should not be considered as a doormat or an animal or a lower-caste person. She constitutes 50% of the society. With the neglect of 50% of the society, perversity creeps into the society and a kind of suffocating situation is seen in many families. If husband and wife with like mind and like-thinking resolve to fulfil their responsibility at an equal level, then peace and happiness will rain and reign everywhere. For the progress of the society and the country, the citizens should be worthy ones, and this is possible only when the father and mother diligently work at carrying out this responsibility. Only then the slogan "men and women are equals" will be meaningful. With this type of co-operative effort, progress can be made in the vast field of life. This thinking is necessary in all spheres, whether it be agriculture, industry or an office.

Knowledge, science, austerities, spiritual endeavour - howsoever high their levels, if the motive behind them is not for the progress of society, then it should be understood that they will not only be unsuccessful, but will also be harmful. *Ravan* did not care for the progress of the society and organised his mind, thought and resolve for achieving his selfish goal. As a result he himself his family, the power of his wealth, intelligence and army - all were destroyed. The same happened with *Bhasmasur* and *Duryodhana*.

It is the lofty duty of the brahmins that they destroy the immoral thinking which has spread in the society and take the people's mind, thinking and resolve on the path of moral goodness: This is the aim of '*vicharkranti abhiyan*' the campaign for a turnaround in thinking to moral thinking.

This is real brahmanism.

समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।

Samaani va aakutihi,

samaanaa hrudayani vaha,

समानमस्तु वे मनो यथा वः सुसहासति ॥

Samaanamastu vo mano

yathaa vaha susahaasati

(Rigved 10/191/4)

Meaning: *Our hearts, minds and resolve always be one so that our collective organisation will never be spoiled.*

Message: Collective organisation, co-operation and the spirit of friendship are essential for a healthy society. There are several types of persons in the society, Foolish, learned, ill, healthy, theists-atheists, hedonists and ascetics i.e. men of opposing natures all-round. Every man's view-point, thinking, experience, education, knowledge, self-interest, liking and qualities are different. Therefore all people do not think alike, and hence it becomes essential that everyman is sympathetic and tolerant towards others. It is not proper to think as foolish, ignorant, wicked and as our opponent, any person who thinks differently from us. Tolerance is the life-blood of an organisation, on its basis, the hearts, minds and resolve of all in the society move in a single direction only, leading to progress in all fields.

Lack of tolerance gives birth to cheating, treachery, anger, revenge etc leading to anarchic atmosphere. On all sides the terror of bullying, goondaism, cunningness and conspiracy spreads and people's living becomes insecure and disturbed.

A very beautiful ideal of union and collective organisation is seen in the life of the deity *Shivshankar*. He had the capability of keeping the blind, lame, lepers and diseased - all with him. He had kept under his control people who were having the bad tendency of harming others like snakes biting with their fangs. Symbolically he had live poisonous snakes round his neck as garlands. Thus he effectively put into effect his resolve to bring together various people of diverse tendencies into a cohesive group for usefulness to the society. He remained an ascetic without clothes, applied only ashes over his body - both as covering and as a sign of asceticism - kept his requirements minimum, drank poison to save the then society and established co-operation and tolerance in the society.

For an all-round progress of the society and the family it is essential that people give importance to others' opinions, accept whatever is good in them and also oppose whatever is wrong or immoral. A union's strength lies in tolerance and respect.

We observe how the thieves, dacoits, and bad men keep their organisation very strong, do not keep any distinctions and carry out the orders even at the risk of their lives, because they are afraid of their leader. If they oppose and do not co-operate, their chief kills them. We have completely forgotten our leader, our chief, the All Powerful God. HE can punish, and punishes also. Many bad tendencies and influences develop and multiply in this world, because people ignore this crucial fact.

This stage has come about because of a decline in brahmanism in our learned and knowledgeable people.

समानो मंत्रः समितिः समानी

Samaano mantraha samitih samaani

समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम्।

Samanum manaha saba chittameshaam

समानं मंत्रमभि मंत्रये वः।

Samanum mantramabhi mantraye vaha

समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमि ॥

samanena vo havishaa juhomi

(Rigved 101191/3)

Meaning: Let the thoughts of all men be alike, let all live unitedly together, let their minds, their concentration and *yagya* rituals be the same, which means, let all people live by mingling with each other.

Message: Just as no two faces are alike, similarly people's thinking, faith and nature are also different. In the society, black and white, big and small, aged and the young, women and men, rich and poor, all live together. All somehow depend on each other. Even then, if people tolerate each other with a liberal attitude and live together, then all around there will be an atmosphere of happiness, peace, unity and progress.

Very big indeed is the power of thoughts which give a direction to people's thinking and character. The polluted thinking of people in the society impels people towards selfish conduct in place of a conduct with motive of serving the society. To-day every man is unhappy. The reason is not only their difficulties but also their jealous thinking of "why are the others happy?" This is corrupted thinking, which prevents unity and creates obstacles in the path of progress. Whatever progress man has achieved in this world is by co-operation and unity. For flying an aeroplane, there is a pilot. But does he do it alone? No. Actually he has the co-operation of a large force of engineers and skilful technicians in the departments of radar, electricity, telephones etc. A slight mistake in any of their functions can cause a disaster. In arithmetic $1+1=2$. This happens also in case of inanimate objects, birds, animals etc. But if two men come together they can be like eleven-strong, just like the two figures of 1 being next to each other as 11. This arithmetical miracle is possible only by unity. If we keep this fact in mind, and believe that our interest lies in the interest of the society because we are an indivisible part of the society, then we will be able to co-operate in the creation of a healthy, strong and capable society.

World-peace is possible only by adopting Vedic philosophy which preaches goodwill, friendship, world-fraternity and strong mutual relationship based on affection. On the one hand man has come very near each other because of the blessings of science. With the curse of the same science there is also strong distrust and fear among men. Unity is possible only when the minds and thinking of people are alike. The mantras in the Vedas stress this mental unity. By imbibing Vedic philosophy in conduct, man achieves '*dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*' (i.e. a holy and religious base, livelihood or money, '*kama*' or fulfilment of wishes and '*moksha*' or salvation). If all men in the world conduct themselves according to Vedas there will be peace and prosperity everywhere.

The rishis (sages) have given the responsibility of reviving and keeping alive this line of thinking to the brahmins.

नीचैः पद्यन्तामधरे भवन्तु ये नः सरि मघवान् पृतत्यान् ।

Nichaihay padyantamadhare bhavantu

ye naha sari maghavaan prutanyan.

क्षिणामि ब्रह्मणमिन्नानुन्नयामि स्वानहम् ॥

Kshinaami brahmanaamitraannayaami swaanaham

(Atharvaved 3/19/3)

Meaning: I, a brahman, after achieving with my own efforts perfection in knowledge, and with control over my mind will strive for the progress of my host. I will see to it that he does not turn towards wrong deeds and does not do away with others' interests.

Message: The responsibility is on the brahman to keep and maintain a progressive society, to keep it full of bright and spiritually strong people and thus create a happy and prosperous atmosphere. One who knows and understands this, he is truly learned and dedicated to the society. Such people never show lethargy for regular study and religious discourses, are constantly engaged in austerities and spiritual-endeavour for the progress of the society and donate their knowledge to the society. To understand what is proper, after understanding it to search a path to achieve it, to go on that path with an attitude of austerity and spiritual-endeavour, that is the proper path for making a true human being out of an ordinary man.

It is the duty of brahmans that, to follow this path, they adopt control of mind (or restraint of mind) and restraint of senses. Mental balance is extremely essential. People's activities increasingly tend towards immoral and wicked deeds and those trapped in these activities are not able to give them up easily. To explain to them and take them on the right path is an extremely difficult and laborious task. One will have to face the resistance of the ignorant and sometimes even beatings from them. In such situations, with patience, without anger or hurry, the learned ones should be constantly engaged in the propaganda and spread of good activities to promote morality.

They should constantly make efforts to make their knowledge more profound by meeting spiritually knowledgeable people and study. Just as a chameleon changes colours on seeing another chameleon, similarly there is an increase in 'sadgyan' (knowledge of morality, goodness, spirituality, simplicity etc) 'sadgun' (good qualities) and 'satpravrutti' (good, beneficent activities). The learned persons are constantly absorbed in the endeavour for knowledge and become well-informed about the distortions of the human-society, the principles for creating a balanced-life, self knowledge (or self-realisation) and spiritual knowledge. They understand very well the difference between proper learning and ignorance. Accumulating knowledge and giving its benefit to the society is called a realistic aim of life of a learned person. The learned ones must pay attention to regular study as well as giving lectures. That way, while increasing their own knowledge, they inspire those coming in their contact to walk on the path of truth.

These days most people make a false show of brahmanatva (i.e. being knowledgeable and religious) and everywhere they are seen encasing the 'religious' feelings of people. No one really benefits by that and on the contrary immoral atmosphere spreads more and more.

Actually, the brahmans must give the knowledge of true spirituality to the people. Real spirituality lies in introspection to understand oneself, to know oneself, to think about personal mistakes and to try to achieve moral conduct. This is the characteristic of a real spiritually-inclined person.

Perversities are arising in the society because the brahmans have forgotten their pious duties.

ब्रह्मगवी पच्यमाना यावत् साभिविजङ्गहे ।

Brahmagavi pachyamaanaa yavat saarnivjangahay

तेजो राष्ट्रस्य निहन्ति व वीरो जायते वृषा ॥

tejo rashtrasya nihanti na veero jaayate vrusha

(Atharvaved 5/19/4)

Meaning: That kingdom gets destroyed where there is constant dishonour of divine men and the knowledge of the Veds. There, nobody is bright and brave.

Message: Who can be called a brahman, a *rishi*? One who determinedly carries out the task of making everyone 'sanskarvan' (morally good, upright and cultured). The society does not benefit by mere ritual worship and by a show of officiating as priests by brahmins on various formal occasions like marriages, births etc in the lives of people. Such 'brahmans' are carrying it on as a profession. This helps them to earn plenty of money and comforts. But this does not provide any spiritual benefit to the society and there is no prosperity and happiness in the society. In the ancient past, the children had to go to the Guru's (Teacher's) hermitage, live there upto the age of 25 years in a 'saatvik' atmosphere (an atmosphere of strict morally upright conduct, simplicity, goodness and spirituality) and get their education. That used to produce knowledgeable and responsible men of good conduct. Bad persons like Duryodhan and Ravan were an exception.

The rishis used to impart not only, education and culture, put according to the times and situations, they used to prepare the kingdom's policies also. They did not publicise themselves, but carried out their duty according to the prevailing challenges of the time. Their main job was to assess the problem and find its solution. No task was carried out for the kingdom without their consultation and advice. *Chanakya* was the Chancellor of *Nalanda* University, where students from all over the world used to come for education. Alongwith this, he was the minister-cum-advisor to king Chandragupta Mourya. He was administering the university as well as the kingdom. The king used to carry out all tasks after receiving the assent of the Guru (the teacher, the brahman). Religion was always guiding the political administration of the country and because of the control of religion, the political administration was not able to indulge in excesses and anarchy and corruption did not dare to enter the society. The realistic meaning of religion is 'carrying out one's duty'. When the fertile soil of religion nurtures the roots of the kingdom, the kingdom's tree blooms with the fragrance of fame.

To-day the educational policy of the various states is such that people's moral and spiritual progress is not possible with it. No encouragement is given to the reading of Vedic literature and religious books. The teaching of morality or moral-science has been eliminated for quite some time from schools. In the past there was a tradition of regular study of the Veds, just like the daily worship at home. One or two mantras used to be taken up for detailed discussion of the meaning and reflection on it during 'satsang'. Such knowledgeable men of character used to be supported and cared for by the State and they used to be honoured by the society. As a result there used to be an increase in the number of patriots and men of excellent character. At the same time wicked men, men of bad-conduct and men addicted to vices used to be ignored, disdained and even punished. This used to increase the achievement and fame of the kingdom.

Brahmanism is meaningful only when knowledgeable men, men of character and dedicated men get proper encouragement, protection and respect. It 'is our pious duty that we do not allow disrespect to men learned in the Vedic philosophy.

उग्रो राजा मान्यमानो ब्रह्मणो यो जिघत्सति ।
Ugro raja manyamaano brahmanum yo jighatsati,
परा तत् सिच्यते राष्ट्रं ब्राह्मणो यत्र जीयते ॥
paraa tata sichyate rashtra brahmano yatra
jiyate

(Atharvaved 5/19/6)

Meaning: The country in which brahmans and persons knowledgeable in the Veds are harassed, that country gets devoid of knowledge and gets destroyed.

Message: The sight of the brahmans, the sages is very bright and sharp. They are able to see into the future. They are farsighted, know the pulse of the times and try to remove the faults and bad tendencies in the society. They constantly struggle to make all the citizens as men of character, culture and knowledge. The Sun destroys all darkness. Similarly the knowledge spread by them destroys the ignorance, bad customs and bad thoughts prevalent in the society. Compared to the power and strength of a wicked individual, the strength of a spiritual man of good conduct is very much more. The problem to-day is 'thinking of the undesirable' and 'corrupt conduct'. Only the true brahmans may be capable of changing it.

The society should honour such worthy men and thank them. Narad was a representative of the rishi-tradition described above. All the time he was constantly busy in removing the difficulties and bad customs of the society by facing every type of hardship. He used to be honoured everywhere. He could go not only into God's court but also into his sanctum sanctorum without anyone preventing him. In India's golden period of *Ramrajya* the rise of devatva (divinity) in men was possible only because of this.

An excellent organisation of the nation and the society was based on the attitude of keeping the holy and spiritually knowledgeable men of character as advisors. Worthy and learned persons who were able to awaken others about their faults and bad tendencies and to guide them on the right path were always considered worthy of honour.

But today if anyone talks about religion, nationality, knowledge, and the need for moral conduct, he is derided and insulted. It has resulted in the prevalence of ignorance on a massive scale. It appears that people have lost the power of discretion to distinguish truth from the untruth and consequently the nation is once again progressing towards a condition of slavery and destruction.

Today it is very very difficult to find honest men, and men dedicated to truth. The insignificant and rare ones have to suffer neglect, ridicule and insult in every way. As a result people lose their self-pride and are willing to stoop to any level for selfish gains. The proverb '*yatha raja tatha praja*' (i.e. like king, like people) seems to be proving true.

Everywhere there is discussion on corruption and scandals. By observation, every man thinks that the true path to success is only through corrupt conduct. That is the reason that everywhere in the country one finds ignorance and anarchy and foreign powers are trying in every way to take advantage of the wrong activities here and trap this '*sone ki chidiya*' (the golden sparrow that is India).

Even now we should become alert and protect this country's and our own honour by going on the path shown by the learned and the Vedic scholars and save the country from destruction.

This is the duty of the brahmans in the interest of the nation.

यस्यां पूर्वे पूर्वजना विचक्रिरे ।

Yasyaam poorve poorvajanaa vichakrire

यस्यां देवा असुरानभ्यवर्तयन् ॥

yasyaam devaa asuraanabhya vartayan,

गवामश्वानां वयसश्च विष्टा

gavamashvaanaam vayasashcha vishta,

भर्गं वरुचः पृथिवी नो दधातु ॥

bhagam varchaha pruthivi no dadhaatu.

(Atharvaved 12/1/5)

Meaning: Let us be prepared to renounce and sacrifice for the nation created by our ancestors and protected from the wicked.

Message: A nation is not only the geographical boundaries of a country. It is the name of the entirety of the physical, intellectual, spiritual level and character, conduct and dealings of the citizens living on that piece of land. It is the name given to the moral and immoral tendencies of the people produced by man's knowledge, devotion and labour. The nation's image is reflected in the mirror of the society's good and bad activities.

Every child of the nation always risks his life for protecting the country from external enemies and internal wicked and antisocial elements. The incarnations of God also manifest from time to time. Their one and only one goal has been to destroy sins and increase virtues. For that it is essential to understand the secret of knowledge, karma and devotion. Knowledge is that by which we can know about life or the way to lead life. Learning the subjects of history, geography and arithmetic is called education, but spiritual knowledge is that which shows us the goal of life. Knowledge explains to us, 'Who am I? From where have I come? What is my goal?' When the knowledge is put into the conduct of life, it is called *karma* (or deed). We know *Gita*, we have heard the stories of *Bhagwat* and *Ramayana*, but we have enclosed their knowledge within the four walls of a library. It should be put into action in our deeds in the conduct of life. We should remove our faults, bad tendencies and mental perversities. Only then God graces us. Putting spiritual knowledge into action is true devotion. Mere rituals or meaningless worship cannot be called '*bhakti*' (or devotion).

In order to protect the country, internal as well as external enemies have to be faced. At the time of the battle of *Mahabharat*, God Supreme, *Shri Krishna* preached a clear and meaningful message to *Arjun* in the form of the holy *Gita* which even to-day guides everyone like a beacon of light. The message in *Gita* is absolutely clear and says that even brothers and relatives are not above the nation, i.e. the interest of the nation comes first and then of anyone else. If their lives have to be sacrificed for the protection of the nation, it is in accordance with religion. Man can conquer his selfishness on the basis of such excellent sentiments of renunciation and sacrifice and can fulfil successfully the task of protecting the nation.

We should have the sentiments of renunciation and sacrifice in our mind for the protection of the country. We should renounce attachment, possessiveness and sacrifice personal interests. We can discharge our obligation to the country if we are prepared to cheerfully give up our interests by considering the national interest as supreme, above all.

The learned persons must re-establish this sentiment in the ignorant citizens.

यां रक्षन्त्यस्वप्न विश्वदानीं ।

Yaam rakshyantvaswapnaa vishwadaanim

देवा भूमिं पृथिवीमप्रमादम् ।

deva bhoomim pruthivimpramaadum,

सा नो मधु प्रियं

saa no madhu priyum

दुहामथो उक्षतु वर्चसा ॥

duhamatho ukshatu varchasaa

(Atharvaved 12/1/7)

Meaning: Let us all citizens be dutiful and alert for the uplift of our country.

The country which has lazy and lethargic men, becomes a slave.

Message: For the upliftment of the country, progress is expected in the fields of spirituality, character, culture, economy, industry etc. Only then a healthy building, that is, a strong and capable nation is created. Once upon a time, India was called *jagatguru* (teacher to the world). Because of a healthy caste system on the basis of the division of labour, all the citizens used to be alert and always performed their duties. Thus they were progressing themselves and the nation too was progressing all around.

Over the passage of time, laziness and lethargy gripped our citizens and many undesirable, bad activities were born. Laziness is the root cause of all sins. God also loves a lively and industrious person and not a lazy and lethargic one. God also does not hold Himself back in helping a person who is eager for diligence. A lazy man depends on luck and does not exert and always remains poor. "*Sahoruroha rohitaha*" i.e. only they progress who constantly strive. Only strong, dutiful, honest and capable men get this benefit in life. A lazy, lethargic, timid and suspicious man is not able to achieve progress. This is the axiom of national uplift.

To-day the situation is upside down. The more the facilities increase with scientific progress, the more the man is becoming lazy, and is not interested in labour. From top to bottom everyone is trapped in this vicious circle of putting their claim to more and more wealth without doing any work. Those who are working hard, they too are doing it for that same sinful aim. As a result, stealing, looting, corruption, cheating and kidnapping etc are increasing in the society. Everyday new wicked activities are being generated.

In the past, lectures from religious heads and authority of the state used to keep the people alert about the nation's uplift. To-day they themselves are blinded by their own selfishness and are indulging in corrupt conduct. To-day they have descended so low, that they are once again forcing the country into helpless slavery. In the past the country was a victim of only political slavery, but to-day it is being pushed into cultural and economic slavery. By alienating the public from the ancient and glorious culture, they are being trapped into the apparently attractive but poisonous and wicked culture by which they are cut off from the very roots where they were born. The class believing in materialistic thinking considers it inferior, unbecoming and below their dignity to accept their own culture and takes pride in imitating the west regarding food, lifestyle, speech and deportment and all other matters. As a result they find themselves like a lost tribe which is neither national nor foreign.

The learned ones and the brahmans must themselves become alert and inspire the citizens to work in the right direction.

उत् तिष्ठ ब्रह्मणस्पते देवान यज्ञेन बोधय ।

Ut tishttha brahmanaspatay

devaan yagyena bodhaya,

आयुः प्राणं प्रजां पशून् कीर्तिं यजमानं च वर्धय ॥

aayuhu pranam prajaam pashun

kirtim yajmanam cha vardhaya

(Atharvaved 19/63/1)

Meaning: It is the duty of the brahmans to remain alert and cautious and thereby prevent their hosts from the path of wicked deeds, so that everyone's welfare is achieved and there is an increase in everyone's longevity, life-force, wealth, fame, happiness and peace.

Message: All the citizens of the society should become knowledgeable, virtuous, cultured and constantly practise restraint of the senses, financial discipline, avoid waste of time and practise control over their thinking, and everywhere there should be an increase in good deeds and peace and happiness. The ancient sages have put the responsibility of creating such an ideal society on the brahmans.

The primary duty of the brahmans and the knowledgeable people is that they themselves remain alert and by understanding the secrets of knowledge and spiritual philosophy (including knowledge about God and man's relationship to God) know the true knowledge, and show the difference between morality and immorality. Unless they know the true path, how will they be able to give the right direction to others? In life there are two paths. In the spiritual scripture called 'Kathopanishad' this is described as "Shreyashcha preyashcha manushyametastate". The "shreya" path is one which benefits the person by leading to salvation. The other is the 'preya' or likable path, which lures and gives pleasure to the senses. Our mind goes more towards this 'preya marg'. The tongue demands various types of tasty foods and destroys health as well as restraint or discipline. Similarly other sense-organs too are busy in external happiness and comforts and thus, by forgetting the soul and God man gets trapped in innumerable bad activities. By being trapped in faults and bad tendencies man sinks so much in a typical intoxication, that despite a wish to get out, he is not able to free himself. With gnawing conscience he hates himself, but avoids facing the truth and like a fly trapped in syrup, he remains trapped in vices. Gradually his strength of mind ebbs away and he comes to be in a helpless situation. He destroys his life and creates a hellish atmosphere for others also.

It is not recommended that man become a monk or an ascetic, that man give up all things material. Materialism and spiritualism, both are important and there should be a proper harmony between the two for success in life. Only then, the people's physical, mental and spiritual uplift is possible. Only then a heavenly atmosphere will be created and people will be healthy, 'long-lived, lively, strong in character, capable and happy, and the nation's fame will spread far and wide.

A brahman is one who will imbibe within himself austerities, asceticism, knowledge, generosity and the activities for public-welfare and stand on a firm foundation like a dam and then remain firm for directing flow of public's thinking in the proper direction. By their excellent character, high ideals and profound diligence, in whatever field they choose for work, they should succeed in reducing the demoniacal tendencies and selfishness in millions of persons and succeed in pushing them towards divinity.

It is a brahman's religious duty to be alert for himself and also to be capable for alerting and awakening others.

यत्र ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च समयञ्चौ चरतः सह ।

Yatra brahma cha kshatrum

cha samayanchoh charataha saha

तल्लोकं पुण्यं प्रज्ञैर्ष यत्र देवाः सहाग्निना ॥

tunllokum punyum pragyeshim

yatra devaahaa sabagninaa

(*Yajurved 20/25*)

Meaning: While it is necessary to keep alive good deeds, it is also essential to destroy wicked people. Only by a combination of knowledge and action, a wholesome spiritual life is possible. That society where the knowledge of the brahmans and the brightness of the *kshatriyas* (the warrior-caste) will be together, that society will always thrive.

Message: In the holy *Gita*, God has himself said that from time to time he manifests on this earth as an incarnation. For what reason? "*paritranaya sadhunam, vinashayacha dushkrutam*", is his goal, i.e. to protect the saints and those who work for the good of the society and to destroy the wicked, the corrupt and the sinful ones. If the matter cannot be solved by persuasion, peaceful approach, or money or punishment or by causing a rift among them, then their destruction becomes a religious duty. '*Nishicharaheen karahun mahi*' i.e. let me free this earth from wicked and demoniac persons. That is the basic mantra or axiom to make the world happy. Only such action was able to establish *Ramrajaya*.

It is not necessary that God should manifest on this earth as a person playing the flute (lord *Krishna*) or with bows and arrows (Lord *Ram*) and liberate the earth from wicked demons. HE exists always, at every place. HE exists in every pore, every cell of our bodies. Our soul is the pious part of God Himself, we are his representatives, the princes whom He loves and we continuously receive His grace and innumerable blessings. We ourselves only should utilise our talents and capacity for good deeds and for destroying evils. This is the real '*manavdharma*' (duty as a human being). The usefulness of human body lies in the endeavour of acquiring knowledge and putting it into action, otherwise there is no difference between us and animals.

The difference between man and animal is only that the animal is not bound by any restraint but man is bound by thousands of restraints, rules and responsibilities. It is his duty to fulfil the responsibilities and the tasks allotted to him. Our duty towards our body is to keep it free from disease. Our duty towards our mind is to make it *sadguni* (i. e. filled with moral qualities). Our duty towards our country, our religion, society and culture is that we pay utmost attention for their uplift. It is our duty to uplift our soul (for deliverance) by freeing ourselves from greed, attachment etc and it is our duty to fulfil the task for which God has given us birth in the human species. It is our pious duty to go on increasing our knowledge and talents and be at our best conduct according to such knowledge and talents. This is real endeavour of '*gyanayog* and *karmayog*'. This is the true devotion to God. It confers glory of humanity on the man.

We are forgetting to-day the injunction that all the four castes should work together for the uplift of the society. With the rule of this knowledge the society becomes bright, powerful and achieves progress and flourishes.

यो जागार तमूचः कामयन्ते,
Yo jaagaara tamruchaa kaamayante,
यो जागार तमु सामानि यान्ति।
Yo jaagaara tamu saamaani yanti.
जो जागार समर्थे सोम आह,
Yo jaagaara tamayam soma aaha
तवाहमस्मि सख्ये न्योकाः॥
tavaahamasmi sakhye nyokaaha

(Rigved 5/44/14)

Meaning: Those who are alert and always cautious about laziness and lethargy, acquire knowledge and wisdom. They get peace. They are known as great men.

Message: The fundamental axiom of Swami Vivekananda is "Uttishthata, jagruta prapya barannibodhata" which means "arise, awake and do not stop till you achieve your objective." There is a religious song "Uth jaag musafir bhor bhai, jo jagat hai so paavat hai". The suggestion here is that if you will arise and awake, then only you will achieve something, otherwise this human life will go waste. First arise then awake; this seems to be a wrong order. Man first wakes up, then gets up from the bed. But are we really awake? Our eyes are still closed with laziness, lethargy, ignorance and *tamogun*. Then how can we say that we are awake? The ever awake is only GOD. We should remain always awake like Him, as far as possible. We shall always be cautious and ready and shall never surrender to laziness in fulfilling our duties. With the attitude of 'kaal kare so aaj kar, aaj kare so ab' (i.e. what you want to do tomorrow, do it to-day and what you want to do to-day, do it right now), we shall be always dedicated to our work, be industrious and shall not be lethargic. By constantly practising in this manner we shall go on succeeding in imbibing God's virtues within us.

This world is for wakeful people. They are capable of shaking off laziness and obtain true knowledge by diligence. Knowledge and *vigyan* create many things for people, and wise men achieve happiness, credit and prosperity. Lazy people run after comforts. They wish and desire, but achieve nothing. They are in the dark slumber of *tamogun* and cannot get the nectar of 'saatvikta' (simplicity, morality, goodness, enthusiasm, pity, compassion etc.). No enemy is as fatal and as near as laziness. Permanent progress is not possible unless the person casts away laziness and lethargy and adopts the virtue of industriousness. To obtain the grace of God, we should offer at His feet our efforts, courage, patience, intelligence, energy and valour. God helps only those people, who personally make efforts. ~ Veds also support this truth with the axiom, "Na rutay shrantasya sakhyaya devaha".

The situation has extremely deteriorated to-day. Small children and students spend their time in useless activities, read with interest obscene and meaningless literature and spoil their thinking. Not only that, the disease of shirking work and laziness is also spreading very badly among doctors, teachers, traders, farmers, workers and executives.

The main task of the brahmans is to drive away the demon of laziness from the society.

इच्छन्ति देवाः सुन्वन्तं न स्वप्नाय स्पृहयन्ति ।

Ichhanti devaahaa sunvantam

na swapnaaya spruhyanti.

यन्ति प्रमादमतन्द्राः ॥

yanti pramaadamatandraahaa

(Rigved 8/2/18, Atharvaved 20/18/3)

Meaning: Lazy people always get sorrow, therefore all of us must be dedicated to work and be industrious.

Message: Laziness is the real enemy of man, because it leads us on to the path of sin. Under the influence of lethargy and laziness we get trapped in many sinful acts. Sometimes man gives up extremely beneficial plans after starting work only because of laziness, becomes disappointed because others have defeated him and remains deprived of personal benefits. God also does not love lazy and lethargic persons. His love is for lively, industrious and diligent people.

The entire world is based on sacrifice. Here everyone has to offer, at all times sacrifice in the form of his labour. This is the essential meaning of dedication to one's duty. That work is called auspicious which helps in uplifting, bettering and purifying the world. God cautions, makes a person stumble and even punishes those who are lazy about labour and lazy about being industrious. We should always be alert and involved in diligent labour. No work should be neglected or despised by considering it small. Most people are trapped in this foolishness. It inflates their ego and thereby destroys their capability. A *Karmayogi* is that person who is continuously busy in auspicious work without any selfish or personal motive. Most of us have great desire 'to do something' but we do nothing. A man cannot be dedicated without proper control over his senses, times and wealth. Thus he strays from the main path and becomes unsuccessful and unhappy. Those who keep their senses under control, put their time to good use, do not waste their money are always prosperous. Real spiritual endeavour (or spiritual discipline) is to be dedicated to work by discarding laziness. Then only one can get the love of God.

There are several standards of measure for the upliftment of man as well as nation. These essential qualities are called "*daivy sampada*" (divine wealth) in the holy *Bhagvad Gita*. These are life's values, which have the capacity of making human life worthwhile.

All the great men of this world have with unlimited diligence and dedication given every moment of their lives for the uplift of the society. *Ramkrushna Paramhans, Maharshi Dayanand, Swami Vivekanand, Swami Ramtirth, Lokmanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Hedgewar* - in the lives of all these people we find a glimpse of their excellent industriousness. Had anyone of them wasted even a moment of their lives in laziness? For them the basic axiom of "*aaram haraam hai*" (rest is unwarranted) is their be-all in life. By making such people as our ideals, we can achieve success in this world.

Our duty is to throw out laziness and also liberate others from this demon.

ज्ञातारो देवा अधि वोचता नो ।

Thaataaro devaa adhi vochata no

मा नो निद्रा ईशत मोत जल्पिः ।

maa no nidraa ishata mota jalpihi

वयं सोमस्य विश्वहृ प्रियासः ।

Vayam somasya vishwaha priyasaha

सुवीरासो विदथमा वदेम ॥

suviraaso vidthamaa vadem,

(Rigved 8/48/14)

Meaning: To be saved from laziness and useless talk, one should always be busy. Let us keep away from bad tendencies, give birth to excellent children and let our knowledge be discussed everywhere.

Message: Every man wants to spend his life on the basis of "less work and more talk". This makes the man lazy and leads to false self-praise. This is a manifestation of *tamogun* and *rajogun* (in short *tamogun* refers to faults, all under one term "mental darkness" and *rajogun* refers in short to materialistic tendencies). This bad tendency becomes a part of his nature. A lazy man leads an unnatural life and harms himself. With ignorance and laziness he wanders in darkness and makes vain boasts and blames others for his failure. A knowledgeable person understands his moves, and nothing is hidden from God's observation. Again and again he alerts such persons, warns them, but their eyes and ears remain closed because of 'tamasik' and 'rajasik' activities (activities of *tamogun* and *rajogun*). They do not care to see anything or hear anything. They are full of ignorance and laziness and immersed in self-praise.

We should restrain ourselves properly by control on our diet sleep and rest and should not allow them to hold sway over us. That way we shall become excellent, and be able to create around us an atmosphere of pleasantness, cleanliness, simplicity and goodwill or gentlemanliness. If we are able to control our time wisely, then after finishing our tasks, we shall have more extra time which we can use for eradicating the bad customs in the society.

We should educate our children, dependents and co-workers about keeping away from laziness. By our conduct, we should set before them an example of a hard-working and restrained person. We should go on sowing the seeds of good qualities in their minds right from childhood. This is not a one-day job but a continuous process. A child's mind is very easily trapped in temptations and bad tendencies. We should pay attention with full alertness that bad tendencies do not enter into them. Like a careful farmer we should constantly clean the field by carrying out the weeding. Bad tendencies' must be crushed in the beginning only, so that they do not increase. Children should always be employed in creative works by inspiring them to good deeds, so that they become successful citizens. The parents must sacrifice their comforts to make their children cultured and strong in character. One has to present an ideal through personal conduct by removing faults and bad tendencies. This is the message of Veds.

Always save yourselves from laziness and meaningless talk. This is the real duty, real religion of a brahman.

अकृन् कर्म कर्मकृतः सह वाचा मयोभुवा ।

Akrun karma karmakrutaha

saha vaachaa mayobhuvaa

देवेभ्यः कर्म कृत्वास्तै प्रेत सचाभुवः ।

Devebheyaha karma

krutvastam preta sachaabhuvaha.

(Yajurved 3/47)

Meanng : Give up laziness and be diligent Give up foolishness and obtain the knowledge of the Veds. Speak sweetly and help each other. This way the happiness of this world and the other world will be achieved.

Message: There is a never ending treasure of knowledge and wisdom in the Veds. Our welfare is achieved by 'Vedgyan'. From Veds we get the knowledge of the very secret philosophies or elements of this world and are also able to see the path of putting to good use that knowledge. It is man's duty to be freed from ignorance and bad tendencies, to uplift those who have strayed from the straight path and spread the knowledge of goodness and morality. Generally it so happens that man is engaged in the foolish pursuit of fulfilling his selfish interests and desires. He does not pay attention to what is proper and improper and stoops to the lowest levels.

We should always wish to follow the path on which moral people with good qualities proceeded, as embodied in the advice, "Aum devanamapi panthamaganma". We should all deal with each other with goodwill. Such dealing of goodwill is filled with generosity, helpfulness and love. This is divine-like conduct. We should conduct in this way among ourselves. All should achieve this path of uplift through Vedgyan (The knowledge or philosophy of the Veds). By speaking pleasantly among ourselves, conflict decreases and love increases. One who has understood the importance of speech which is sweet as honey and beneficial as ghee (butter-oil), always succeeds. We should never advise anyone to go on the wrong, path and should work keeping in view the interest of all.

Life is perishable, but that does not mean that we while away time in laziness and worthless talk. Man should take inspiration from the constantly flowing time itself, that he should utilise it properly, consider it invaluable and not to waste it at all. In giving the wealth of time, God has not shown any partiality. He has given this wealth equally to all- poor, wealthy, foolish, knowledgeable, women, men, children and the aged. Available time can neither be decreased nor increased. But it is a fact that in laziness and foolishness we waste this time and also true that by making good use of the same time, we are able to do so much work in a single lifetime, which may not be possible by hundreds of men.

Inactivity is a characteristic of dullness, a characteristic of death, therefore lazy, foolish and wretched people are inactive and like the living -dead. Knowledgeable people are quiet and balanced and put to good use, every moment of life.

A lazy and cowardly person cannot get joy anywhere. Only a knowledgeable and diligent man gets credit. He gets spiritual bliss, and gets every type of happiness and satisfaction in life.

घृताव्रतो धनदाः सोमवृद्धः स

Ghrutavrato dhanadaaha,

somavruddhaha sa

हि वामस्य वसुनःपुरुक्षुः ।

bee vaamasya vasunaha purukshuhu

सं जग्मिरे पथ्या रायो

Sum jagmire pathya raayo

अस्मिन्समुद्रे न सिन्धवो यादमानाः ॥

asmintsamudre na

sindhavo yaadamaanaaha

(Rigved 6/19/5)

Meaning: The Ocean has no desires, even then innumerable rivers merge into it. Similarly wealth is always in the service of industrious men i.e those who work and are diligent, never feel the want of money.

Message: "Seva paramo dharmaha" - To serve others is the most pious and pure act in this world. One principal part of religion is a feeling of togetherness. Because of man's nature of working together and helping one another in; innumerable fields such as education, health, culture, science, trade and architecture etc man has reached the zenith of progress. It is our duty to use our talents in the uplift of society, to help the wretched, sorrowful, ill and helpless persons, and to donate to social institutions engaged in good activities and working for good purposes.

It is a misconception in people's minds that by giving in donation, they suffer financially. The actual truth is that the money used for others' welfare is returned to us many more times. The religious books enjoin us to "earn with a hundred hands and distribute with a thousand hands". Those helping others do not remain wretched and unhappy. It is an act of sowing seeds in God's farm. Each grain produces thousands of grains. Man should never be lethargic in work and diligence. Earn to the maximum extent with hard work and honesty and after fulfilling your meagre needs as befits a brahman, use the remaining in helping others.

The ocean has immeasurable quantity of water, but does not utilise it for own use. With Sun's co-operation he gives away water as vapour which in turn comes down as rain to quench the thirst of the world. The ocean has no self-interest, no wish, nor any desire. Still does its water ever decrease? No, innumerable rivers always go on filling it with their waters. For a man connected with diligence and helping others in this way, there is never any dearth of money. When the desire for helping others is aroused in one's mind, then one's life is uplifted, wretchedness gets destroyed, new capacity is stirred up in the body, the capability to bear hardships increases and in every way, the path to progress manifests before the self. When one's talent and capacity is utilised for welfare-work, then God's help and blessings are automatically received. Not only that, co-operation from others too is easily available. The difficulties in the path of self-progress automatically start disappearing and achievement of life's goal becomes easy.

The learned ones and the brahmans must try to tread this royal road to success.

ममग्ने वर्चो विहवेश्वस्तु वयं त्वे-धानास्तन्वं पुषेम ।

*Mamaagne varcho vihaveshvastu vayum
tvendhaanaastanvam pushem,*

महां नमन्तां प्रदिशश्चत स्त्रस्त्वयाध्यक्षेण प्रतना जयेम ॥

*mahyum namantaam pradishashchata
strastvayaadhyakshene prutanaa jayem*

(Atharvaved 5/3/1)

Meaning: Men should never be swayed because of struggle. By worshipping God, make your soul and body strong, so that no one in this world is able to harm them.

Message: In this world, big, difficult and strange situations constantly occur in a man's life. A man who carries out a justly proper task, others undo it by their bad deeds and he has to suffer defeat upon defeat. He is unable to find a solution for this bad situation. All-round there is an empire of worry, fear, sorrow, disappointment, jealousy, desires and lust. For the fulfilment of their desires, people are falling like sheep into the deep well of downfall and are pulling others too. Then what should be done? Should one give up the truthful path and choose the suicidal path of downfall?

Man has not been given this life merely for passing the days. He has been given this life for achieving excellence, greatness and doing some great deeds. Blessed are those who are striving for excellence and greatness. For this, one has to be alert and struggle constantly. The mind has to be made determined and one has to move forward towards one's goal, and follow ideal persons.

What is our ideal? A man greedy for the fulfilment of desires and wealth, when he cannot achieve these by proper means, he resorts to many immoral, wrong paths for fulfilling his selfish interests. Should we make such people as our ideals? No, never. The real ideal is our Father, God himself. His order is that we should always fulfil our duties and responsibilities. Without getting swayed by whatever difficulties on the path of truth, we should be involved in our work with cheer. They really worship God, who are not afraid of the difficulties on the truthful path and strive hard to remove them.

Life is struggle itself. The meaningfulness of life lies in constantly struggling against the wicked activities going on everywhere in the world. Struggle rouses simplicity, moral goodness and self-respect in man. Love for spirituality, good emotions, and faith in God gets strengthened. Ideals become the focus of man's life and he tries to conduct himself according to the ideals. Hardships, big and small, come in a man's life. But those who do not get afraid are not swayed, patiently fight them, shine with brightness like gold refined in fire and succeed in life. These difficulties manifest in our lives to test our patience, courage and valour and we are blessed with God's grace only by defeating them.

To make the soul and body powerful and strong by restraint and to plunge into life's struggle is the distinctiveness of an ideal brahman.

अनुहूतः पुनरेहि विद्वानुदयनं पथः ।

Anuhootaha punarehi

vidwanudayanum pathaha

आरोहणमाक्रमणं जीवतो जीतोऽयनम् ॥

aarohanamakramanum jivatogjito ayanum.

(Atharvaved 5/30m)

Meaning: Man, rouse thyself always. That is your duty. Just as ants and other small forms of life always try to climb upwards, similarly, you too should find out the means of uplift and progress constantly.

Message : Tremendous progress has been achieved in the world by knowledge and science. But this science does not confer peace and happiness. Peace and happiness are always available through good persons and it is outside the power of science to 'create' good men. Men become good only through spiritualism.

What is this spiritualism which makes a good and uplifted man? This is the trinity of worship, spiritual-endeavour (or spiritual discipline) and adoration. Once a person takes a plunge in the river of this trinity, his life becomes successful. By worshipping ('*upasana*') we are trying to imbibe within us the divine qualities of God. Keeping in mind the divine principles, one should decide one's tasks and be firm in them and to remain rock-stable in the face of the biggest attractions, temptations and hardships. Spiritual-endeavour or spiritual-discipline ('*sadhana*') is for one's own self through thorough control of the body and mind with austerity, celibacy and restraint. Adoration (*aaradhana*), translated into action, means service to others and always to pay attention to others' welfare. Not to be busy in achieving self-interest, but to think of societal-uplift, and to think that one's progress lies in contributing to the society's progress. A man, who conducts himself according to these religious precepts, always forges ahead, carves out a path for peace and happiness for all and thus creates a blissful atmosphere for all.

Strange is the life of a man, because he can fall downwards or raise his level very high. Man's downfall can be so low that even animals will be considered at a higher level in comparison, or he can achieve levels higher than deities. Decide by yourself where you wish to go. In this human species, do you want to behave as an animal or as a divine being? It is very easy to fall down, but tremendous diligence is required to rise upwards. Like the fish swimming against the current, you have to exert courageously. Man has to go constantly ahead in the direction of progress. The Veds instruct thus, "*Udyanum te purusha naavyanum*" i.e. "O human being! You have to rise high in life, and not to fall."

God's shelter is required for forging ahead in the direction of progress in life. The only route to God is to put God's divine qualities into one's conduct. For that one has to strive to become humane by purifying one's sentiments and attitudes and developing a habit of introspection. After that alertness and cautiousness are necessary for strict adherence to rules. Man's humanity is expressed by the high quality of his thoughts or mental attitudes.

By putting into action this religion of humaneness, man becomes a human being and fulfils God's purpose.

पवमानः पुनातु मा कृत्वे दक्षाय जीवसे ।

Pavamaanaha punaatu

maa kratve dakshaaya jivasay

अथौ अरिष्टतातये ॥

atho arishtataataye

(Atharvaved 6/19-1)

Meaning: O Supreme God, may devotion and desire for work develop in me. May I be granted health and life. Please make me pure in every way.

Message: Man must remain pure from outside as well as inside because cheerfulness lies in purity. In a pure atmosphere, the mind's cheerfulness, coolness, peace, freedom from worry, stability and truth does not remain hidden. Beauty lies in liveliness, alertness, good taste, simplicity, cleanliness and orderliness. That is called purity.

Purity is a spiritual quality. By nature, the soul is pure and beautiful; therefore a spiritual man's thoughts, conduct and things are always clean and beautiful.

Man should always pay attention to outer and inner cleanliness. Man becomes excellent, courteous, gentleman and cultured with inner purity. Mental purity inspires a man towards an austere, restrained and regulated life, by which he becomes blessed with good health and long life. His senses become powerful and profound. The senses are administered by the mind. Mind influences the body by right or wrong wishes.

Alongwith bodily and mental purity, spiritual purity is also necessary, because without it, the main goal of life, i.e. spiritual salvation cannot be achieved. With spiritual purity, noble emotions like love, devotion, pity, generosity and helpfulness are aroused, and divinity develops. Usually the attitudes and emotions of *tamogun* and *rajogun* prevail in men.

Spiritual-endeavour develops *satogun* or *satvagun* in man. The development and increase of *satogun* in man makes him lively and 'pranvaan' (i.e. powerful with the force of life-breath or energetic or capable of endurance) *ojasvi* (i.e. luminous with alertness in senses) *tejasvi* (i.e. bright with intelligence) and *varchasvi* (i.e. with power to influence others because of increased spirituality and strength of character). *Satogun* makes a man praiseworthy because of *satsang* (company of God through saints, learned religious persons, attending religious discourses), regular study (of religious-books and self), service restraint and *sadhana* (i.e. spiritual-discipline or spiritual-endeavour)

The scriptures have specifically stated that by birth we are all *shudra* (or low-caste) and nobody is born a brahman-caste. For becoming a brahman, spiritual strength, the strength of austerity, moral strength and religious (i.e. moral) conduct are required. A man who does not have these qualities is lower than a *shudra*-caste person even though he may be born in a brahman-caste family. Becoming a brahman is possible only when man's mind is transformed and his general character changes. By mere outer show of religious symbols, nothing happens. Hypocrisy and facade are our greatest enemies. One does not achieve success by a difference in thinking and action. Devotion and an attitude of 'work is worship' develop in those whose thinking and action show unity. Such people achieve success in every task and inspire people in their contact to go on the path of morality and good deeds. With their talent and capability they are able to sow the seeds of 'satvikta' i.e. qualities of 'satogun' by removing from the people's minds *tamasik* and *rajasik* activities (i.e. those related to *tamogun* and *rajogun*) and make their lives clean and pure.

Achievement of life's aim is possible through bodily, mental and spiritual purity.

उत् कामातः पुरुष माव पत्था

Ut kraamaataha Purush maava patthaa

मृत्योः पङ्क्वीशमवमञ्चमानः ।

mrutyo ho paravishamavamanchamaanaha

मा च्छित्था अस्माल्लोकादग्नेः

maa chhittha asmallokadagnehe

सूर्यस्य सद्द्रुशः ॥

suryasya sumdrushaha

(Atharvaved 8/1/4)

Meaning: O men! You should not be satisfied with your present situation.

You have to move forward and have to exert with body and soul's strength.

Message: Is there any limit to progress? Has anyone been able to know all the knowledge and science or wisdom in this world? Has anyone been able to find the deep secrets or mysteries of the Veds? Even to-day man is busy in trying to find out the secrets of the world

This is the basis of progress and uplift. Arise, start walking, fall down, get up again, progress.' Do this again' and again. Work constantly. Lose not your heart. Gradually you will reach the top. Be not afraid of failure. One can only know from it that the attempt for success was not done with full-determination. Involve yourself with double enthusiasm.

Is this all possible merely by saying it? Will it be possible with physical and spiritual strength? No, for this the body will have to be made so strong by austerity, restraint and celibacy that it will be able to face all the material difficulties. *Gandhiji* had made his body so strong that even the cold weather of England was not able to influence his open body. Only such control over the body facilitates the endeavour of restraint. This is the first step towards the control of the senses. It increases spiritual power or the strength of the spirit which is the soul, and because of it the mind does not wander here and there. With it, one develops other strengths. Spiritual power is very necessary for becoming great. With the power of money and intelligence material progress is possible and comforts available, but spiritual power gives much more. One whose spiritual power is strong, he imbibes ideals and principles in his personal life and progresses continuously.

Our life's ideal should be the Sun-god or the Sun. Every moment, he goes ahead towards his goal. He is eager to give his entire life as a gift to the world. He is involved with full spiritual power to give light, heat and energy to the world and also to help in drying up the din and garbage for destruction. Constantly endeavouring, he never thinks of halting even for a moment. He has no self-interest. This is the secret of success in life.

Our rishis (sages) and munis (monks) have given the assurance to the whole world that if a man strives, he can rise to the level of a deity. They have also given the direction. But how to carry out this process? What is its fundamental basis? We should never lag in putting into our conduct the qualities of divinity. With those qualities in our conduct we succeed in rising to the level of a deity.

Life means constantly striving for progress like the Sun. That is the duty of the brahman.

उद्यानं ते पुरुष नावयानं,

Udyaanam te purusha naavayaanum

जीवातुं ते दक्षतातिं कृणोमि ।

jeevatoom te dakshataatim krunomi

आ हि रोहेमममृतं सुखं

aa hi rohemamamrutum sukhum

रथमथ जिर्विर्विदथमा वदासि ॥

rathamatha jirvirvidathama vadaasi

(Atharvaved 8/1/6)

Meaning: Those who believe in God's wish and the preachings of the 'Gurujans' (knowledgeable teachers) and continue to proceed in difficulties, they receive honour in the society. They are praised everywhere.

Message: The soul has been given this human body by God's wish. God has decided our main task, that is, while solving the difficulties in the path of life, one should always work for the progress of the self and the society.

We should never be disappointed, because God is ever ready to co-operate in our progress. We have to make tremendous effort. God never wishes our downfall. We ourselves get trapped in bad, wicked activities and prepare the road for downfall. God wants to make our life so full of life-force and powerful that the whole world will bow down before its brightness. We should properly realise the real power of our soul and body.

Most men do not really recognise their 'atmashakti' (soul's strength or spiritual strength) and thinking that their body is everything; surrender themselves to its service. This produces many types of bodily and mental perversities and their hearts are filled with the offensive smell of the mire of their perversities. They forget that this body is merely the vehicle for the *atma* (or the soul). One who allows the body to rule his soul, his spiritual-light does not spread outside, and it hinders his progress. One whose soul or *atma* firmly pulls up the rein to restrain the body, he progressively climbs the steps of spiritual progress and reaches the peak.

The life-force of such a man increases daily and becomes fully developed as he grows old. Man becomes helpful in making the society properly cultured by contributing from the vast treasure of his knowledge and experience and also develops his own capability for struggling against difficulties. Difficulties will always come in life's passage. It is not that we will get everything in life as desired. Only the capability of successfully coming out of a difficult situation takes our character to a higher level. With that a person receives honour and praise everywhere. The soul's strength and the strength of *prana* (the life-force) is tested by struggle. Through God's desire these difficulties arise in our path and by arousing us from our slumber, they inspire us towards spiritual uplift. The Supreme Father is very benevolent and his grace is constantly showered upon his beloved sons. The difficulties in life are His blessings in disguise. They create an opportunity for repenting for sins that man has committed in his previous births. Like gold's refining in a furnace makes it pure and bright, similarly the soul is made to shine while it boldly faces the difficulties.

One who does not become disappointed and frustrated in difficult situations and encourages others, he only is a true brahman.

सत्यं बृहद्यतमग्रे दीक्षा तपो

Satyam bruhadatmagre dikshaa tapo

ब्रह्मा यज्ञः पृथिवीं धारयन्ति ।

brahma yagyaha pruthivim dhaarayanti

सा नो भूतस्य पत्न्युर्ह

saa no bhootasya bhavyasya patnyuroom

लोकं पृथिवी नः कृणोतु ॥

lokum pruthivi naha krunotu

(Atharvaved 12/1/1)

Meaning: Those persons progress in this world who love God and learned people, who are moral in their deeds, knowledgeable and in control of their senses. This has happened so far and will also happen in future.

Message: Who progresses? People consider that earning a lot of money, collecting a lot of wealth, having a bungalow, motor-car and other means of comfort is progress. There is a cut-throat race for earning money immorally.

Progress is possible when man and the nation are successful together. It is necessary that men perform austerities for the progress of the nation to make it powerful and glorious. Austerity is the name for the ability to march forward while patiently bearing with the difficulties for achieving an excellent objective. There is the episode of a 'yaksha' (a type of deity) asking prince Yudhishtir the characteristics of *tap* and he had replied "*tapaha swakarmavartitvum*" i.e. 'to carry out one's duty with dedication is *tapa*' and this is possible only with '*jitendriyata*' (control over the senses). Progress or uplift cannot even be thought of in the absence of control over the senses (or the abnegation of the gratification of the senses). In search of peace and happiness man will be, as if wandering in a mirage until the sentiment for national uplift is strengthened by conquering the feeling of 'me- and-mine' (which leads to nepotism), attachment, greed, selfishness and which creates an atmosphere of grab and loot through corruption everywhere.

For uplift or progress it is very necessary to know the great truth and be initiated into it. It is an indelible truth that the entire universe has been created by God, He is present in each and every particle of that universe and is providing it with dynamism since millions of years. We too are a part of God, who keeps an account of our deeds with total integrity and impartiality and His just authority decides our '*Karmaphal*' (i.e. the punishment as well as rewards). This knowledge inspires us to practise restraint and thereby excellence enters our conduct.

The benefit of abnegation of senses (i.e. negation of gratification of desires) and moral truthful conduct is that man gives up his own petty selfishness and thus patriotism is roused in the countrymen. All citizens start co-operating for the removal of others' hardships by considering them as their own and become powerful allies for each other's progress. The feeling of friendliness becomes stronger and stirs up the life-force of the nation. The citizens become clever, bright and successful. Even the powerful nations of the world bow down in homage to such progress.

What is the importance of the seed? It has no value when it is in a sack with other seeds in a corner of the house. When it is sowed in a field, then in a few years it grows into a vast tree. For such a transformation, it has first to dissolve itself underground and has to get the co-operation of water and manure. The

combination of self- denial and friendly co-operation of the society acts as a golden step for progress. If someone thinks that he can do everything by himself, then it is his deluded thinking. Man can go ahead on the road of progress only by the co-operation of others alongwith personal austerity and the hardship of spiritual-endeavour.

This actually is God's instruction to his dear sons. For that purpose he has created the body with all the qualities and He has decorated him with His powers. HE is always available for them, but the condition is that man should be engaged in diligence with selflessness. The main goal of a life is to place one's total capacity and talents for public- welfare work with full faith in God's authority.

It is the duty of the learned people that they inspire the society to push ahead on that true path of progress. Brahmanatva (the philosophy of brahmanism) can be sustained only by doing that.

