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मा नो वधीरिन्द्र मा परा दा मा नः प्रिया भोजनानि प्र मोषीः ।
आण्डा मा नो मघवच्छक्र निर्भेनू मा नः पात्रा भेत्सहजानुषाणि ॥

– ऋ० १.७.१९.३

हे घनेश्वर सकल व्यवहारों के करने में समर्थ शत्रुओं का विनाश करने वाले प्रभो ! हमें मत मारिये,
हमें परे मत कीजिये, हमारे स्वभाव के अनुकूल प्यारे भोजनों का हरण मत कीजिये, हमारे गर्भों का
विदारण मत करें,
हमारे पात्रों वरतनों को मत तोड़िये ।

Harm us not, O resplendent God. Abandon us not. Deprive us not of the
enjoyments that delight us.

O bounteous and supreme Lord, may our unborn off springs meet with no injury,
and may our kids

Also be spared who are just crawling along.

– Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati
Satyakam Vidyalankar

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कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम्
Krinvanto Vishvam Aryam
Make this world noble

Editorial



I am reminded of my childhood days when every year, I was asked by my parents to give up one bad thing and pick up one good quality. Today while working on those lines, I was thinking about fear. There is a mantra in Atharva Veda -

अभयं नः करत्यन्तरिक्षमभयं द्यावापृथिवी उभे इमे । अभयं पश्चादभयं पुरस्तादुत्तरादध्वरादभयं नो अस्तु ॥

Through this mantra God teaches us to be free from all kinds of fear. 'May there be no fear from heaven and earth, no fear to us from behind, from front, from above as well as from below' (Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati).

What is fear? It is just an illusion. It does not exist; it is all in the mind. The only thing we have to fear is fear itself as said Franklin D Roosevelt. Send them packing, tell them they are fired. We no longer need them, telling and believing that 99% of them are not real. This thought is further strengthened by a line from a poem in English, "if hopes are dupes, fears may be liars". (Dupes mean deceivers). If hopes cheat us fears can also prove to be liars. There is nothing to feel afraid of these

fears. Fear about a thing that has yet to happen or may never happen is really a waste of energy. And we do this to ourselves; no one else is forcing us to fear. Let urgency conquer fear. Instead of overthinking and over analysing, just start doing. To get rid of fear, embrace it first. Do not believe all that mind tells, especially if it is negative and self-defeating.

Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. It is the basis or foundation for the growth of other noble qualities. How can one seek truth and establish facts without fearlessness? The brave are those armed with fearlessness and not with the sword. Fearlessness does not mean aggressiveness. It does not relate to physical aspect, it relates to the soul. So, what we should fear is the internal foes that is 'kaam', 'krodh', 'lobh', 'moh', 'ahankaar' and should overcome them. The only thing human beings should fear is God Almighty. As He is All Powerful 'Serv Shaktimaan', fear from Him helps us to be cautious of all the wrong things. Thus, being aware of His Presence, His Strength emboldens us to be firm and resolute to refuse to be afraid of all worldly fears. So, this year that is 2014, let's decide to shed all Fears and be Fearful only of God.

– Harsh Chawla

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Soul is Immortal

– Dr Mahesh Vidyalkar

Discourse on soul is the second most important topic in the Gita - the first being GOD. Gita's discourse on soul is clear and simple - a lot better than similar descriptions elsewhere. The nature and character of soul, the immortality of soul, and the logic of the concept of soul - these may be stated as the main elements of the discourse on soul, a unique contribution to the human civilization by Gita. This may be understood as the victory of spiritualism over materialism. That the soul is immortal is a ray of hope for humanity. Sri Krishna's discourse on soul is easy to understand and practical, a unique feature of course. According to Gita, existence of this world is due to GOD. Soul is there because of being the master of bodies. Atma (the soul), literally means "one that moves constantly", is dynamic and animate. Life results from fusion between animate and inanimate. The body is inanimate; but the soul is animate. So long as the both are together, life persists. A break between them is death. The soul is essence of life in body. When it departs, what is left is a corpse, a lifeless object, just a heap of clay. The body with soul is valued in crores; the same without soul is not worth even a single penny. It is now clear that the soul reigns over body. The body with soul is active, beautiful and attractive. All the worldly relations, kith and kin, family members, wealth and money, objects of luxury relate to and depend on the body. With departure of soul, the body is reduced to nothing. The body is invaluable so long as soul is there. Each part of the body carries a high price tag. Ask a man the price of a part of the body which he doesn't have. The man lives his life

through his body only. This is the body which enjoys worldly pleasures. The most important and valuable component of the body is soul. Soul is the very foundation of body. Soul musing; reflecting on soul, is an important feature of Gita's discourse.

Message and teaching of Gita is: "soul never dies. No one can kill it. It is the body which meets the death." The true knowledge about soul helps a man to avoid disappointment, frustration and sorrow. Instead, he is infused with zeal to live well, go ahead, reform and elevate himself. He can make up the loss of this life in the next one. Anytime, he can go for self-reform. Soul is immortal; journey to gaining heights never ends. It continues from one life to another. Gains made in the previous life will be extended to the next one. That is why, in the Indian tradition, a man on the verge of death is advised to chant the name of GOD. A number of charity acts are organized in order that the chain of his noble actions continues, providing for the upliftment in his next life.

The materialist, the hedonist and unfortunately the modern educated, non-believing man does not accept the entity of soul. He argues that nothing remains behind once the body is finished. What is not visible does not exist. Nobody has so far seen the soul. Then, how to admit its existence? The answer is that there are many things that we cannot see but certainly we can feel them. Who has seen entities like – hunger, thirst, heat and cold? All these are felt by us vividly and experienced beyond doubt. The same is true of soul; its entity is subject to experience. With the departure of soul,

the body turns lifeless, lies on the ground motionless. Though it looks intact as if nothing has happened to it, it is of no value now as the most valued force has gone out of it. After a while it starts stinking. No one is ready to take its charge. Family members and friends, who were ready to spend large sums of money for keeping the body and soul together, are no longer prepared to spend anything now as the soul has deserted the body. No one till now has been able to catch hold of the soul, but the soul has been asserting its existence ever since.

Gita gives the name "ATMA" to this vital force. Gita presents a practically oriented simple and beautiful interpretation of atma. Gita became popular and was accorded a place of honor on account of its idealistic, lofty and inspiring ideas. Gita is the principal source of knowledge about atma which is a kind of elixir to mankind. Message of Gita has a worldwide attraction. Thinking about the immortality of soul as enshrined in Gita is not to be found elsewhere in the world. Gita describes immortality of the soul in the following words:

na jāyate mriyate vâ kadâcin nâyam bhûtvâ bhavitâ vâ na bhûyah ajo nityah âsvato. ayam purâo na hanyate hanyamâne sarîre

"Atma is never born. It never dies. It is not being born once and then born again. It is unborn, everlasting, eternal, and existing since time immemorial. It does not die even after the death of the body". The man who aims at procuring all kinds of worldly luxuries, and does not go beyond this material world, forgets the superior object, the atma. He does not listen to the voice of his soul. He comes to grief. Devoid of true knowledge, he laments over the past. It is the knowledge of atma alone which can do away with the worldly sorrows.

Arjun, on seeing his relatives, in the battlefield on one hand and the grandeur of royalty and worldly wealth on the other, forgot his duty. It was then that Sri Krishna explained to him the significance of atma, the immortality, the reality of the world, the aim of human life, and thus relieved him of his ignorance and selfish ego. Sri Krishna transformed an almost defeated man into a raging warrior by his well reasoned arguments and thoughts.



Thoughts and ideas are storehouse of strength. Gita gives you an idea for life: try to know the reality and truth of life. The world is selfish. All worldly relationships are selfish. The world is an ever-changing entity. Everything is changing fast. The human body is also undergoing changes. A day will come when the body will cease to exist. The atma is eternal and immortal. Death comes to one who is born. Since the atma, does not take birth, it does not meet death either. Death is the attribute of the body. All the forms of life - humans, animals, birds, and insects etc gain existence through body, hence are bound to die one day or the other. No power on earth can prevent the coming of death. This is the inviolable law of GOD. Nobody can change it. The size of creatures varies from small to big, but soul in all is similar, irrespective of the size of creatures. The soul in an ant or in an elephant is similar. Where there is life and movement, there is soul. Atma, the soul, is not accessible through any microscope or any such other instrument. Nobody has till now been able to catch it physically.

The body is mortal. It must perish some day. The soul is immortal. No power on earth can kill it. Gita imparts the substance of this knowledge in the following words:

Nainam chindanti sastrani nainam dahati pavakahna nainam kledayanty tapo na sosayati marutah

"Atma cannot be decimated by weapons, nor can be burnt down by fire or moistened by water or dried up by air". The fire, the water and the air can affect the body, but not the soul. On the other hand, it is the soul that is the experiencer of bliss or sorrow occurring to the body. Whatever good or

bad, holy or unholy action, right or wrong during life, it is the soul which experiences the consequence. It is the soul which undergoes suffering in different forms of existence according to the deeds of the person. It is the soul which is responsible for right or wrong. The soul, elevated by contact with senses, mind and intellect, earns respect and fame and at the same loses them all on the same account. The soul, failing in self-realisation, faces degradation and disgrace.

Shri Krishna advises Arjuna again and again to know himself, understand his own self which is soul itself. Spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of soul, is considered significant and given a place of honor.

The great souls of the world took their lives to greater heights and were able to transform this world. They achieved self realization and succeeded in lifting themselves above the worldly matters. The people who submit to greed, selfishness, egoism hedonism and passions followed the course of "eat, drink and be merry" mistaking it for the aim of life, fall victim to strifes, worries, tensions and desires, and passing through different forms of life, keep on doing the rounds of life and death process. They live the life of animals, which live just for worldly enjoyment and sort of body-worship. They fail to achieve the aim of human life.

Gita, says, it is only in the human life that self-realization is possible. The other forms of life are meant for material enjoyment only. The birds and beasts do not know the aim of their lives. The animals get up in the morning and start eating straightaway or go searching for food. If a human being follows suit, how is he different from the animals? For a human being, food is the means, not the goal. The final goal is realization of soul.

Company of noble persons, religious discourses, lectures, yajyan, etc. are meant for human beings, not for the animals. The learned people take care of soul along with the body. They know that the soul, though living in the body is more valuable than the body. The man residing in the house is more important than the house itself. The body is a means, so are house, money and other things of comfort. The soul is the end, the

accomplishment. Gita says, "Know the soul. The man can reach the Supreme Soul through the individual soul only. The man of the present age is knowledgeable, yet wants to know more. However, those who want to know the individual soul as well as the supreme soul are few and far between. Just a couple out of hundreds and thousands aim for this goal. The rest indulge in worldly enjoyment only.

The common man is living the life of ignorance, selfishness, egoism, greed and profit motive. He is almost blind to true knowledge. His spirit of self knowledge is blunt. He is just running after the fleeting shadows. He does not know his destination and where it is? Most of the people find it hard to live their lives well. Gita's message is, "live your life well and fine. It is the thoughts and ideas, and not the material comforts, which help you live well." People living with worldly comforts are not necessarily happy. Happiness is a certain state of mind, a state of positive thoughts. The world is a great teacher. It says, "Look at the changing state of worldly phenomenon. If you look at it with discerning eyes, you will find it different; different from as the ordinary people see it. You will, however find it colorful and lovely, if you see it with the eyes of greed, passion desire and pleasure." Look at your own body. It is undergoing changes every moment. Each day is cutting down your life-span. "I am today, say 40 years old" is an expression of ignorance. The truth is that our life span is reduced by another year. He, who understands this change and through it the soul, is neither sad, nor worried. He is truly a learned man. The following teaching of Gita is memorable:

**Dehinoasmin yathadehe komaram youvanam
jarah Tatha dehantarapratirdhirastatra na
muhyati**

"As the soul residing in the body, goes through the stages of childhood, youth and old age, so it transmigrates to another body after death. The wise people are not perturbed by this change." They take the change as a law of creation and remain calm. The death is the gateway to the new life.

You will find the new body only after you have relinquished the old sick one. The death is

inalienably linked with the birth. Changes occur to the body, not to the soul. The life and the world will turn hell if there is no change in things. It is the change which makes for the newness and charm in this world. State of no change leads to monotony. People will go mad if the day does not change to night. Therefore, don't be scared of change. The change brings with itself new possibilities and hope for the mankind. It is the change which brings charm and beauty to human life and the world.

The wise consider the world an inn, a temporary resting place. The thinking is that this life is just a halting point. There were many lives earlier and many in the future also. The soul is a traveller. It has been travelling for many lives together. Sometimes this, and sometimes that, the chain has been going on since a very very long time. The self realizing people do not feel the pain of death when they leave this world. They know, their stay in the world is not permanent. They got this life in order to go through the outcome of the past life's actions and perform noble deeds in the present one. The wise people do not go against their souls. They live, not for the body but for the soul. The ignorant live to enjoy the body. One, who acts and thinks against the voice of the soul, is called the ATMAHANTA, the self-killer. The soul of the self-killer goes through many a dark life. Whenever we act against our souls, we invariably face the death. Speaking metaphorically, we die many a deaths during a single day.

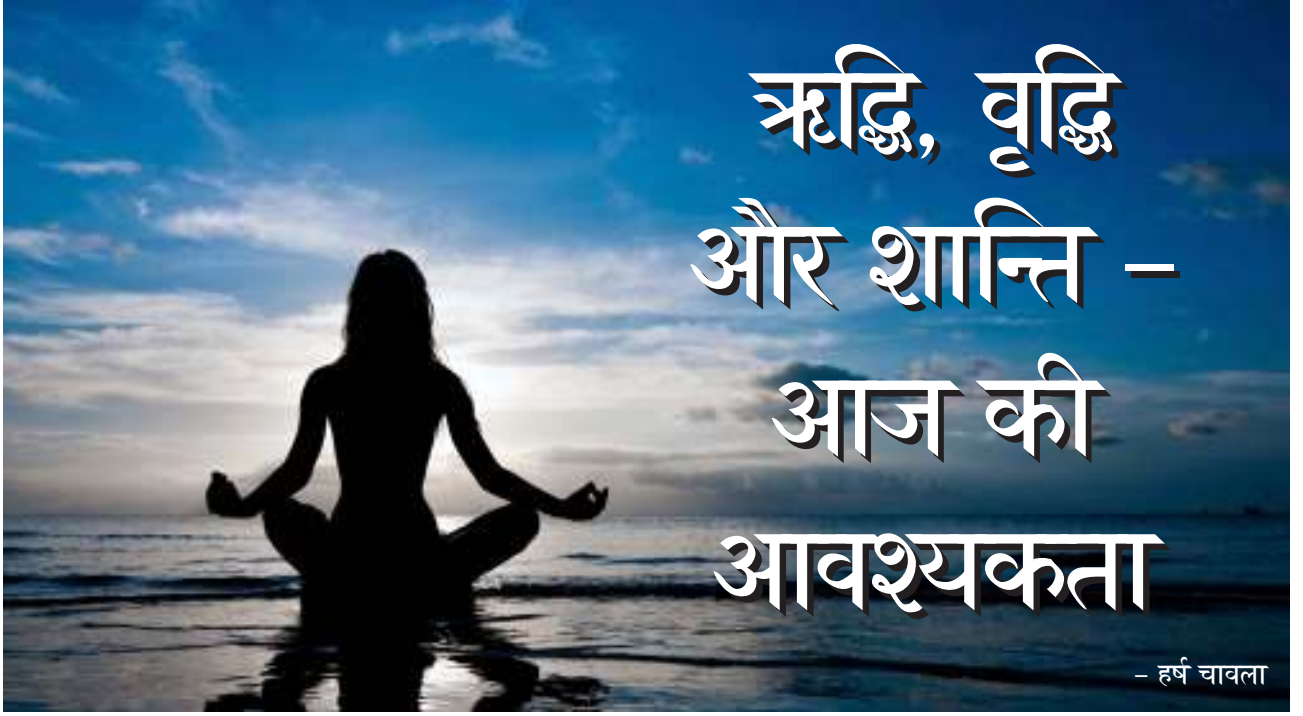
""Arjuna got his enlightenment after Shri Krishna explained to him the knowledge of soul and its immortality. Arjuna did achieve his self-realization. His life's strategy changed. There was new spirit, new enthusiasm and new inspiration in his life. Shri Krishna says,

vasamsi jirnani yatha vihaya navani grhnati naro 'parani tatha sarirani vihaya jirnany anyani samyati navani dehi

"As a man discards his old and worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so does the soul take up a new body, rejecting the old and diseased one." The soul finding itself unable to work with the old, diseased and the worn out body, wants to change it. This very change is called death. As our clothes,

after being used over a long period, wear out and lose their charm and brightness and thus are due for change, so is the case with our body. As we change our old clothes, so does the soul change the body. The soul changes the body according to the actions of the doer. As there are the actions, so is the new form of life. Nobody can do anything about it. It is the inviolable law. If a man engages himself in good deeds, he becomes the deity. If he indulges in sinning, all kinds of wrong doings, he becomes a devil. It all depends on a man's actions and his aim of life.

"For a wise man, death is bliss. But for the unwise it is pain and sorrow. The self-knowing person is neither sad nor worried at the sight of death. He knows well that he will have the form of life allotted to him in accordance with his actions in the present life. The unwise man, for whom the body and worldly pleasures are the aim of life, is fearful and tearful at the sight of death. He sees darkness around himself. He enjoyed a lot of worldly pleasures during his present life but failed to prepare for the future. Human life is meant for achieving self-realization, but he almost wasted it by indulging in acts of jealousy and greed and going for sensual pleasures. Gita conveys the message of the immortality of the soul. It says you try to know your body, fine, but do the same for your soul too. Plan something for enriching your soul - serious study, good company, worshipping and so on. Feed your soul with the elixir of true knowledge. Without spiritual knowledge your life is lifeless and fruitless. It is the spiritual knowledge that wards off sorrows, worries, diseases, grief and tension. Spiritual knowledge and self-meditation are the only means to tackle material problems, confusions, conflicts of desires and passions. Only spiritual knowledge can help you to break the ties of worldly bondage. The modern man has made a lot of progress on material front but is lagging behind in the matter of spiritual upliftment. He has amassed a lot for the consumption by the body, but has failed to gather enough for the soul. Gita's message on self-realization and immortality of the soul has a practical value for the modern human life. Spiritual knowledge is a great need of the modern age.



ऋद्धि, वृद्धि और शान्ति – आज की आवश्यकता

– हर्ष चावला

विचार कीजिये, सृष्टि में जितने प्राणी हैं, उन सब में मानव ही ऐसा जीव है, जिसे हर चीज़ की आवश्यकता है, जिसे हर वस्तु के लिए दूसरों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। पशु-पक्षी और कीड़े-मकौड़े आदि को मनुष्य की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। मनुष्य को पौधों की, वृक्षों की, पशुओं की सबकी आवश्यकता है और सबसे अधिक आवश्यकता है देवताओं की, जैसे सूर्य देवता, अग्नि देवता, वायु देवता। एक क्षण भी मनुष्य साँस के बिना नहीं रह सकता और इन सबसे भी अधिक आवश्यकता मनुष्य को किसकी है ?

परमेश्वर की। हम ऐसा क्या करें कि ईश्वर से हमारा सम्बन्ध सदा बना रहे। इसका सबसे सरल तरीका है – यज्ञ। यज्ञ माँगता क्या है ? आहुति और आहुति किस की ? अहं की, 'इदन्न मम'। सिखाता क्या है ? दान, किसका ? ममत्व का, और सिखाता है,

देव पूजा – दूसरों के गुणों का सम्मान और सिखाता है – संगतिकरण – विश्वप्रेम। जब ममत्व की आहुति दे दी तो शेष क्या बचा ?

प्रेम और परोपकार। और यज्ञ देता क्या है ? वरदान, जो माँगो देता है। यज्ञ को 'कामधेनु' कहा गया है। यज्ञ का देवता है 'इन्द्र' 'इन्द्रो विश्वस्य राजति'। तो हम यज्ञ से क्या माँगें 'बुद्धि'। मनुष्य का मूल 'बुद्धि' से है।

ओं यां मेधां देवगणाः पितरश्चोपासते, तया मामद्य मेधयाग्ने मेधाविनं कुरु स्वाहा।

ज्ञानी, विद्वान, जिस मेधा, धारणावती बुद्धि की उपासना करते हैं, उसी मेधा, बुद्धि से मुझे आज मेधावी बना, ऐसा प्रभु से हम इस मन्त्र के द्वारा निवेदन करते हैं।

सब प्राणियों का मूल प्राण से है और मनुष्य का मूल्य बुद्धि से। ऋषि पतंजलि 'योग दर्शन' में इसी बुद्धि की बात करते हैं। कैसी बुद्धि हो, 'मेधा', 'प्रज्ञा', और सबसे उत्तम बुद्धि कौन सी है ? 'ऋतम्भरा'। आज जो भी उन्नति मनुष्य ने की है – किस के द्वारा ? बुद्धि के द्वारा, मस्तिष्क के द्वारा और मस्तिष्क क्या है ? भगवान का दिया कम्प्यूटर, जिसे कोई भी वैज्ञानिक अभी तक पूर्ण रूप से नहीं समझ सका। यजुर्वेद में बुद्धि से सम्बन्धित एक बहुत सुन्दर मन्त्र है-

ओं मेधां मे वरुणो ददातु मेधामग्निः प्रजापतिः,
मेधामिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मेधां धाता ददातु मे स्वाहा।

वरुणीय प्रभु हमें मेधा दे, प्रकाशस्वरूप प्रजापति ! हमें मेधा दे और जगत्सम्राट, सर्वव्यापक, सर्वाधार ईश्वर हमें मेधा दे। जगत् का धारण करने वाला अपनी सत्यवाणी व प्रेरणा से हमें मेधा दे।

जब बुद्धि पा ली तो ऋद्धि, वृद्धि तो सब मिल ही जाएगी, अब सोचना यह है कि मनुष्य यह सब करता किस लिये है, उसका उद्देश्य क्या है ? उद्देश्य है खुशी को पाना और इस खुशी, प्रसन्नता को पाने के लिए बाज़ार नहीं जाना पड़ता, यह तो अन्दर की बात है, यह सदा हमारे अपने पास है, आवश्यकता केवल उस तरफ सोचने की है, ठीक विचार बनाने की है, जिस दिन हमारी विचार-धारा ठीक दिशा में हो जाएगी, प्रसन्नता स्वतः हमारे व्यक्तित्व का अभिन्न अंग बन जाएगी। तो ज़रूरत किस बात की है ? कि हम सोचें ठीक। हैरानी की बात है कि हमें सब कुछ सिखाया जाता है, परन्तु ठीक दिशा में सोचना नहीं सिखाया जाता। याद रखने की बात यह है कि कोई भी बाह्य वस्तु हमें सच्ची खुशी नहीं दे सकती। अगर ऐसा होता तो सब लोग एक ही चीज़ पाकर खुश हो जाते। हम अगर ध्यान से



देखें, सोचें तो अनुभव करेंगे कि लोभ और मोह वास्तव में हमारे शत्रु हैं। हमने इनसे मित्रता कर रखी है, मानों सुख की लुटिया स्वयं अपने हाथों से डुबो दी है और कष्ट उठा रहे हैं। आवश्यकता है कि हम अन्तर्मुखी बनें। कैसे बनें? शरीर की रचना पर दृष्टि डालें। हमारा शरीर पाँच महाभूत तत्वों – पृथ्वी, जल, अग्नि, वायु तथा आकाश से मिलकर बना है, परन्तु यह सब तत्व बहुत अल्प मात्रा में हैं। और इनके अतिरिक्त एक और शक्ति है – सर्वतः परिपूर्ण है – और वह है – रोम रोम में व्यापक परमेश्वर। जल, अग्नि आदि सभी गुणों को शरीर अन्दर नहीं रखता। जल का गुण है शान्ति, परन्तु अन्दर जो जल है, मुझे शान्ति नहीं देता, हमें ठण्डक के लिए जल लेना पड़ता है। अग्नि, वायु अन्दर है,

परन्तु अपने सब गुणों के साथ नहीं। सारे गुण अन्दर होते तो बाहर से वायु लेने की आवश्यकता न पड़ती। अद्भुत लीला है कि इन तत्वों का अंश मात्र अन्दर रखा। अग्नि ज़रा सी भी चू जाये तो अनुभव होता है कि कुछ जल गया। जल की बूँद पड़ जाये तो तुरन्त कहते हैं कि बारिश आ गई। परन्तु आश्चर्य की बात है कि भगवान् जो परिपूर्ण रूप से अपनी शक्तियों सहित हमारे अन्दर विद्यमान है, उसका भान हमें नहीं होता। हम पूजा करते हैं, तप करते हैं, यज्ञ करते हैं, सन्ध्या करते हैं, तब भी हमें प्रभु की प्रतीति नहीं होती। कारण – एक आवरण परमेश्वर और हमारे मध्य में। धन का सामर्थ्य नहीं, जो इस पर्दे को हटा सके। शारीरिक बल भी इस पर्दे को नहीं हटा सकता। इसका अर्थ यह नहीं कि यह आवरण बहुत भारी है। इसका अर्थ यून समझिये, हम जब पूजा करते हैं, हवन करते हैं, ऐसा करते हैं मानों हम किसी नाटक में अपना अभिनय अदा कर रहे हैं। यदि सच्ची पूजा करते तो जैसे अग्नि छूने ही हम चौंक जाते हैं, परमात्मा के स्पर्श मात्र से ही हमें आनन्द प्राप्त होता। परमात्मा के साथ – साथ हमारे शरीर में एक और मुख्य तत्व है, जिसे कहते हैं आत्मा और जिस की हम सदा उपेक्षा ही करते आये हैं। इस शरीर का स्वामी, सारथी कौन है? 'आत्मा' मगर उसकी हम परवाह नहीं करते। शरीर की देख – भाल बुरी नहीं, गलत भी नहीं, परन्तु आत्मा की अवहेलना करना ठीक नहीं। आत्मा एक ऐसा तत्व है, जिस के कारण यह जड़ शरीर चेतन अवस्था प्राप्त करता है और इस चेतन तत्व का सम्बन्ध, चेतन परमात्मा से। इसलिए हमें क्या करना है, उस प्यारे प्रभु की भक्ति और यह भक्ति सच्चे हृदय से करनी होगी।

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Shri Yashpal Puliani



Alcohol Fest or New Year's Celebration

- Dr Dharamvir

An interesting piece of news of Doordarshan piqued my interest. It said that this New Year's eve the alcohol consumption in the cities of Delhi and Mumbai was worth Rs. 270 crores. Based on this it is safe to assume that on one single night of 31st December thousands of crores of Rupees were spent entirely on consumption of alcohol. Who says that India is a poor State? According to the estimates of various newspapers the approximate expenditure on alcohol is bound to increase from 50700 crore Rupees in 2011 to 1140 thousand crore rupees. This means that the sale of alcohol is increasing at the rate of 30 %.

There are 3 kinds of alcohol sold in India: the locally produced one, the foreign brands producing liquor in India and lastly the imported one. The average consumption of these three varieties is 48%, 49% and 3 % respectively. Out of this, 49 % is consumed by the four southern states of India alone, northern India contributes to about 12%, western India about 30% and eastern India consumes about 9% of the total amount of alcohol.

When India achieved Independence, we envisioned to have a liquor free India. Once Mahadevi Varma had commented that there cannot be a bigger irony that the Alcohol Prohibition Department of the Government of India is run by the money obtained by the sale of Alcohol in India. Mahatma Gandhi was trying to reduce alcohol consumption, while his own Government is making a mockery of the same by encouraging the alcohol consumption in the country. The most favored argument given by those who drink is, India always had a tradition of consuming liquor. And it was called SOMRAS. Even Rishis used to drink

the SOM and it was even offered in the HAVANS. Drinking and offering of Somras has been a tradition in India since times immemorial. Though this argument has been refuted time and again, it is suffice to say that SOMRAS was used to improve the concentration and mind whereas the alcohol causes a complete loss of the senses. It is foolish to compare Somras with alcohol. In Indian/Vedic culture consumption of alcohol has been considered a sin and crime. Therefore translating Somras as alcohol is flawed argument.

When we talk about culture, it means a way of life and collection of thoughts and behaviors of our previous generations which benefitted individuals and the society as a whole. Today drinking alcohol is a sign of prestige. Liquor is a lucrative industry. A businessman tries to expand his business; advertisement is the easiest way to do that. Though alcohol advertisements are banned in India they keep appearing through proxies. The parties of the glamour world and that of cinema are sponsored by various liquor companies and liquor barons. These companies are specifically targeting the youth. Those who are averse to the use of alcohol become used to it in college hostels and universities. It is portrayed as a symbol of progress and modernism, to the extent that those who do not drink are looked down or frowned upon. This trend is common not only amongst boys. In metro cities of India, even the girls are not far behind. Those who are in favor of drinking often argue that prohibition of drinking alcohol is a violation of personal right or freedom. What they fail to understand is the defining limit to personal freedom. If personal freedom is detrimental to



oneself then this personal freedom cannot be acceptable to the society as a whole. Not only does one destroy health, wealth, strength by alcohol consumption it destroys the structure of family and society. There are four categories of people who consume alcohol.

1. A few capitalists encourage alcohol consumption, they bribe the Government and loot the public and gain enormous amount of wealth and power. They throw grand parties with a free flow of liquor.
2. The second level is that of the politicians. They own wealth from corruption and have their share from the wealth accumulated by the capitalists. There is no loss for them either by throwing liquor parties or consuming it themselves.
3. At the administrative level, who enjoy alcohol from the money collected by bribery. This set of people ranges from a senior bureaucrat to a low level clerk.
4. The last level that has been created is that of the labor which has been created by the Government. This section of people gets paid without working by the sheer virtue of being poor. They are paid under various schemes devised by the Government in the name of helping them. A labor that gets paid without working makes use of this, get food without having to pay for it, use the ill-gotten money, the ill-gotten way, that is by drinking.

5. There are others too who deprive their children of proper food and education to drink liquor. These set of people do not contribute to the family income, take away whatever the wife earns, and deprive their children, who are then forced to work as labors or get involved in crimes. Some farmers are known to have sold off their lands because of their addiction to alcohol.

Seen in any light, alcohol is a wasteful expenditure and is the root cause of poverty, weakness and immoral behavior.

In all cases of crime against women, alcohol is found to be at the foundation. A person commits crime under the influence of alcohol. He thinks of crime when he is drunk. According to the Government statistics, everyday almost 10, 00,000 women suffer at the hands of men in one way or the other. Most of the crimes are never reported. Those who misbehave with women also have been found to persuade the women to drink. In the light of all this, saying that drinking alcohol is a personal choice and using it as a sign of enthusiasm, success and joy sounds ludicrous. Calling it a personal right, is a very far-fetched thought.

Our Government considers the revenue from the sale of alcohol very important. Amongst the larger states of India, Gujarat is the only state that has a complete ban on alcohol. It is argued, that the ban

encourages an illegal consumption, bribery and smuggling. This is an argument for the sake of argument. If this argument justifies an open sale of alcohol, then gambling and prostitution should also be legalized and they might even earn more revenue to the Government.

There is no law in the world that has not been broken. But we don't stop making laws for their fear of being broken. Instead strict counter measures are taken against those who break it. Imposing a ban helps most an ordinary citizen who can escape peer pressure or who attempts to drink to be socially acceptable. He also does not dare to break the law. Therefore it is incorrect to say that Gujarat should remove the ban of consumption of alcohol. Making revenue as an excuse to encourage alcohol consumption is ignoring the welfare of the country and its citizens.

We are a very hypocrite society. We don't want to ban alcohol but we want to stop all crimes that happen under its influence. We want to legalize gambling but don't want the poor to become poorer due to that. In the name of rights we want personal freedoms to behave as we like but want to stop atrocities and crimes against women. The fundamental reason for this mentality is the

economic benefit that arises from it. There is no immediate benefit either for the doer or for the preacher. If we start advertising against smoking, drinking alcohol: who will get revenue from such advertisements. There might be expenditure of course, but certainly no economic benefits. In contrast advertisement for cigarettes, wine and beer promotes sales. The amount received by sales is many times more than that invested in its advertisement.

It is ironical that we want our children to stay away from these addictions but don't mind the benefit that comes to us by promoting their sales. Small or big all those involved in the business of cigarettes and alcohol addiction have no scruples in adopting force and illegal means to protect their interests. From the village vendor to the bigger liquor barons, all make use of force and pressure tactics to their end. It is difficult to put a stop to these ills. However protecting the public, its health, its wealth and its culture, is the duty of the well-wishers of this society and nation. Under no circumstance should we give up protesting against the wrong. The result of goodness and righteousness is permanent and long term.

(Source: Paropkari February 1, 2014)

Events

During the last quarter, many events were organized at Arya Samaj Indiranagar, Bangalore. Some snippets from the same –



Kids reciting Vaidic Mantras



Small Kids reciting the Sandhya Mantras



Republic Day Celebrations



महर्षि दयानन्द का जीवन-संदेश

- डॉ० अरुणदेव शर्मा

अज्ञान से बड़ा मनुष्य का कोई शत्रु नहीं है और ज्ञान से बड़ा कोई मित्र नहीं है। अज्ञानता के कारण मनुष्य विष को अमृत, सम्प्रदाय को धर्म, अनीश्वर को ईश्वर और दुःख को सुख आदि समझता है तथा अपना अनमोल जीवन नष्ट कर लेता है। अज्ञानता से अभिप्राय है अविद्या, अशिक्षा, असत्य, कुशिक्षा, अविवेक, नासमझी, मूर्खता, विपरीत ज्ञान और ज्ञान से हमारा तात्पर्य है विद्या, सुशिक्षा, सत्य, विवेक, समझदारी, बुद्धिमत्ता व सत्य - ज्ञान।

वेद परमेश्वर का शुद्ध ज्ञान है जो कि पूर्ण सत्य, पवित्र करने वाला और बुद्धि की पराकाष्ठा है। सृष्टि के प्रारम्भ में ईश्वर ने अमैथुनी - सृष्टि के पश्चात् चार पवित्र - आत्माओं (अग्नि, वायु, आदित्य और अंगिरा) को क्रमशः ऋग्वेद, यजुर्वेद, सामवेद और अथर्ववेद का पावन ज्ञान दिया था। जो कि आज भी मनुष्य मात्र के लिए परमात्मा की सर्वोत्कृष्ट देन है। वेद - ज्ञान सार्वकालिक, सार्वभौमिक और हमारा सनातन धर्म है।

महाभारत के युद्ध के पश्चात् लगभग पाँच हजार वर्ष पूर्व भारत की राजनीतिक व्यवस्था नष्ट - भ्रष्ट हो गई थी। जिसके दुष्प्रभाव से प्राचीन वैदिक गुरुकुल शिक्षा प्रणाली का भी ह्रास हो गया था। अज्ञानवश लोग एक परमेश्वर की स्तुति - प्रार्थना - उपासना के स्थान पर अनेक पाखण्ड, अंधविश्वास, मूर्तिपूजा आदि वेद - विरुद्ध मान्यताओं के दुष्चक्र में फँस गए। वेदों के ज्ञान का अभाव होने के कारण लोग ईश्वर, धर्म और सुख आदि का स्वरूप भी न जान सके तथा वेदों के नाम पर यज्ञों में पशु - बलि दी जाने लगी और अनेक जातिप्रथा, सतीप्रथा, दूआच्छूत आदि सामाजिक कुरीतियाँ उत्पन्न हो गई थी। जिनके विरोध में चारवाक, बौद्ध, जैन आदि सम्प्रदाय उत्पन्न हुए। वेदों में ज्ञान, धर्म और उपासना का स्थान चारवाक, बौद्ध, जैन, शैव, शाक्त, वैष्णव, ईसाई व इस्लाम आदि मतों - मान्यताओं ने ले लिया तथा भारत देश मुगलों के बाद अंग्रेजों के अत्याचारों से पीड़ित था। ऐसे अविद्या, अज्ञानमय अंधकार के युग में सन् १८२४ ई० में गुजरात प्रान्त में युग - प्रवर्तक महर्षि दयानन्द सरस्वती का जन्म हुआ। ईश्वरीय - ज्ञान वेदों की पावन - धारा को धरातल पर पुनः प्रवाहित करने का श्रेय महर्षि दयानन्द को जाता है। वेदों तथा ऋषियों के विभिन्न शास्त्रों का गहन अध्ययन करके महर्षि दयानन्द ने वेदों को सब सत्य विद्याओं का पुस्तक बताया और वेदों की शिक्षण - प्रणाली का पुनः प्रारम्भ किया। उन्होंने वैदिक ज्ञान को सर्वोत्कृष्ट और सबसे ऊपर बताया। उन्होंने अपने सत्य उपदेश, प्रवचन, शास्त्रार्थ तथा सत्यार्थ प्रकाश आदि

पुस्तकों की रचना के द्वारा सत्य सनातन वैदिक मान्यताओं की स्थापना की तथा वेदों के विरुद्ध उत्पन्न हुए चारवाक, बौद्ध, जैन, शैव, शाक्त, वैष्णव, ईसाई और इस्लाम आदि सम्प्रदायों की असत्य मान्यताओं तथा उनके कल्पित ग्रन्थों के असत्य का खण्डन किया। महर्षि दयानन्द ने संसार के सम्मुख ईश्वर, जीव तथा प्रकृति का सत्य स्वरूप प्रस्तुत किया।

महर्षि दयानन्द के वैदिक आदर्श जीवन, उपदेश तथा दर्शन से प्रभावित होकर अनेक विद्वान, देशभक्त तथा क्रान्तिकारी तैयार हुए, जिन्होंने स्वामी जी को अपना आदर्श बनाया। जिनमें प्रमुख हैं - स्वामी श्रद्धानन्द, पं० गुरुदत्त विद्यार्थी, भाई परमानन्द, नेताजी सुभाष चन्द्र बोस, गोविन्द रानाडे, श्याम जी कृष्ण वर्मा, योगी अरविन्द घोष, महात्मा गाँधी, लोकमान्य तिलक, सरदार पटेल, लाला लाजपत राय, पं० रामप्रसाद बिस्मिल, वीर सावरकर, भगत सिंह, डॉ० पट्टाभि सीता रमैया, विट्ठल भाई पटेल, लाल बहादुर शास्त्री आदि।

स्वामी दयानन्द की वाणी, लेखनी, विचारधारा तथा जीवन शैली में सर्वत्र वेदों का ज्ञान दिखलाई देता है। उनके जीवन तथा दर्शन में वेद - उपनिषद् तथा ऋषियों के शास्त्रों का ज्ञान कूट - कूट कर भरा है। महर्षि दयानन्द के सत्यार्थ प्रकाशादि पुस्तकों तथा वेद - भाष्य में स्थान - स्थान पर महर्षि पतञ्जलि का समाधि विज्ञान, ऋषि कपिल का तत्त्वज्ञान, कणाद ऋषि का धर्मज्ञान, गौतम ऋषि का न्याय, व्यास मुनि का ब्रह्म - ज्ञान तथा जैमिनि ऋषि के कर्म - विज्ञान का बोध होता है। वे इस युग में वेदों के प्रतिष्ठापक ऋषि तथा वेदज्ञ शास्त्रवेत्ता ब्राह्मण थे। ब्राह्मणों में श्रेष्ठ ऋषि होते हैं, ऋषियों में श्रेष्ठ ईश्वर के उपासक ब्रह्म - ऋषि, योगी होते हैं। महर्षि दयानन्द को एक सच्चे ब्राह्मण, योगी, ऋषि, तपस्वी, सन्यासी, ब्रह्मचारी, सन्त तथा महान् देव पुरुष, नव जागरण का पुरोध आदि नामों से विद्वानों ने पुकारा है।

महर्षि दयानन्द समाधि योग से ईश्वर के सत्य स्वरूप को जानने के लिए सदा पुरुषार्थ करते रहे। स्वामी जी दया, आनन्द और सरस्वती तीनों गुणों से युक्त आप्त पुरुष हैं। उनके सम्पूर्ण जीवन का यह अमर सन्देश है कि परमेश्वर की सच्ची भक्ति के बिना मनुष्य के जीवन में न दया हो सकती है, न आनन्द और न सरस्वती 'ज्ञान'। स्वामी जी ने संसार के सभी मनुष्यों को 'सत्यार्थ प्रकाश' ग्रन्थ लिखकर यह सन्देश दिया कि बिना वैदिक ज्ञान का प्रकाश हुए मनुष्य समुल्लास, सम्यक् उल्लास अर्थात् पूर्ण शान्ति व आनन्द को प्राप्त नहीं कर सकता।

Pravachans



Smt. Jyoti Khemani



Sh. Varun Dev Sharma



Smt. Harsh Chawla



Dr Sudhakar Sharma ji



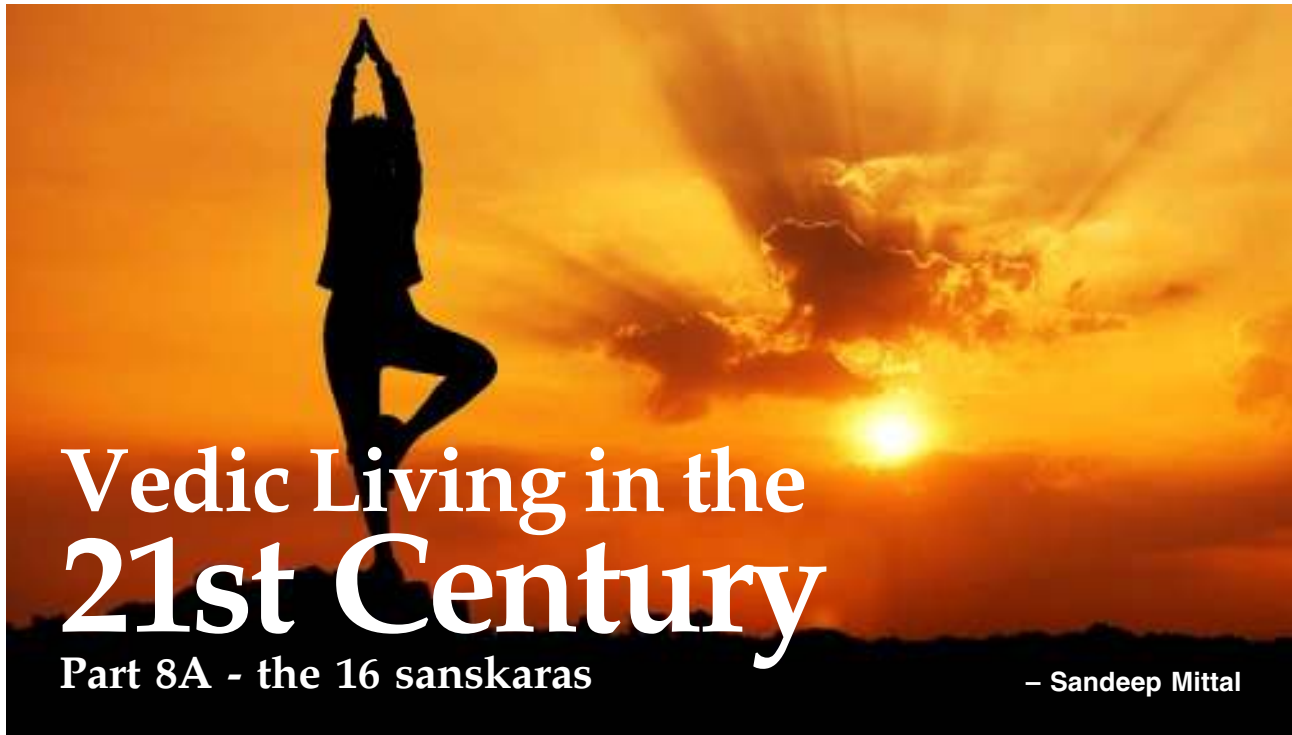
Smt. Usha Shastri



Swami Vivekanand
Parivrajak



Arya Samaj feels proud to acknowledge the achievement of the President of Arya Samaj Trust, Dr. P C Manav when he was honoured by the Govt. of Haryana with the "Haryana Gaurav" award. As part of the award, he was felicitated with a citation and a cheque of Rs 1 Lakh. Heartiest Congratulations to him on this achievement.



Vedic Living in the 21st Century

Part 8A - the 16 sanskaras

- Sandeep Mittal

Rituals are an external processes designed to impress the human mind about an underlying spiritual thought. Unfortunately over time the spirituality of the process gets lost and only the hollow ritual or ceremony remains. In fact in a show of peer pressure the hollowness is amplified with ostentation and vulgarity.

The Vedas prescribe 16 rituals or ceremonies during the lifetime of a human being to aid in spiritual transformation and realisation of the divinity within. The human mind being receptive to external processes, the Vedas ensure these rituals help to attain spiritual impressions conducive to an ideal human being and achieve self-realisation.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) Garbhaadaan - womb nuptials | 8) Mundana - shaving of hair - 3rd year |
| 2) Pumsavana - strengthening of pregnant mother | 9) Karnavedha - piercing of ears - 5th year |
| 3) Seemantonnayan-cheering of the mother | 10) Upanayan - initiation - sacred thread |
| 4) Jaatakarma - purification at childbirth | 11) Vedarambh - commencement of scriptural studies |
| 5) Namakaran - naming of the child | 12) Samavartan - graduation - returning home |
| 6) Nishkramana - taking out the child - 4th month | 13) Vivaha - marriage |
| 7) Annapraashan - feeding first morsel - 5th month | 14) Vanaprastha - retirement to the ashram |
| | 15) Sanyasa - renouncing the world |
| | 16) Antyesthi - cremation |

Of the above 16 ceremonies, in the 21st century it is practical and possible to observe only a few of them. Life is so busy and living so crammed that it is well-nigh impossible to practise them all.

In the next edition of VaidicDhwani we shall elaborate on the 8 most common rituals that are practical and popular in being observed.

(The author acknowledges with thanks the content guidance from "Grace and Glory of the Vedic Dharma" by PandithSudhakaraChaturvedi, a centenarian Vaidic scholar, published by Arya Samaj VV Puram, Bangalore)

VARSHIKOTSAV 2014

The annual festival "Varshikotsav" organized by Arya Samaj Indiranagar, Bangalore was successfully held on 4th, 5th and 6th January 2014. Renowned vedic scholar Dr Som Dev Shastri ji and famous bhajanopadeshak Sh Jagat Verma ji graced the event. We thank all our members for having participated in the event in large numbers and making it a grand success.



Each of the sessions of the Varshikotsav began with the Vaidic Agnihotra



Our President, Smt. Swatantra Lata Sharma introducing our renowned guests and welcoming everyone



Sh. Jagat Verma ji from Punjab kept the audience mesmerised with his bhajanopedeshas



Renowned Vedic scholar Dr. Som Dev Shastri kept the audience spell bound with his pravachans



Sh. Bhima Rao Sankhre singing a bhajan



Smt. Indu Anand singing some bhajans



A new feature of the festival - "Shanka Samadhan" - an informal, open and interactive Q & A session was very well appreciated by the audiences



Smt. Sneha Rakhra singing some bhajans



Dr. P.C. Manav felicitating Sh. Som Dev Shastri ji



Dr. P.C. Manav felicitating Sh. Jagat Verma ji



Our President Smt. Sharma with the key karya-kartas of the Arya Samaj Indiranagar (from L to R, Sh. Sandeep Mittal, Sh. Shrikant Arya, Smt. Harsh Chawla, Sh. Ravi Ochani)



A view of the audience during the Varshikotsav

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SERVICES OFFERED

SAMAJ CONDUCTS AT MANDIR

- **Daily Havan** from 7.30 to 8.00 am
- **Weekly Satsang**
comprising havan, bhajans and discourses every Sunday from 10 to 11.45 am. Every last Sunday of the month, the programme extends to special discourse and Preeti-bhoj.
- **Annual Festivals – Vaidikotsava and Varshikotsav**
2-3 days programmes of havan, Bhajans and discourses on Vedic philosophy by renowned scholars are conducted twice a year.

SAMAJ CONDUCTS AT MANDIR OR YOUR VENUE

Namkaran & Annaprashan

- naming & first grain

Mundan & Upanayan

- head shaving & thread

Vivah - marriage with certificate valid in court of law

Griha Pravesh - house warming

Antyeshti - funeral rites

Shudhdhi - reversion from other faiths to Vaidic dharma with certificate valid in court of law

Havan - for any ceremony on any occasion, at any place

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- 2) Pandit Brij Kishor Shastry 97410 12159
- 3) Pandit Arun Dev Sharma 98446 25085
- 4) Smt Harsh Chawla 99726 14241

YOGA & PRANAYAM

- **Patanjali Yoga**
of Swami Ramdev - 15 days free camp starts Second Sunday of every month
Time : Mon to Sat - 6.15 - 7.30 am (Morning)
Venue : Small Hall
Smt Malati Kapoor 9686579916
Smt Iravathi 98451 99904
Sri G S Paranjyothi 93412 28593
- **Yoga (Evening)** - 45 days
Time : Every Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri - 7.00 - 8.30 pm
- **Pranayam** - 11 days
Time : Mon to Sat - 6.00 - 7.15 am (Morning)
& 7.00 - 8.30 pm (Evening)
Venue : Basement Hall
Sri Nanjunde Gowda 98458 56204

YOGA & PRANAYAM

Manasa Light Age Foundation - Starting from first Wednesday of every month and every Wednesday
Time : 7 - 8 pm
Venue : Small Hall
Sri Pratap Gopalakrishnan 98800 80801

MUSIC

- **Vocal**
Time : Sat & Sun 2 - 4 pm
Smt Seethalakshmi 96200 56218