

### Gayatri Mantra

(Questions from following readers on the Gayatri Mantra and my replies can be read by clicking on the following links)

Kavitha Rao

#### The Gayatri Mantra

Just like the Sun annihilates darkness, so does the Gayatri Mantra destroy ignorance. The Gayatri Mantra invokes the power and radiance of the Sun to energize all earthly life, to destroy our sins and to reveal the Supreme Self to us. Krishna in the Bhagvad Geeta says: " Amongst the Mantras, I am the Gayatri"

In a loose translation that cannot possibly do justice to the original it implores: OM, O Lord! You are the all pervading Source of Light, Sustainer, Protector and Bestower of Happiness, Kindle, Enlighten and inspire our Intelligence to possess Eternal Qualities.

Follows the verse in Sanskrit:

Om Bhur bhuvah svah  
Tat savitur varenyam  
Bhargo Devasya dheemahi  
Dheeyo yonah prachodayaat

The Gayatri Mantra is the essence of the three Vedas. It is the Vedas simplified. The more one contemplates and meditates upon the Gayatri, the more complexities are revealed to one.

#### AUM Supreme Lord

BHUR Protector of the earth, the material sheath, The Life breath of the Universe. From the feet to the navel center.

BHUVAH One of the meanings is the sky. The Lord who pervades and eliminates all miseries. From the navel to the throat center.

svAH One of the meanings is the heavens. He is all Bliss and blesses His devotees with happiness. From above the throat center to the thousand petaled lotus.

TAT That (That Thou Art)

SAVITUR The SUN, Creator, Preserver and Self Luminous, the central mantra of the Solar Science.

VARENYAM Most fit to be worshipped. Most choice worthy.

BHARGO The burning splendor of the Sun that dispels ignorance, and therefore sorrows and miseries.

DEVASYA The 'Deva', The God, He who is All Bliss, The Joyful One, The Shining One, The Revealer of All Glory

DHEEMAHI We meditate upon Him

DHEEYO YO NA Who our intelligence and Wisdom

PRACHODAYAAT Inspires

The Gayatri Mantra was traditionally given from the Guru Master to the disciple, while standing mid-stream. Look at the darkness. Visualize the sun rising. Offer water to the sun.

The story goes that once the Devas, the Shining Ones wanted to learn the secrets of the Universe. Since learning about the Scientific aspect 'atoms' etc. did not quite work out, they went to the Lord. The Lord gave them the Rig Veda, The Yajur Veda and the Sama Veda to study. After a couple of eons of study, the Devas lost their patience and wanted to quit. The Lord urged them not to give up and decided to teach the essence of the 3 Vedas in 3 fragments:

Essence of Rig Veda Tat Savitur Varenyam

Essence of Yajur Veda Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi

Essence of Sama Veda Dheeyo Yonah Prachodayaat

The more the Devas practiced and contemplated upon the Gayatri, the more complexities were revealed to them. So they lost patience again and went to the Lord to make it simpler still. So the Lord gave them the essence of the 3 segments, in the 3 words:

Bhur, Bhuvaha, Svah

The Devas spent a few cycles of Creation, probably a quadrillion human years pondering upon the 'maha vyahritis' ie 'Utterances of the Lord' but became impatient again and urged the Lord to make it simpler yet. So He Said "All right I'll make it simpler"

And He taught them AUM

The great western thinker, Arthur Koestler, had once said that the Gayatri Mantra has the power of a thousand atomic bombs! and the famous scientists

J.B.S. Haldana wrote: "The Gayatri Mantra should be carved on the doors of every laboratory of the world".

My friend Rohini Gupta informs me that there is a longer version of the Gayatri Mantra which is only used for breathing exercises: Pranayam.

It is not a mantra for recitation. the version for recitation is the short version. Many foreign books do not know that the longer version is not used for chanting so they only give that version. It is not common in India since it is only used with breathing exercises.

It does not predate the short version. all versions appear in a five thousand year old text the Rig Veda. they are just used for different purposes.

if you plan to do the Gayatri do only the short version.

The Gayatri mantra was 'discovered' by Vishwamitra and it first appears in the third mandala of the Rig Veda.

The long Gayatri Mantra is used for pranayaam, breathing exercises. (the short form is used for chanting).

Om bhu Om bhuvah Om swah Om mahah Om janah Om tapah Om satyam

tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhi yo yo nahah prachodayaat